

Welcome to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lancaster



Good Friday Worship

Rev. Jamie Retallack
716-848-9683

Good Friday
April 3, 2026

+ THE TENEBRAE OFFICE +
(Congregation may remain seated)

Reading

Isaiah 53:2-5

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.

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.

Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.

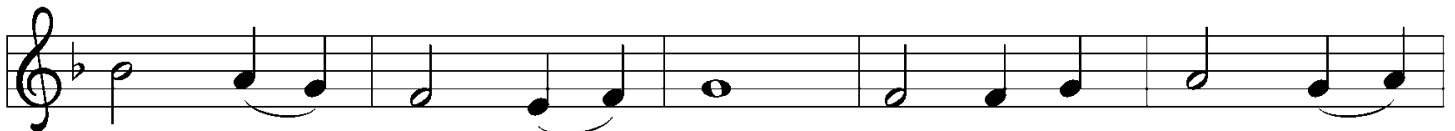
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.

This is the Word of the Lord.

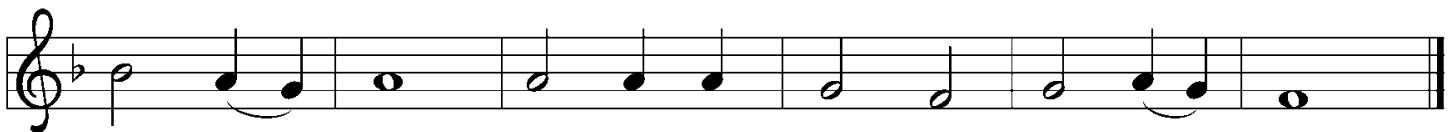
Thanks be to God.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a



prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
 death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and
 pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,



count but loss and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: HAMBURG, Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

The Confession and Forgiveness

I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins. Amen

I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins. Amen.

Please remain seated for a period of silent meditation

Behold the life-giving Cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world. **Oh, come, let us worship him.**

O God our Father, by the cross of your Son you reconciled the world to yourself, enabling us to live in love and harmony. We thank and praise you for the forgiveness of sins and the precious gift of peace. Help us to forgive each other and to establish justice and concord throughout the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm 4
Read responsively

Answer me when I call, O God of my right!
You gave me room when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?
How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?

But know that the Lord has set apart the faithful for himself;
the Lord hears when I call to him.

When you are disturbed, do not sin;
ponder it on your beds, and be silent.

Offer right sacrifices,
and put your trust in the Lord.

There are many who say,
"O that we might see some good!"
Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord!"

You have put gladness in my heart
more than when their grain and wine abound.

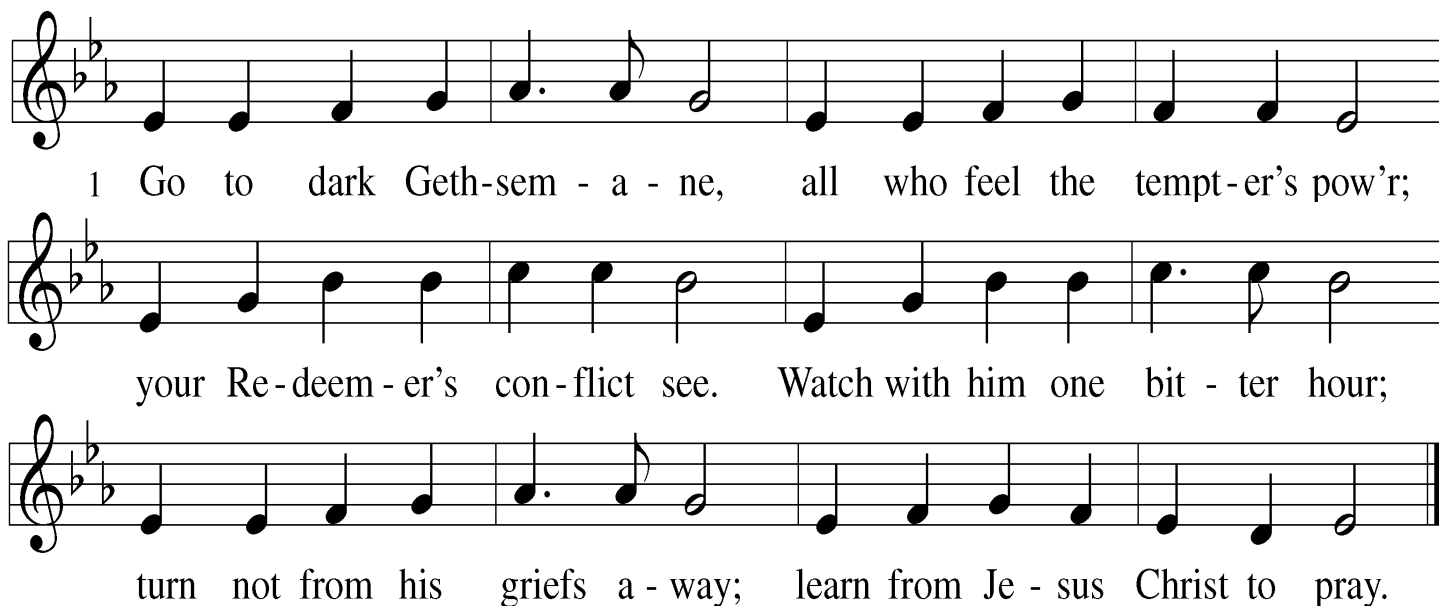
I will both lie down and sleep in peace;
for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.

