

# WILLOW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MAY 4TH, 2025 | THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER | 10:00AM



## OUR APPROACH TO GOD

*Come, celebrate the love of God in Jesus Christ with us! All are invited to sing and pray and participate in liturgy.*

‡ IF YOU ARE ABLE, WE INVITE YOU TO STAND.

PRELUDE

HE LIVES

ALFRED HENRY ACKLEY

Tom Andrew, piano

WELCOME AND SHARING

REV. LAUREN PATRUS-BETZEL

‡ CALL TO WORSHIP FROM ROMANS 8

SHANNON REAGAN

If God is for us, who can be against us? Who will bring any charge against God's chosen ones?

**It is God who justifies.**

Who then is the one who condemns?

**No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

**No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through God who loves us. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Come, let us worship God!**

‡ HYMN #159

O SING A SONG OF BETHLEHEM

BENSON, 1899; WILLIAMS, 1906

## INVITATION TO CONFESSION & PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy, Merciful and Righteous One, we confess that we are none of those things. We confess that we are slow to admit our need for your righteousness, clinging instead to self-righteousness. And in our self-righteousness we often lack mercy, judging others instead of responding in compassion. Thank you for showing us mercy, especially when we are slow to offer it to others. Convince us once again that your grace is sufficient.**

## A PERIOD OF SILENT CONFESSION

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON FROM 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 & 21

If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: **The old has gone, the new is here!** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Christ we might become the righteousness of God. **In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!**

## I GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

## I PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST

May the Peace of Christ be with you; **And also with you.**

## INVITATION TO THE WORD

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

## PSALTER READING

## PSALM 22 SELECTED VERSES

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This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## SPECIAL MUSIC

## THE WONDERFUL CROSS

CHRIS TOMLIN, ISAAC WATTS, J. D. WALT, JESSE REEVES, LOWELL MASON

## CHILDREN'S MOMENT

## GOSPEL READING

## MATTHEW 27:45 - 54

PASTOR TANYA MUZZARELLI

The Gospel of our Risen Savior. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

PAGE 1548 - 1549

## SERMON

"THE SCANDAL OF THE CROSS"

## OUR RESPONSE TO SERVE

## MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

## I HYMN #216

## BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS

CLEPHANE, 1868; MAKER, 1881

## I AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - PHILIPPIANS 2:5 - 11

**Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Amen.**

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

LET'S JUST PRAISE THE LORD

GLORIA GAITHER, WILLIAM J. GAITHER

I DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessing flow; Praise God all creatures here below;  
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.

I PRAYER OF DEDICATION

I HYMN #228

WERE YOU THERE

AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL; COSTEN, 1987

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)*  
*Were you there when they crucified my Lord? O! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.*  
*Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)*  
*Were you there when you nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)*  
*Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? O! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.*  
*Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)*

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

COMMUNION

*We hold the bread and partake together, celebrating that Christ joins us into one united body. We drink the cup as it comes to us, rejoicing that Christ comes to us as individuals and loves us just as we are.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and glory forever. Amen.**

I HYMN

THE OLD RUGGED CROSS

GEORGE BENNARD (1913)

*On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame;  
and I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain.*

*Refrain: So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it someday for a crown.*

*O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world, has a wondrous attraction for me;  
for the dear Lamb of God left his glory above to bear it to dark Calvary. [Refrain]*

*In that old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine, a wondrous beauty I see,  
for 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died, to pardon and sanctify me. [Refrain]*

*To that old rugged cross I will ever be true, its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
then he'll call me some day to my home far away, where his glory forever I'll share. [Refrain]*

## I CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

## I SAW THE LIGHT

HANK WILLIAMS SR.

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THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SERVED TODAY! LITURGIST: SHANNON REAGAN

USHERS: RON MUZZARELLI, STEVE PICKEN, JOHN REID AND ED ROTTMAN

**NEW TO WILLOW CREEK?** Join us next **today** at 11:30am to learn all about our wonderful church and how to get involved! We will be done by 1:30pm. **Childcare and lunch are provided.**

**MISSION DRIVE:** Thank you for supporting **Capron Elementary's** Faculty and Staff! Please bring any homemade treats (or other final donations) by 9am on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>.

**WORSHIP BAG REFRESH:** Coming soon! Let the Church Office know if there are any items you would like to see in the children's worship bags (or any items you would prefer to have removed!).

### YOUTH FUNDRAISERS

Bidding closes at 11:30am next Sunday, May 11th on our **Pew Bench Silent Auction!**

Do you need help with spring cleaning or yard work? Our **youth are for hire!** Sign up in the Fellowship Hall for a Sunday to hire two youth for two hours for \$100. Take the youth home with you after church, please provide a light lunch, and bring them back when their work is complete. All proceeds go to the Youth Group's fundraising efforts for their summer trip to Presbyterian Youth Triennium in Louisville.

**COVER IMAGE:** Hochhalter, Cara B. When They Crucified Jesus

**A note from the Artist:** "How could I possibly create an image of Jesus on the cross? I avoided facing this most poignant and painful scene in the Christian story. Finally, I drew the crucifixion from above and behind. From this vantage point, we do see all that is going on below the cross... I realized that everyone (the soldiers and the disciples) are the same size. Perhaps in God's eyes, there is incredible love for each one of us in spite of our "rightness or wrongness." It is not so much who was good and who was bad; even the soldiers probably thought they were doing the right thing under orders. Perhaps we are to find ourselves along this winding path from grief and guilt to resurrection and reconciliation...Jesus saw the possibilities for good and God's infinite blessings, even in those who were seen as wrongdoers. In the face of this painful death, Jesus did not call on armies to protect him...and so, in his self-giving love, he was killed... However, this is not the end of the story."

From Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. [retrieved April 30, 2025]. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59271>

The cross of Christ's crucifixion is central to our Christian faith. And yet, how would you describe what the cross means? For the next few weeks, our **sermon series** the **Wondrous Cross** will invite us to remain at the cross, lingering over the mystery of how God's great love came into the world, defeated death, and provided salvation.

**WCPC COOKBOOK** The Deacons need recipes of your family favorites and special potluck dishes. Please bring us a copy or email it to [recipes@willowcreekpc.org](mailto:recipes@willowcreekpc.org) as soon as possible. Thank you!

### WEEKLY CHURCH CALENDAR

<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	10a	Worship - Communion, 11a Fellowship, 11:30a New to Willow Creek Lunch
<b>Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	6p	Pipe Band & Drums: Lessons & Rehearsals, 6:30p Session
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	8a	Mens Coffee at Boone County Family Restaurant
<b>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	6p	Bell Choir Rehearsal
<b>Sunday 11<sup>th</sup></b>		<i>Mother's Day</i>
<i>Change for Change</i>	10a	Worship, 10:30a Sunday School, 11a Fellowship

**"A Faith Community, Growing Together, Sharing the love of Christ"**  
**MINISTERS: ALL MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**