

The HOLY WEEK STORY

Worship begins in a dark sanctuary. The cross is up front. The stone is in front of the “tomb” CLY (Chetek Lutheran Youth) are scattered at different microphones, ready to read their part of the HOLY WEEK STORY.

As the story is read, each reader continues to repeat the underlined refrain from his/her narrative randomly (without mike as the narrators continue to read the story into mikes). As more and more readers read their part of the story the background noise of remembered phrases becomes more and more distracting, more and more chaotic.

The last reader is “Christ” who is slowly carrying a cross to the front of the sanctuary – as he/she gets the cross standing at the front he/she puts great emphasis and shouts the final three words. IT IS FINISHED. There is sudden and complete silence ~~ PAUSE ~~~ then the Roman Soldier steps up to the cross to declare that Jesus is the Son of God.

Following that the song “THE WONDERFUL CROSS” is played over the PA system, while CLY prepare for the telling of the EASTER GOSPEL through the slide show.

1) Jesus Rides into Jerusalem as King

All of Jerusalem was excited. People flocked out the city gate and hurried along the road to Mount Olivet. Many of them had come to Jerusalem for the Passover. They wanted to meet Jesus because they had heard so much about him.

Jesus told his disciples to go into the village, he said they would find a colt for him to ride. It was just like he told them. Jesus sat on the colt. Many people spread their clothes along the road. Others waved palm branches. They shouted, **“Hossana, to the Son of David. Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.”**

2) Jesus Teaches in the Temple

Early the next morning Jesus and his disciples were on their way to the temple at Jerusalem. When they got there, they went in. Here Jesus saw men and women buying and selling animals for sacrifices. Others were changing money into temple coins. Jesus knew they cheated the people. He turned over their tables and drove them out saying, “In the Scriptures it says that **my house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.**”

3) Jesus Enemies Come with Questions

Many people in the temple were waiting to hear Jesus teach. Of course the chief priests and scribes were there too. Since they did not want Jesus to teach the people they started an argument. **“By what authority do you teach and work miracles? Who gave you this authority?”**

Jesus said, "I will answer your question if you will first answer mine. Was the baptism of John from heaven or was it of human origin? "

The chief priests and scribes did not know what to say. Because they were afraid to answer his question they said, "We do not know."

4) A Lawyer Questions Jesus

One who came to question Jesus was a lawyer. He asked, "Which is the greatest commandment of the Law?"

Jesus answered, "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength**"; this is the first commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "

5) The Foot Washing

When evening came Jesus and his disciples gathered in the upper room. A feeling of sadness crept over them when Jesus said that this was his last supper with them. Would Jesus really be taken away from them? It seemed impossible to think men could ever kill him.

Soon they were talking about other things. Some of them were wondering who would be greatest in Jesus' kingdom. Jesus knew what they were thinking so he took off his robe and took a basin of water and washed their feet. When the washing was over, Jesus laid aside the towel and put on his coat again. He said, "You call me Lord, and Master, and so I am. **If I your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet.**"

6) The Last Supper with the Twelve

Being troubled, Jesus said, "One of you will betray me."

The disciples wondered how this could be. He said to them, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it." Jesus gave the bread to Judas. Immediately Judas left the room and went out into the night.

After supper Jesus took bread, offered thanks, broke it and gave each disciple a piece, "**Take this bread and eat it, for it is my body which is broken for you.**"

Then he took the cup. When he had given thanks he passed it to them saying, "Drink this for it is my blood, which is shed for you. I will never drink of the fruit of the vine again until I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

7) Jesus predicts his own death

Jesus told them he would soon die and leave them alone. They should not be afraid. "After I have risen, I shall go before you into Galilee."

Peter said, "Lord, I will never leave you!"

Jesus answered, "This night **before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.**"

Then Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn together, left the upper room and went to the Garden of Gethsemane.

8) Jesus prays in the Garden

At the entrance to the garden Jesus told eight disciples, "Stay here while I go and pray." He took Peter, James and John with him. While he prayed the disciples fell asleep.

Jesus knew he would die on the cross. He must bear the sins of the world in order to become the Savior of all people. He had a body and a mind like ours and he dreaded the pain and suffering that was coming. He prayed, **"Father, if it is possible, let this pass away from me. Not my will, however, but yours be done."**

When Jesus was finished praying he awoke the sleeping disciples and told them his betrayer was near. Soon Judas arrived with men carrying torches. Jesus had told the men that he would kiss Jesus and they would know which one to take as prisoner. When he arrived he kissed Jesus. Then they arrested him.

9) The trial

The soldiers took Jesus before Pilate. The mob yelled, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate did not want to crucify him he sent Jesus to King Herod.

King Herod mocked Jesus, made fun of him. He pretended to honor him, but then he sent him back to Pilate.

Pilate, too wanted to free Jesus. He told the mob. But the mob demanded that he crucify Jesus. Being afraid of the angry mob he gave them the choice. The demanded , **"Set Barabbas free!"** What about Jesus he asked, **"Crucify Him! Crucify Him."**

10) They Crucified Him

The Roman Soldiers took Jesus and put a crown of thorns on him. They mocked him, blindfolded him, spat on him and whipped him. They took him with two robbers and gave them each a heavy cross to carry. A crowd of curious people followed them up on the hill.