Throughout Christian history, references to “the Jews” in scripture—particularly in John and Acts—have been used to perpetuate negative stereotypes and falsely assign blame for the death of Jesus. These references gloss over significant distinctions among religious leaders, such as Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees, and obscure the fact that Jesus and his disciples were themselves Jews. As Christians, we confess and lament the history of anti-Judaism associated with these texts. We renounce the evils of violence and discrimination against Jewish people. We strive for mutual understanding, respect, and partnership with Jewish neighbors and commit ourselves to the work of reconciliation among people of all faiths.

Jesus’ Betrayal and Arrest
John 18:1b-11

[Jesus] went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.” This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

** The first candle is extinguished **

Go to Dark Gethsemane (vs 1)

1 Go to dark Geth-sem - a - ne, all who feel the tempt-er's pow'r;
your Re-deem - er's con-flict see. Watch with him one bit - ter hour;
turn not from his griefs a - way; learn from Je - sus Christ to pray.

Peter's Denial
John 18:12-27

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

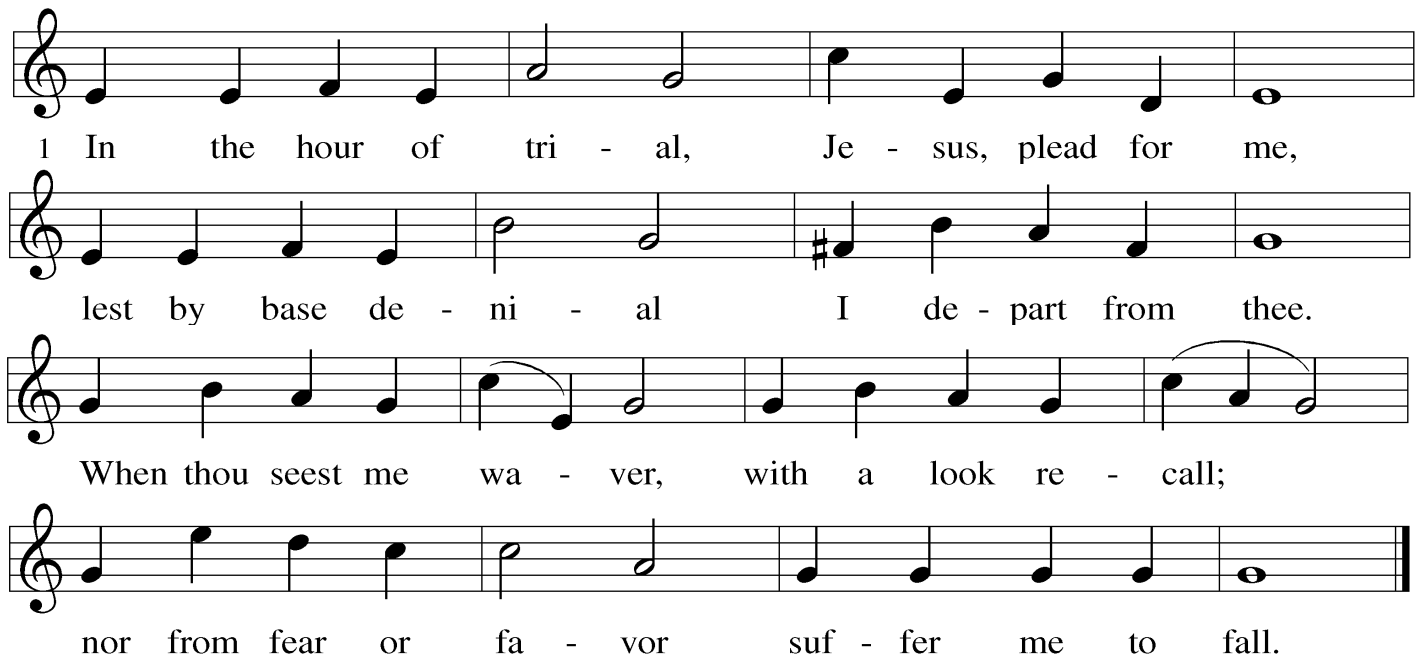
Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caia-phas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

