



(This abridged Liturgy of the Word is designed to be used in the home during this time of extraordinary circumstances.)

Our Confession

Holy God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
for all the ways we have failed to love you
with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength:
Lord, have mercy.

(A brief silence is kept)

For all the ways we have failed to love our neighbors as ourselves:
Christ, have mercy.

(A brief silence is kept)

We are amazed, Lord Jesus, by your great love toward us:
**For on this night, you did not flee from your mission,
nor hide from your accusers,
nor fade into the safety of the wings of angels.**

We praise you, Lord Jesus,
for you stepped with determination into the waiting darkness,
willingly giving yourself, on our behalf, to whip and fist, to wood and nails:
Lord, have mercy on us. Amen.

(A brief silence is kept)

Forgive us, Lord Jesus:
**For we have often taken your suffering too lightly
and have just as often received your grace too cheaply.**

Forgive us, Lord Jesus:
We have wounded your love and have marred your image in us.

In your great mercy, O Lord, forgive us and heal us:
**In order that our brokenness may be mended,
our hearts transformed, and our lives restored. Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Help us, Lord Jesus, as we now enter these Three Days.
And when we see again the depth and mystery of your redeeming love,
help us to follow where you go, to stop where you stumble,
to listen when you cry, to hurt as you suffer,
and to bow our heads in sorrow when you die.
So that when raised to life again,
we, too, may share your endless joy.
Amen.

¹⁷On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹⁸He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" ¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

²⁰When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; ²¹and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." ²²And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" ²³He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." ²⁵Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." ²⁷Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." ³⁰When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'" ³²But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." ³³Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." ³⁴Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." ³⁵Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

(Silent or Spoken Reflection)

³⁶Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." ³⁹And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." ⁴⁰Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴²Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" ⁵⁵At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

(Silent or Spoken Reflection)

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" ⁶²The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" ⁶³But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." ⁷¹When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷²Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." ⁷³After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. ⁷⁵Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

(Silent or Spoken Reflection)

Prayers of Intercession

Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

(A brief silence is kept)

God of love, unite your church in its commitment to humble service. Make us your faithful disciples. Speak words of truth and grace through us. Encourage us in self-giving acts of kindness. Let us love one another as you have loved us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, tend to flocks, fields, and vineyards. Bring favorable weather for crops to grow. Guide the hands of those who cultivate, farm, and garden. Let the earth flourish so that all may eat and be satisfied. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, you give us a New Commandment, to have love for one another. We give thanks for organizations that respond to disasters and for agencies that offer relief and humanitarian aid to populations in need (*particular organizations may be named here*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, give ear to all who call upon you for any need of body or spirit (*especially those who we now name...*). Provide for those who do not have enough to eat, those who are unemployed or underemployed, and those who rely on the generosity of others. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of love, you invite us to your table of mercy. Heal all divisions between members of our congregation. Extend the hospitality of your holy table beyond the walls of our church, that your love and welcome be made known to all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

(Other intercessions may be offered here)

According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Remember us, Lord, in your Kingdom, and help us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

(There is no Benediction between now and the close of Easter worship. Therefore, this liturgy ends in silence.)