
BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

April 3rd, 2026

12:00 p.m.



Where is the good news on Good Friday? We come looking for it and we find it not in triumph, but in restraint. Jesus kisses the one who betrays him. When swords are drawn, he says no more and then heals the wound. From the cross, his breath runs out not in curses but in forgiveness. This is the shape of God's power: not force, not retaliation, not self-preservation, but love held open even as everything closes in. The Passion narrative strips every pretense away. In Jesus, we see who God is. In those around him the betrayals, the mockery, the mob, the violence we see who we are. And the distance between those two things is the whole story. We are not here to explain it. We are here to stand inside it.

~ All gather in silence. ~

WELCOME

CANDLE LIGHTING

During the candle lighting liturgy (Adapted from Genesis 1 and John 1) four candles are lit from the Christ candle.

In the beginning, darkness covered the face of the deep. then God said,
"Let there be light."

And there was light. and every day since, the light has come and gone.

The sun has risen and set.

The moon has waxed and waned.

The light is still with us.

In the beginning was the Word, which brought all things into being.

What has come into being through him is life,

the light of all people.

The light shined in the darkness,

and the darkness did not overtake it.

When God made the light, when the light of all people came into the world,
God did not send away the dark.

The darkness remains.

God created the night for dreams and clarity,

an exhaling of the light.

Let us enter this holy darkness to bear witness to the light of the world
who was extinguished by violence.

Let us worship our incarnate God.

FIRST READING: ARREST

Luke 22:47-53

The holy gospel according to Luke

This is the story of grace flowing down. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸ but Jesus said to him, "Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" ⁴⁹ When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" ⁵⁰ Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. ⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as though I were a rebel? ⁵³ When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour and the power of darkness!"

A candle is extinguished. Silence for prayer and reflection follows the reading.

Reflection | VISIO DIVINA

Rev. Christina Kadelbach

The presiding minister leads the congregation through a time of contemplation.

A minute of silence follows each prompt.

Go to Dark Gethsemane



1 Go to dark Geth-sem - a - ne, all who feel the tempt - er's pow'r;
2 Fol - low to the judg - ment hall, view the Lord of life ar - rained;
3 Cal - v'ry's mourn - ful moun - tain climb; there, a - dor - ing at his feet,
4 Ear - ly has - ten to the tomb where they laid his breath - less clay;



your Re - deem - er's con - flict see. Watch with him one bit - ter hour;
oh, the worm - wood and the gall! Oh, the pangs his soul sus - tained!
mark that mir - a - cle of time, God's own sac - ri - fice com - plete.
all is sol - i - tude and gloom. Who has tak - en him a - way?



turn not from his griefs a - way; learn from Je - sus Christ to pray.
Shun not suf - f'ring, shame, or loss; learn from him to bear the cross.
"It is fin - ished!" hear him cry; learn from Je - sus Christ to die.
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes. Sav - ior, teach us so to rise.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854
Music: GETHSEMANE, Richard Redhead, 1820–1901

SECOND READING: SENTENCING

Luke 23:13-25

¹³ Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people ¹⁴ and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people, and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. ¹⁵ Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. ¹⁶ I will therefore have him flogged and release him."

¹⁸ Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" ¹⁹ (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city and for murder.) ²⁰ Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, ²¹ but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" ²² A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." ²³ But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

A candle is extinguished. Silence for prayer and reflection follows the reading.

CALL TO CONFESSION

The presiding minister leads the call to confession.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we can easily see ourselves in any number of the people surrounding Jesus in his final days. We are Judas, betraying what we hold most dear for status, wealth, and security. We are the soldiers, using our power to maintain the status quo which serves us. We are the disciples, brandishing our weapons to fight violence with violence, and we are the high priest's servant, victims of a world hell-bent on winning.

Prince of Peace, forgive us.

We are Herod, finding our entertainment at the expense of other people's dignity.
 We are Pilate, excusing ourselves from the blame that is rightfully ours.
 We are the crowd, foaming at the mouth and demanding blood,
 and we are Barabbas, our lives spared while others are crucified.

Prince of Peace, forgive us.

Forgive us, we pray, for the parts we have played. Set us free from the sin that chokes the world, threatening to extinguish all that is good and beautiful. Break the cycles of violence, step into the machinery of a world fueled by division and disrupt us.

Forgive us, Prince of Peace. Kyrie eleison. Have mercy on us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Family of faith, the impossibly good news is that we are forgiven. No matter what we have or haven't done, our God is always waiting with open arms to receive us.

