



St. Anne's Episcopal Parish
Church Circle • Annapolis, MD • 21401

Parish Offices & Education Building
Location at 199 Duke of Gloucester St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone : 410-267-9333
Fax 410-280-3181
www.stannes-annapolis.org

The Rev. Amy Richter
Good Friday April 2, 2010
St. Anne's Episcopal Church, Annapolis, MD

It is finished.

Many said words like those that day.

Pilate pushed himself up from the judgment bench and sighed. "Jesus is finished, another political troublemaker out of the way."

The religious leaders looked at one another and said in hushed tones, Jesus is finished. No more offense from him."

The soldiers as they turned their backs and walked away: "Finished. It is over, our unpleasant but necessary work for the day."

The crowds as they watched Jesus breathe his last and his head slump down lifeless: "Finished. The spectacle is over."

All comments on the moment, comments on the day, comments made by those with limited vision.

Not so with Jesus' word, "it is finished." This is a word of cosmic import, a word of timeless importance, of universal significance.

It is finished. Jesus' last word. It's just one word in the language he spoke. It is finished. His concluding declaration, his last word, the final punctuation on a sentence begun before the beginning. With this word of completion, finality – "finished," we are reminded how all began: in John's Gospel, "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him. In him was life, and the life was the light of all

people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. From his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace.”

And so Jesus’ word, word of Word incarnate, this one word, “it is finished” is the final punctuation on a sentence begun before all that is, is, before we were knit together in our mothers’ womb, before first light, first life, first spark, first bang, first dream, first bursting forth of creation. The final punctuation on a sentence spoken in love, spoken across space, time, through ages, prophets, patriarchs, matriarchs, sages, and in these last days, spoken to us by a son: Jesus. The final punctuation on a sentence spoken, lived in love, love – spoken, sung, breathed, in words, words like, “And I, when I am lifted up, I will draw all to myself.” Words like, “Love one another as I have loved you.” Love, spoken in actions: touched and touching, taught and teaching, love reaching out, healing, embracing, lifting; calling “beloved” those called wrong, weak, small, outcast, other, sinner. The Word incarnate spoke love in words, in deeds, spoke love in handing himself over, giving himself up, pouring himself out, until there is nothing left, nothing more needed, just one last breath, one last word. God’s sentence of love spoken across time, space, boundaries -- on the cross spoke its final syllables, in gasps, in agonized whisper, in pain, yes, but with precision, point, and power. This is no giving up, this is declaration. It is finished. Period.

O Jesus, to you, now lifted up, with your arms of love stretched out on the hard wood of the cross, in your loving and giving until all is completed, to you in your finishing, we bring all our incompleteness, all our unfinishedness, all those things done and left undone,

our fractional loving,
 our fragmentary living,
 our unrealized intentions,
 our unfulfilled potential,

our unarticulated praise,
our unprayed prayers,
our underachieved service,
our ungiven forgiveness,
our conditional charity,
our inadequate hope,
our wanting faith,
unfinished us,
unfinished me.

and you say, drawing each of us and our incompleteness all
to you, "it is finished." Period.