

Good Friday - Christ Lutheran

April 3rd 2026 6:30 PM

Yesterday, Maundy Thursday, began the “Three Days” — Thursday, Good Friday, and the Resurrection of our Lord—that are at the heart of our Christian faith.

Tonight's service is taken from an early Christian service called Tenebrae. The name Tenebrae is the Latin word for “darkness” or “shadows.” During this service the candles will be extinguished one by one until only a single candle, the Christ Candle, considered the symbol of our Savior, remains. As it gets darker and darker we can reflect on the great emotional and physical pain that was very real for Jesus. Toward the end of the service, the Christ candle is taken away, symbolizing the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of his death. At the moment of the earthquake, the temple veil was torn apart, making the Holy of Holies exposed to public view. This is understood to represent the change in our relationship with God, where we now have direct access to God, no longer requiring the ceremonial acts of the priests for our forgiveness of sin.

The Christ candle remains outside, for our worship doesn't end when we leave this place, but it concludes with the Resurrection of Our Lord on Easter.

Shortly before his death 82 years ago on April 9th, 1945 at the Flossenbürg concentration camp for his role in the plot to assassinate the German dictator, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: “Resurrection does not mean that Christ is gloriously transported from earth into heaven. He must go to the cross. And precisely there, where the cross stands, the resurrection is near. Precisely here, where all lose faith in God, where all despair about the power of God, God is fully there, and Christ is alive and near.”

Together the Three Days proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ was birthed among us. Christ was executed among us. Christ will rise again among us.

Procession of the Cross

(Said three times)

P: Behold the life-giving cross, on which was hung the Savior of the world. **All:** **Oh, come, let us worship Jesus.**

Act of Confession

P: Again and again
we have bound you
and taken you captive, O Lord,

**C: Because it's easier,
easier than facing the reality
of what you ask of us.**

P: Again and again
you have been taken captive
and your voice silenced.

**C: Again and again
you have been dragged out
whenever it seems
that quoting your name will justify
our attempts to gain what we want
at the expense of others.**

P: This is the day when life is raw,
quivering, terrifying:
The day of numbed emotions,
the day of blunt nails
and splintered wood,
of bruised flesh
and red blood.

The day we loathe,
when hopes are crushed.
The day we long for,
when pretences fall away—
Because the worst that we can do
cannot kill the love of God.

P: Gracious God,
your love is a light in our darkness,
vulnerable, yet unquenchable.
We would stand with Christ,
in the midst of the horrors of this world
where betrayal and death
constantly threaten your love and peace.

Gathering Around the Cross

After the invitation, spend some time in reflection as you sing or listen to the music. This is a space to bring forward grief or heavy heartedness, and to reflect on the question: *“What sorrows, mine or the world’s, do I bring into this space?”*

As led by the spirit, you may come forward and select a stone from the bowl. As you feel the texture and weight of the stone in your hand and the warmth of your own hand warming the stone, allow the stone to represent those sorrows or burdens which weigh upon your heart. When you are ready, place the stone in the sand cross at the center, knowing that Jesus takes our burdens with him to the cross. During this time, hymns and chants will be sung.

ELW 345: Jesus, I Will Ponder Now



1 Je - sus, I will pon - der now on your ho - ly pas - sion;
 2 Make me see your great dis - tress, an - guish, and af - flic - tion,
 3 Yet, O Lord, not thus a - lone make me see your pas - sion,
 4 Let me view your pain and loss with re - pen - tant griev - ing,



let your Spir - it now en - dow me for med - i - ta - tion.
 bonds and blows and wretch - ed - ness and your cru - ci - fix - ion;
 but its cause to me make known and its ter - mi - na - tion.
 nor pre - pare a - gain your cross by un - ho - ly liv - ing.



Grant that I in love and faith may the im - age cher - ish
 make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails, did wound you,
 For I al - so and my sin wrought your deep af - flic - tion;
 May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Sav - ior,



of your suf - f'ring, pain, and death, that I may not per - ish.
 how you died for those, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.
 this the shame - ful cause has been of your cru - ci - fix - ion.
 that I may in heav'n a - bove sing your praise for - ev - er.

“Crucem Tuam”

Cru - cem tu - am a - do - ra - mus Do - mi - ne,
re - su - rec - ti - o - nem tu - am lau - da - mus Do - mi - ne.
Lau - da - mus et glo - ri - fi - ca - mus.
Re - su - rec - ti - o - nem tu - am lau - da - mus Do - mi - ne.

(O Lord, your cross, we adore and glorify, for your holy resurrection,
we praise you Lord of life.)

“Behold the Wood of the Cross”

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

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

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.

“Were You There”

- 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?*
- 2 *Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? etc.*
- 3 *Were you there when they pierced him in the side? etc.*
- 4 *Were you there when the sun refused to shine? etc.*
- 5 *Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Etc.*

The Passion of Jesus

Reading: "Good Friday," by M Jade Kaiser

"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." -

Luke 23:26-37

First candle is extinguished

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."- Luke 23:39-43

Second candle is extinguished

"Woman, here is your son.... Here is your mother" -John 19:26-27

Third candle is extinguished

Poem: "What Abides," by Jan Richardson

Ah, Holy Jesus- CLC Handbell Ensemble

"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"- Mark 15:33-39

Fourth candle is extinguished

"It is finished" - John 19:28-30

Fifth candle is extinguished

Poem: "Can You Drink the Cup?" by Scott Surrency

Sixth candle is extinguished

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"- Luke 23:44-49

Seventh candle is extinguished

Christ candle is extinguished

“Resurrection does not mean that Christ is gloriously transported from earth into heaven. He must go to the cross. And precisely there, where the cross stands, the resurrection is near. Precisely here, where all lose faith in God, where all despair about the power of God, God is fully there, and Christ is alive and near.”

The tomb is closed

Depart in Silence

Acknowledgements

Portions of the liturgy are from Enfleshed liturgies. The Act of Confession is adapted from a prayer by Nathan Nettleton, Laughingbird Liturgical Resources ©1996. Hymns reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-709536

Participating in Worship

Daniel Alley, Minister of Liturgy & Music (Christ Lutheran Church)
Christ Lutheran Church Handbell Ensemble, Dir. Elsa-Jennie Bliss
Pastor Clare McElaney (Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church)
Pastor Jill Disbro (Hope Lutheran Church)
Pastor Sara Schultz (Hope Lutheran Church)