Ah, Holy Jesus



1 Ah, ho - ly Je - sus, how hast thou of - fend - ed that we to
 2 Who was the guilt - y? Who brought this up - on thee? A - las, my
 3 Lo, the Good Shep - herd for the sheep is of - fered; the slave hath
 4 For me, kind Je - sus, was thine in - car - na - tion, thy mor - tal
 5 There - fore, kind Je - sus, since I can - not pay thee, I do a -



judge thee have in hate pre - tend - ed? By foes de - rid - ed,
 trea - son, Je - sus, hath un - done thee. 'Twas I, Lord Je - sus,
 sin - ned, and the Son hath suf - fered; for our a - tone - ment,
 sor - row, and thy life's ob - la - tion; thy death of an - guish
 dore thee, and will ev - er pray thee; think on thy pit - y



by thine own re - ject - ed, O most af - flict - ed.
 I it was de - nied thee; I cru - ci - fied thee.
 while we noth - ing heed - ed, God in - ter - ced - ed.
 and thy bit - ter pas - sion, for my sal - va - tion.
 and thy love un - swerv - ing, not my de - serv - ing.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Robert Bridges, 1844–1930, alt.
 Music: HERZLIEBSTER JESU, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

THIRD READING: CRUCIFIXION

Luke 23:33-38

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ [[Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

A candle is extinguished. Silence for prayer and reflection follows the reading.

REFLECTION ON THE CROSS | PRAYER STATIONS

The presiding minster offers instruction for the prayer stations.

A time of silence follows the prayer stations.

POETRY READING

“Love & Love & Love Again”

Poem by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

If you back a cat into a corner
she'll arch her back,
show her teeth,
hiss in your direction.
If you back a human into a corner,
we'll raise our fists,
raise our voices,
throw words of hate in your direction.
But when we backed Jesus into a corner,
he said, Forgive them, for they know not what they do.
He turned and looked at Peter, love in his eyes.
He offered grace to the criminal hanging beside him.
When we backed Jesus into a corner,
he loved and loved and loved again.

In this war-torn world,
we could do the same.
We could ground the bomber planes,
empty the gun cartridges,
unclench our fists, soften our jaws.
They say it can't be done,
but don't believe them.
In this war-torn world, we could try—
love and love and love again.

A candle is extinguished. Silence for prayer and reflection follows the reading.

PROCESSION OF THE CROSS

A large cross is carried in procession through the church and placed before the assembly. The assembly stands and faces the cross as it is brought forward.

The following dialogue is spoken as the procession begins.

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

Oh, come, let us worship him.

The dialogue is spoken a third time at the midpoint of the procession.

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

Oh, come, let us worship him.

The dialogue is spoken a third time at the end of the procession.

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

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Were You There



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?
4 Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?



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?
Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?



Oh, some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble.



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?
Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Text: African American spiritual
Music: WERE YOU THERE, African American spiritual

FOURTH READING: DEATH

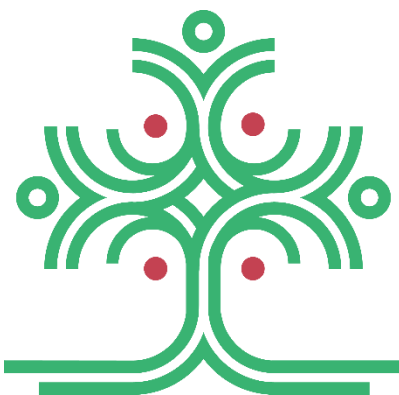
Luke 23:44-46

⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

The Christ candle is extinguished. Silence for prayer and reflection follows the reading.

Depart in silence.

*The service continues with the Easter Sunday worship April 5th at 9:00 a.m.
Remain and pray as long as you wish.*



Bethesda Lutheran Church blcmalmo.org

Office: 320-684-2123 (1-877-684-2123)

Fax: 320-684-2836

E-mail address: blcmalmo@gmail.com

A member congregation of the NE MN Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Ministers: All People of Bethesda Lutheran Church

Pastoral Ministries: Reverend Christina Kadelbach

blc.reverend@gmail.com 218-213-6731

Church Secretary: Mary Braun

Music & Sound Technician: Jim Christensen

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, Kathy Berland RN ANP

Prayer Chain Contacts: Char Berg 320-684-2102 or

Darlene Christensen 320-279-0097

Ushers: David and Libby Brown **Lector:** Mary Vukelich

Serving on April 5th Resurrection of Our Lord: Easter Day with Holy Communion

Ushers: Mark & Mary Vukelich

Greeters: Dianne and Del Jones

Lector: London Feland

Hospitality: Rocky and Cindy VanVickle

April Altar Care: Linda Southworth and Carol Pantsari