** The second candle is extinguished **

In the Hour of Trial (vs 1)


1 In the hour of tri - al, Je - sus, plead for me,
lest by base de - ni - al I de - part from thee.
When thou seest me wa - ver, with a look re - call;
nor from fear or fa - vor suf - fer me to fall.

Jesus Before Pilate
John 18:28-40

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?"

Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

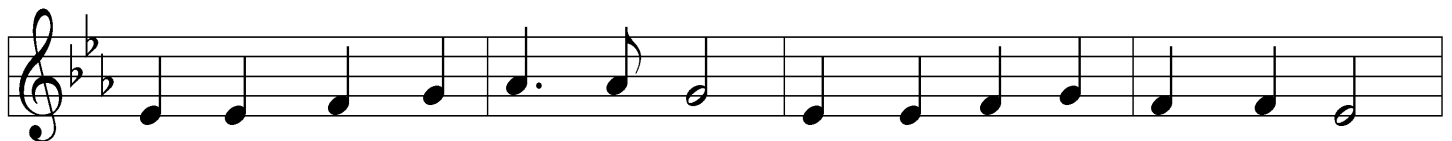
After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

** The third candle is extinguished **

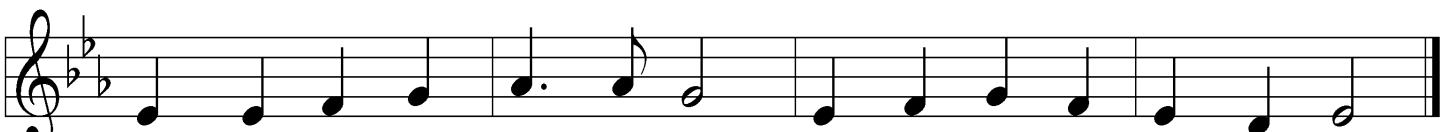
Hymn

LBW 109

Go to Dark Gethsemane (vs 2)



oh, the worm-wood and the gall! Oh, the pangs his soul sus-tained!



Shun not suf-f'ring, shame, or loss; learn from him to bear the cross.

