

Celebrating the Love of Our Eternal Father in the Death of His Son

Joint Good Friday Worship

Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church & Old Orchard Church

Friday, March 29, 2013



The Angel Hinders Abraham from Sacrificing Isaac.

**For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
that whoever believes in him
should not perish but have eternal life.**

~ John 3:16 ~

Warm Greetings!

The elders and pastors at Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church and Old Orchard (Presbyterian) Church warmly welcome you to our 18th Good Friday service together. We are different congregations in Webster Groves in different denominations, but we belong to and celebrate one Lord and Savior, the Man Jesus Christ.

We are glad you are with us tonight and hope our worship lights up for you a bit, how much stronger than human failure is the strength of God's love—the God who suffered for our sake, humbly submitting to his Father who handed him over to humiliation and death to rescue us from judgment and oblivion.

As we go through this service it is good to remind ourselves that the bitterness of Christ's death reveals both the severity and the great love of God. Severity, because all that Christ got in the way of punishment is what we deserve as sons and daughters of guilty Adam; and love, because God cared enough for us that he was willing to crush his Son under the demands of holiness so that, as a Father, he might again delight in us as precious children. *Who can fathom the mysterious depths of the tender love of God?* And what amazes, confounds and sometimes offends is the Bible's insistence that all anybody need do is own their guilt and admit they need a Savior; God the Son did the rest. This is why we call this day, Good.

Christ's work of nailing our guilt to the cross truly is "free" for the asking for anyone who is learning that the biggest threat to their security is not financial, psychological, educational, political, or even relational. We know the common script by heart: "If *only* I was married; or had a more compliant child, or a more understanding spouse, a more encouraging boss; if only there was more justice in the world, or less waste, or less...." Those all matter, but none is the biggest threat to our security. This is: *our own self-centered heart*. But in the Bible divine grace always trumps human self-centeredness, because God loves us as a Father which is why we are here tonight to give thanks to him and to bow with fresh trust and joy before him. Because while our rescue is absolutely free to us, it cost the eternal Son of the Father a great deal: his very life.

Welcome, in Christ's name, to our worship.

Ron Lutjens, Sr. Pastor
Old Orchard Church

Terry Schoenfeld, Sr. Pastor
Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church

Welcome

Prelude

“Tender Mercy” (Psalm 28)

Scott Roley & Paige Overton Pitts (1999)

Words are in the printed bulletin.

Call to Worship

From Psalm 2 and John 3

The Mystery of Divine Love

“What Wondrous Love is This?”

American Folk Hymn (c. 1835)

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing.
To God and to the Lamb Who is the great “I Am”;
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sin!.

And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on;
And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on.
And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing and joyful be;
And through eternity, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on;
And through eternity, I’ll sing on!

Old Covenant Promise: A Substitute

From Isaiah 53

Confessing Our Need For Grace And Forgiveness

“From Depths of Woe” Psalm 130

Christopher Miner

Words are in the printed bulletin.

New Covenant Fulfillment: The Son Condemned

Mark 15:1-20

Litany of the Humiliation of the Son of God

Leader: The Seed of Abraham, the Righteous Branch of David emptied himself, taking the form of a servant!

People: He got hungry, he got thirsty.

L: He humbled himself.

P: He got tired, and never had a home to call his own.

L: He emptied himself of his glory.

P: He cried tears, and became troubled. He lived without the companionship of marriage.

L: An itinerant Jewish preacher, he was ostracized by the religious establishment, and accused of being in league with the devil.

P: He humbled himself, hiding his majesty.

L: He was shunned, nearly stoned, and despised by so many.

Women: He humbled himself, entrusting justice to Him who will judge all things rightly.

L: He was lonely and misunderstood—glory veiled in a jar of clay.

Men: He emptied himself, and postponed his wrath until the End.

L: He took up his cross, and did not complain. He was spit upon, taunted, pushed around and beaten.

P: He humbled himself.

L: He endured the mockery of a fake crown, and the pain of a real crown of thorns.

P: He lost his own clothes to gamblers; he hung in a shameful display. He bled; he died. He died in the form of a servant, being Deity

L: He emptied himself to serve us, in obedience to his Father, and humbled himself, even to death on a Roman cross.