The soldiers removed his clothing and nailed his hands and his feet to the cross. Then they raised the cross high in the air and hung him there to die. A sign said, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews!"

About noon the sky suddenly grew dark. For three hours the great darkness lasted. Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice, **"It is finished!"**

SILENCE

When it grows silent a lone Roman soldier comes to stand near the cross, **“TRULY this man was the Son of God.”** He says.

PLAYING OF THE SONG – the WONDERFUL CROSS

– as CLY prepare for the gospel slide show at which time the focus will switch from the cross to the tomb.

Slide Show – Easter Gospel

Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-11, John 20:1-8

Our Gospel Lesson today is the Easter Story as recorded in all four of the Gospels as told in Egermeir's Bible Story Book. It will be presented visually in the form of a slide show for you today.. As you listen to the text you will be able to watch the scenes, but you'll need to help us because you are the projector.

Between scenes we'll ask you to close your eyes. As each scene is portrayed we'll ask you to open your eyes. Are you ready? Let's practice.

Close your eyes (wait for them to do so)

Now, open your eyes (wait)

Very good -- NOW WE CAN BEGIN. . . Close your eyes.

SCENE 1: The sanctuary is very dimly lit. The tomb is placed up in front with two guards standing outside guarding it. They are tough, strong and bored. On guard duty -- but nothing is happening – for THREE DAYS.

OPEN YOUR EYES> The hours dragged slowly for the Roman soldiers who guarded Jesus' grave. No one had come. Perhaps they laughed at the Jews for being afraid. They had been guarding the tomb now for three days and the only thing they knew for sure is that **NOTHING** was happening here. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 2: The tomb “trembles” and the soldiers are FRIGHTENED. They bite their fingernails and have a look on their faces as if saying, “MOMMY!”

OPEN YOUR EYES> As dawn came the ground began to tremble. Another earthquake had come. The soldiers were **VERY** frightened. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 3: The tomb stone is rolled away. An angel “appears” and is seen above the tomb. The soldiers are amazed, frightened, trembling, frightened and fallen to their knees.

OPEN YOUR EYES> They saw an angel come down, roll the stone from the grave and sit on it. The angel's face was like lightening, and her garments were as white as snow. The soldiers fell to the ground, trembling and helpless. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 4: *The soldiers are running away from the tomb. The angel is standing in front of the tomb. Jesus' enemies are standing huddled and sinister looking off to the side. (Where the wheelchair space is in the aisle).*

OPEN YOUR EYES> As soon as they were able they fled into the city to report to Jesus' enemies. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 5: *Three women come to the tomb – Mary and two others. The angel is not visible. Mary is bending and looking in the tomb – shocked. The other two women embrace each other despairingly, in fright.*

OPEN YOUR EYES> When the women came to the garden, they found the grave empty. At first they did not see the angel, and they wondered who had stolen the body of their Lord. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 6: *Two of the women are bending to see in the tomb, facing the congregation with hand in front of mouth as if saying, "OH MY GOD!" Mary is running away toward the disciples who are seen off to the side. (On the organ side of the aisle, but in front)*

OPEN YOUR EYES> Mary Mag'dalene ran to tell Peter and John and the other disciples that Jesus' body had been taken away. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 7: *The angel stands arms open at the opening of the tomb. The women are on their knees at a distance, as if biting their fingernails. Mary and the disciples are seen in conversation off to the side. They are shocked, excited, doubtful, believing and in awe.*

OPEN YOUR EYES> After Mary had gone, the other women saw an angel in the tomb. They were afraid and bowed themselves to the ground. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 8: *The angel is shrugging as if saying, "WHY?" and at the same time pointing as if saying, "GO!" The women, are standing, listening to her, yet still confused.*

OPEN YOUR EYES> The angel said, "Do not be afraid. Why are you seeking the living among the dead? Jesus is not here; he is **RISEN AS HE SAID HE WOULD.** Go, quickly - tell his disciples and Peter --- **JESUS IS ALIVE** and will meet them in Galilee." **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 9: *The women are running away full of joy and anticipation as they go to share GOOD NEWS with the disciples still seen off to the side.*

OPEN YOUR EYES> The women ran from the place, filled with joy, yet trembling with excitement and fear. The good news seemed too wonderful to be true. Still, they believed and hurried to tell the disciples and other friends. **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

SCENE 10: *The disciples could not believe the glad message. Peter and John go and look in the tomb. The other disciples line up (like the seven dwarfs) watching after Peter and John and looking off into the distance to see this wonderful thing that was happening to them.*

OPEN YOUR EYES> The disciples could not believe the glad message. Peter and John ran to see for themselves. When they came to the tomb, they found no one, but they saw the graveclothes that Joseph had wrapped around Jesus' body. Peter and John were sure not that Jesus was alive once more.

Leader: THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

People: Thanks be to God.

SCENE 11: *The congregation will most assuredly be weak on their "THANKS BE TO GOD RESPONSE." The disciples indicate their displeasure in the weak response.*

Leader: THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD (louder)

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD (still louder)

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: CHRIST IS RISEN

People: He is risen indeed!

Followed by an Easter Hymn & the rest of the service.