Pilate Condemns Him

John 19:1-7

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

** The fourth candle is extinguished **

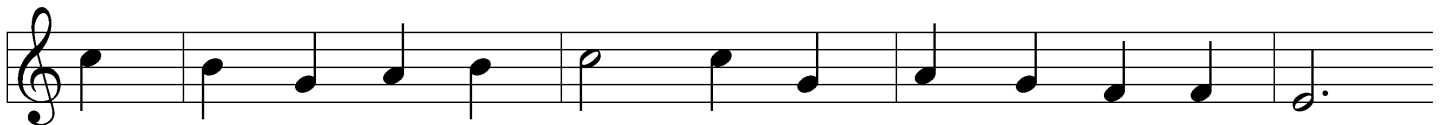
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
(vs 1 & 4)



1 O sa - cred head, now wound - ed, with grief and shame weighed down,
2 How art thou pale with an - guish, with sore a - buse and scorn;
3 What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank thee, dear - est friend,
4 Lord, be my con - so - la - tion; shield me when I must die;



now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, thine on - ly crown;
how does that vis - age lan - guish which once was bright as morn!
for this thy dy - ing sor - row, thy pit - y with - out end?
re - mind me of thy pas - sion when my last hour draws nigh.



O sa - cred head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was thine!
Thy grief and bit - ter pas - sion were all for sin - ners' gain;
Oh, make me thine for - ev - er, and should I faint - ing be,
These eyes, new faith re - ceiv - ing, from thee shall nev - er move;



Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call thee mine.
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but thine the dead - ly pain.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to thee.
for he who dies be - liev - ing dies safe - ly in thy love.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, based on Arnulf of Louvain, c. 1250; tr. composite

Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, German melody, c. 1500, adapt. Hans L. Hassler, 1564–1612

Jesus is Sentenced to Death John 19: 8-16

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.”

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge’s bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but the emperor.” Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

** The fifth candle is extinguished **

Jesus, I Will Ponder
(vs 1 and 3)



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.

Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626–1681; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.

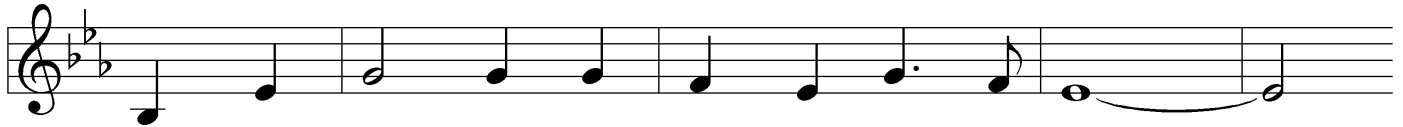
Music: JESU KREUZ, LEIDEN UND PEIN, Melchior Vulpius, 1570–1615

Jesus is Crucified
John 19: 16b-22

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

** The sixth candle is extinguished **

Were You There
(vs 1-3)



1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

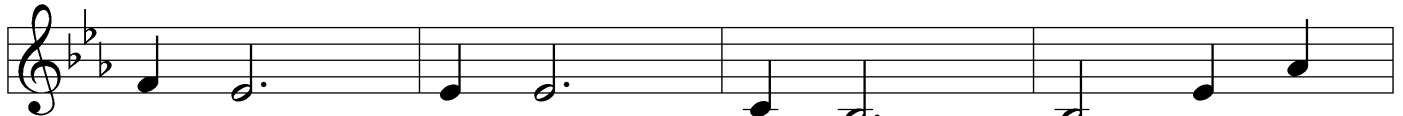


Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Refrain



Oh! some-times it caus - es me to



trem-ble, trem - ble, trem - ble. Were you



there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
there when they nailed him to the tree?
there when they pierced him in the side?

