



Friday April 3, 2026 Good Friday

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday. In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death. Standing with the disciples at the foot of the cross, we pray for the whole world in the ancient bidding prayer, as Christ's death offers life to all. We gather in solemn devotion, but always with the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life. We depart silently, and we anticipate the culmination of the Three Days in the Easter Vigil.

WELCOME! We are glad to have you join us in worship this evening. Here are a few notes to help you feel more at home participating in our worship.

Welcome Cards & Prayer Requests. In the pew in front of you, are "Welcome Cards." If you are a guest today or if you have a prayer request, please take a moment to fill out a card, and place it in the plate during the offering.

Worshipping. Today's service is printed in this bulletin. Parts in **bold** indicate responses by everyone in which you are invited to participate.

ST. STEPHEN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
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RINGING OF THE BELL

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. C Amen.

READING: ISAIAH 52:13—53:12

A reading from Isaiah.

¹³ See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up and shall be very high. ¹⁴ Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—¹⁵ so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him, for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. ^{53:1} Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity, and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

⁴ Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases, yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. ⁹ They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with affliction. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper. ¹¹ Out of his anguish he shall see; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out himself to death and was

numbered with the transgressors, yet he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

...The word of the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

I JOHN 18:1-11 – THE ARREST OF JESUS

Stay with Me (Taize Community) (sung 2x)

Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray. Watch and pray.

II JOHN 18:12-27 – JESUS IS TRIED AND DENIED

Stay with Me (Taize Community) (sung 2x)

Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray. Watch and pray.

III JOHN 18:28-40 – JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Stay with Me (Taize Community) (sung 2x)

Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray. Watch and pray.

IV JOHN 19:1-7 – JESUS IS MOCKED

Stay with Me (Taize Community) (sung 2x)

Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray. Watch and pray.

V JOHN 19:8-16A – JESUS IS JUDGED

Stay with Me (Taize Community) (sung 2x)

Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray. Watch and pray.

VI JOHN 19:16B-22 – JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

Were You There (v. 1)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

VII JOHN 19:23-25A – JESUS’ CLOTHES DIVIDED

Were You There (v. 2)

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

VIII JOHN 19:25B-30 – THE DEATH OF JESUS

Were You There? (v. 3)

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

IX JOHN 19:31-42 – THE BURIAL OF JESUS

Were You There? (v. 4)

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

MEDITATION – TIME FOR SILENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION

HYMN OF THE DAY: BEHOLD THE WOOD ~ DAN SCHUTTE

Refrain

Be - hold, be - hold the wood of the cross, on which is
 hung our sal - va - tion. O come, let us a - dore.

Verses

1. Un - less a grain of wheat shall fall up - on the ground and die, it
2. And when my hour of glo - ry comes as all was meant to be, †
3. For there can be no great - er love — shown up - on this land than
4. My Fa - ther, if it be your plan, this cup might pass me by; yet
5. For sure - ly he has borne our tears, is wound - ed by our sin, and
6. My bod - y now is torn with pain, my friends have left and gone. O

to Refrain

1. shall re - main but a sin - gle grain and not give life.
2. you shall see me lift - ed up up - on a tree.
3. in the one who came to die that we might live.
4. let it hap - pen as you will if I must die.
5. yet he o - pens not his mouth that we might live.
6. lov - ing Fa - ther, take my life in - to your hands.

BIDDING PRAYER

All may remain seated for the prayers. The assisting minister leads the invitations to prayer (the bids). Silence for prayer follows each bid. The presiding minister concludes the silent prayer.

A Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy church throughout the world.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. By your Holy Spirit guide the church and gather it throughout the world. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your name, and bring the good news of salvation in Christ to all people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for our bishops, for our pastor(s), for all servants of the church, and for all the people of God.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the church and makes it holy. Strengthen and uphold our bishops, pastors, other ministers, and lay leaders. Keep them in health and safety for the good of the church, and help each of us in our various vocations to do faithfully the work to which you have called us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for those preparing for baptism.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you continue to bless the church. Increase the faith and understanding of those preparing for baptism. Give them new birth as your children, and keep them in the faith and communion of your holy church. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for our sisters and brothers who share our faith in Jesus Christ.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you give your church unity. Look with favor on all who follow Jesus your Son. Make all the baptized one in the fullness of faith, and keep us united in the fellowship of love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and your teaching to Moses. Hear our prayers that the people you called and elected as your own may receive the fulfillment of the covenant's promises. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, gather into your embrace all those who call out to you under different names. Bring an end to inter-religious strife, and make us more faithful witnesses of the love made known to us in your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for those who do not believe in God.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you created humanity so that all may long to know you and find peace in you. Grant that all may recognize the signs of your love and grace in the world and in the lives of Christians, and gladly acknowledge you as the one true God. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for God's creation.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you are the creator of a magnificent universe. Hold all the worlds in the arms of your care and bring all things to fulfillment in you. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for those who serve in public office.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you are the champion of the poor and oppressed. In your goodness, give wisdom to those in authority, so that all people may enjoy justice, peace, freedom, and a share in the goodness of your creation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **C Amen.**

A Let us pray for those in need.

Silent prayer.

P Almighty and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. Heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travelers, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and deliver your world from falsehood, hunger, and disease. Hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble, that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

A Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask.

C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

PROCESSION OF THE CROSS

The assembly stands and turns to face the cross in the back of the sanctuary. The cross is carried in procession through the church and placed before the assembly. The assembly faces the cross as it is brought forward. The following is sung three times, at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the procession. The presider sings the first part; all sing the response where indicated.

P Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of ^l the whole world.

C Oh, come, let us ^l worship him.

P Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of ^l the whole world.

C Oh, come, let us ^l worship him.

P Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of ^l the whole world.

C Oh, come, let us ^l worship him.

VENERATION OF THE CROSS

During this time, worshipers may come to the cross to make a sign of reverence. Reverencing the cross may include pausing before the cross.

SOLEMN REPROACHES

(PRAYED DURING THE VENERATION OF THE CROSS)

P O my people, O my church, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me. I led you out of slavery into freedom, and delivered you through the waters of rebirth, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. Forty years I led you through the desert, feeding you with manna on the way; I saved you from the time of trial and gave you my body, the bread of heaven, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I led you on your way in a pillar of cloud and fire, but you led me to the judgment hall of Pilate; I guided you by the light of the Holy Spirit, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I planted you as my fairest vineyard, but you brought forth bitter fruit; I made you branches of the vine and never left your side, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I poured out saving water from the rock, but you gave me vinegar to drink; I poured out my life and gave you the new covenant in my blood, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I gave you a royal scepter, but you gave me a crown of thorns; I gave you the kingdom and crowned you with eternal life, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I struck down your enemies, but you struck my head with a reed; I gave you my peace, but you draw the sword in my name, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I opened the waters to lead you to the promised land, but you opened my side with a spear; I washed your feet as a sign of my love, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I lifted you up to the heights, but you lifted me high on a cross; I raised you from death and prepared for you the tree of life, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I grafted you into my people Israel, but you made them scapegoats for your own guilt, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you? Answer me. I came to you in the least of your brothers and sisters, but I was hungry and you gave me no food, thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

P We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

C **By your holy cross you have re-deemed the world.**

SENDING HYMN: JESUS, REMEMBER ME (ELW 616) (SUNG 3X)

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 7/8 time signature. It contains a melody of chords and eighth notes. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment of chords and eighth notes.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

The second system of musical notation is identical to the first, consisting of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two flats and a 7/8 time signature. It contains the same melody and accompaniment for the lyrics.

Text: Luke 23:42; Taizé Community
Music: REMEMBER ME, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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All depart in silence.

Serving at Worship this evening

Assisting Ministers.....Kevin Dolan **Ushers**.....Kevin Barcavage & John Musi
Lector.....Dave Staton **Greeter**.....Ilse Zeeck
Acolyte.....Gavin Barone **Audio/Visual**.....Tyler LaVorgna
Music Director.....Mason Griffin **Altar Guild**...Allison Barone & Jane Ebersberger

***** JOIN US AS WE CONTINUE WITH OUR HOLY WEEK SERVICES *****

Easter Sunday, April 5th ~ 9:00 AM

Christ is risen indeed! With signs of the resurrection everywhere, join us in Easter joy as our shouts and songs of Alleluia ring and reign with the Good News!