All: In his death is my birth, in his life is my life. Alleluia!

New Covenant Fulfillment: The Son Put to Death

Mark 15:21-41

Prayer

Praise of the Ransomed “Hallelujah, My Father”

Tim Cullen

Words are in the printed bulletin.

Preaching of the Word of God

“Offering Up the Son”

Genesis 22

Pastor Terry Schoenfeld, senior pastor, Cornerstone Evangelical Free Church

Gratitude of the Redeemed “In Christ Alone”

Keith Getty | Stuart Townend

Words are in the printed bulletin.

Meditation on the Death of Our Savior (audio/visual montage)

Time for Quiet and Silent Prayer

The Hope of the Forgiven

Revelation 3:20; 22:1-5

(Continued)

The Hope of the Forgiven

**“The Tree of Life”
K. Lee Scott**

Communion in the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ

Song of Hope

Words are in the printed bulletin.

Benediction on the People of God

Credits

Cover Art: *The Angel Hinders Abraham from Sacrificing Isaac* Woodcut engraving by Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472-1553). Germany

Image on Page 7: *Abraham About to Offer Isaac*. Yiddish “*scherschnitte*” (paper-cutting)

Songs:

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Special thanks to Greg Roig for putting together the art and music montage, and to Nate McKie for a lot of technical help with it.

It was inspired by a similar piece done at Old Orchard by Edward Crim, back in the mid-1980s. The haunting music that provided the backdrop for our meditation on the artistic images of Christ's Passion is Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* (1936)

The Blessedness of Possessing Nothing

In the story of Abraham and Isaac we have a dramatic picture of the surrendered life as well as an excellent commentary on the first Beatitude [**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3).**]

Abraham was old when Isaac was born, old enough indeed to have been his grandfather, and the child became at once the delight and idol of his heart. From that moment when he first stooped to take the tiny form awkwardly in his arms, he was an eager love slave of his son. God went out of His way to comment on the strength of this affection [Genesis 22:2]. And it is not hard to understand. The baby represented everything sacred to his father's heart: the promises of God, the covenants, the hopes of the years and the long messianic dream. As he watched him grow from babyhood to young manhood the heart of the old man was knit closer and closer with the life of his son, till at last the relationship bordered upon the perilous. It was then that God stepped in to save both father and son from the consequences of an uncleansed love.

Take now your son, said God to Abraham, **your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of.** The sacred writer spares us a close-up of the agony that night on the slopes near Beersheba when the aged man had it out with his God, but respectful imagination may view in awe the bent form and convulsive wrestling alone under the stars. Possibly not again until a Greater than Abraham wrestled in the Garden of Gethsemane did such mortal pain visit a human soul. If only the man himself might have been allowed to die. That would have been easier a thousand times, for he was old now, and to die would have been no great ordeal for one who had walked so long with God. Besides, it would have been a last sweet pleasure to let his dimming vision rest upon the figure of his stalwart son who would live to carry on the Abrahamic line and fulfill in himself the promises of God made long before in Ur of the Chaldees.

How should he slay the lad! Even if he could get the consent of his wounded and protesting heart, how could he reconcile the act with the promise, **In Isaac shall your seed be called?** This was Abraham's trial by fire, and he did not fail in the crucible. While the stars still shone like sharp white points above the tent where the sleeping Isaac lay, and long before the gray dawn had begun to lighten the east, the old saint had made up his mind. He would offer his son as God had directed him to do, and *then trust God to raise him from the dead.* This, says the writer to the Hebrews, was the solution his aching heart found sometime in the dark night, and he rose "early in the morning" to carry out the plan. It is beautiful to see that, while he erred as to God's method, he had correctly sensed the secret of His great heart. And the solution accords well with the New Testament Scripture, **Whosoever will lose for my sake shall find.**

God let the suffering old man go through with it up to the point where he knew there would be no retreat then forbade him to lay a hand upon the boy. To the wondering patriarch he now says in effect, "It's all right, Abraham. I never intended that you should actually slay the lad. I only wanted to remove him from the temple of your heart that I might reign unchallenged there. I wanted to correct the perversion that existed in your love. Now you may have the boy, sound and well. Take him and go back to your tent. **Now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.**"

—A.W. Tozer in *The Pursuit of God* (1948)