Jesus Gives Up His Spirit John 19: 23-30

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

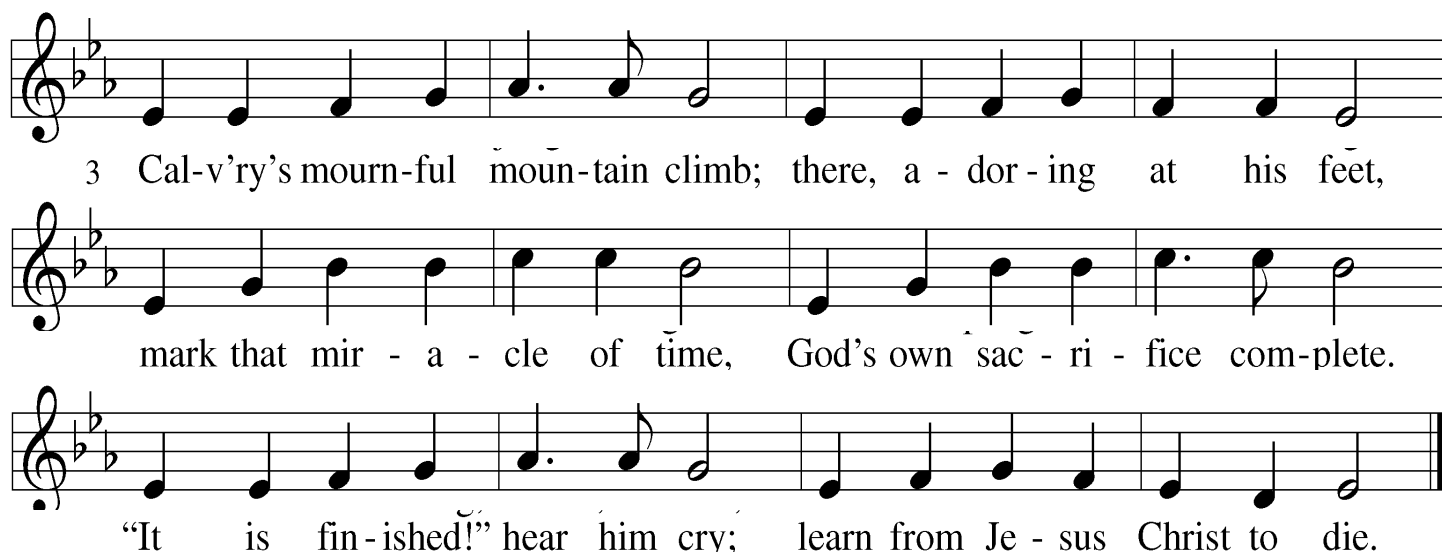
After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

** The seventh candle is extinguished **

Hymn

LBW 109

Go to Dark Gethsemane (vs 3)



3 Cal-v'ry's mourn-ful moun-tain climb; there, a - dor - ing at his feet,
mark that mir - a - cle of time, God's own sac - ri - fice com-plete.
"It is fin-ished!" hear him cry; learn from Je - sus Christ to die.

Meditation
Pastor Jamie Retallack

Prayer before the Cross

God of mystery and wonder, because we know the ending of the story, it's tempting for us to ignore the darkness of this day.

It's tempting for us to go about our business as usual. It's tempting for us to move too quickly to the dawn of light on Easter morning.

But give us courage and strength on this day to live for a while in the darkness,

to set aside comfort and pleasure, to feel the darkness in which so many of your children dwell, the darkness into which your son Jesus entered.

As we reflect on the frailty of Christ, remind us of the frailty of all life.

As we cringe at the suffering of Christ, make us mindful of suffering throughout the world.

As we witness the death of Christ, bring to our awareness all those who die in pain,

the pain of hunger, the indifference of those who pass by, the violence of streets where life is cheap, the innocent struck down by war or acts of terror.

Gracious God, deep in the human heart is an unquenchable trust that life does not end with death.

Like a seed which is buried in order to bring forth life, Christ goes to the tomb to usher in new life.

We trust that we too will be raised to new life, in this world, here and now, and in the mystery of what lies beyond death itself.

We trust that the whole world will be born anew, that your kingdom is coming as a new heaven and a new earth. We watch, Lord, and we wait. We watch and we wait.

The Christ-candle is removed and carried out

**THE CHURCH IS PLUNGED
INTO DARKNESS AND SILENCE.**

*The Tolling of the Steeple Bell:
33 times in remembrance and honor of Jesus'
33 years of life and ministry on this earth*

(A time of Silent Meditation and Prayer)

*The Light of the Christ-Candle silently returns,
the first faint ray of the unthinkable miracle to come*

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 trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

*The lights come up in the church
when the Christ Candle is set in place.*

We adore you, O Christ and we bless you.
By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

*When you "depart in peace," please do so in SILENCE,
without vocal greeting or words to anyone
in order to maintain the mood of Tenebrae*