

AS WE GATHER:

TENEBRAE SERVICE

To impress on the minds and hearts of believers the awful consequence of sin and the magnitude of the Savior's sacrifice, the ancient Church held a special service on the last day of Holy Week, called "tenebrae" (a Latin word meaning darkness or shadows).

The Tenebrae service is based on the ancient order dating back to the seventh or eighth century A.D. It comes from the ceremony of extinguishing the candles in the church in succession. The extinguishing of the candles is to remind us of the events that led to the darkness which covered the earth when Jesus hung on the cross.

Tonight's service is divided into seven parts, each highlighting our Lord's being forsaken. The words for tonight's service come from the Psalms, Isaiah, the Gospel of Matthew, and ancient liturgical texts.

At the conclusion of the service, the Christ candle is removed from its place and concealed for a few moments. This time of silence is at last broken by the "strepitus" - a harsh noise. With the noise, the candle is returned to symbolize the victory of Christ even in the midst of death and darkness. The forces of hell do not and shall not prevail against the Light of Christ. His resurrection is sure. He lives eternally, and we, too, shall live!

NOTE: Good Friday and its worship services are reflective and somber occasions. It is a time for quiet reflection on the sacrifice of our Savior. Please respect that quiet time by refraining from conversation before and after the service. In case your child is having trouble staying quiet during the service, you can take them downstairs to our Fellowship Hall. Speakers will be turned on in Fellowship Hall so you are able to follow along with the worship service. Thank you!

Special Note:
The offering will be collected at the exits as you leave tonight's service.

“The Liturgy of the Cross”

TENEBRAE
A Service of Darkness

Good Friday, April 3, 2026; 7:00 p.m.

Ringling of the Bells

We're So Glad God Brought You Here Tonight!

(The Pastors enter the Church in silence)

Opening Hymn: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” *LSB, hymn #426*

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

PART 1: FORSAKEN BY THE BETRAYER **RESPONSIVE READING**

(Psalm 55)

- P: Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea; Hear me and answer me.
C: **My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught at the voice of the enemy, at the stares of the wicked; for they bring down suffering upon me and revile me in their anger.**
- P: My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death assail me.
C: **Fear and trembling have beset me; horror has overwhelmed me.**
- P: I said, “Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest – I would flee far away and stay in the desert;
C: **I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm.”**
- P: If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him.
C: **But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God.**
- P: Let death take my enemies by surprise; let them go down alive to the grave, for evil finds lodging among them.
C: **But I call to God, and the Lord saves me.**
- P: Evening, morning, and noon I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.
C: **Cast Your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall. But You, O God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of corruption; bloodthirsty and deceitful men will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in You.**

Passion Reading: Matthew 26:17-25

Let us reflect on how our Lord was forsaken. So many turned away from Him. He was first forsaken by His betrayer – Judas Iscariot. In what ways have you forsaken Jesus? Have you – in your thoughts, words, and actions – betrayed your Lord and His words and actions?

- P: Let us pray, . . . Lord, You were forsaken by one of Your own disciples, who betrayed You into the hands of sinful men. Never forsake us, O Lord, and send Your Spirit that we, who have betrayed You by our sins, may yet hold fast to You, so that we may not forsake You.
C: **Amen.**

(The first candles are extinguished.)

Special Music: “Jesus, In Thy Dying Woes”

Liz Deck, Solo

PART 2: FORSAKEN BY HIS DISCIPLES

RESPONSIVE READING

(Psalm 31)

P: In You, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in Your righteousness.

C: Turn Your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me.

P: Since You are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of Your name lead and guide me.

C: Free me from the trap that is set for me, for You are my refuge.

P: Into Your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O Lord, the God of truth.

C: I hate those who cling to worthless idols; I trust in the Lord.

P: I will be glad and rejoice in Your love, for You saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul.

C: You have not handed me over to the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place.

P: Be merciful to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief.

C: My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak.

P: Because of all my enemies, I am the utter contempt of my neighbors; I am a dread to my friends – those who see me on the street flee from me.

C: I am forgotten by them as though I were dead; I have become like broken pottery.

P: For I hear the slander of many; there is terror on every side; they conspire against me and plot to take my life.

C: But I trust in You, O Lord; I say, “You are my God.”

P: My times are in Your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me.

C: Let Your face shine on Your servant; save me in Your unflinching love.

P: Let me not be put to shame, O Lord, for I have cried out to You; but let the wicked be put to shame and lie silent in the grave.

C: Let their lying lips be silenced, for with pride and contempt they speak arrogantly against the righteous.

P: How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, which You bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in You.

C: In the shelter of Your presence You hide them from the intrigues of men; in Your dwelling You keep them safe from accusing tongues.

P: Praise be to the Lord, for He showed His wonderful love to me when I was in a besieged city.

C: In my alarm I said, “I am cut off from Your sight!” Yet You heard my cry for mercy when I called to You for help.

P: Love the Lord, all His saints! The Lord preserves the faithful, but the proud He pays back in full.

C: Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.

Passion Reading: Matthew 26:31-56

Reflect upon our Lord as He was forsaken by His disciples. As He faced the cross, He was alone, denied by His disciples, betrayed by a friend, and arrested. All this He endured willingly so that we would not be denied by God the Father – so that we would be welcomed in His presence.

P: Let us pray, . . . Lord, You were forsaken by Your disciples who deserted You and fled. When we are tempted to desert You, send Your Spirit-given gift of faith, that we may hold fast to You, and never forsake You.

C: Amen.

(The second candles are extinguished.)

Hymn: “Go to Dark Gethsemane”

LSB, hymn #436

Go to dark Gethsemane, All who feel the tempter’s pow’r;
Your Redeemer’s conflict see, Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away; Learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment hall, View the Lord of life arraigned;
Oh, the wormwood and the gall! Oh, the pangs His soul sustained!
Shun not suff’ring, shame, or loss; Learn from Him to bear the cross.

Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb; There, adoring at His feet,
Mark that miracle of time, God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear Him cry; Learn from Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb Where they laid His breathless clay;
All is solitude and gloom. Who has taken Him away?
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes. Savior, teach us so to rise.

PART 3: FORSAKEN BY HIS OWN PEOPLE
RESPONSIVE READING

(Psalm 4)

- P: Answer me when I call to You, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.
- C: **How long, O men, will you turn My glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?**
- P: Know that the Lord has set apart the godly for Himself; the Lord will hear when I call to Him.
- C: **In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.**
- P: Offer right sacrifices and trust in the Lord.
- C: **Many are asking, "Who can show us any good?" Let the light of Your face shine upon us, O Lord.**
- P: You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound.
- C: **I will lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.**

Passion Reading: Matthew 26:57-66

Reflect upon the fact that Jesus' own people had forsaken Him. He stood before His accusers. They falsely accused Him and found Him worthy of death. They sought to extinguish the light of the world.

- P: Let us pray, . . . Lord, Your own people declared You guilty of blasphemy and sought Your death. When we are tempted to take Your name in vain, send us Your Spirit, that we may resist temptation, and ever hold fast to You.
- C: **Amen.**

(The third candles are extinguished.)

Special Music: "Stricken, Smitten and Afflicted"

Handbell Choir

PART 4: FORSAKEN BY PETER
RESPONSIVE READING

(The Reproaches)

- P: Thus says the Lord: What have I done to you, O My people, and wherein have I offended you? Answer Me. For I have raised you up out of the prison house of sin and death, and you have delivered up your Redeemer to be scourged. For I have redeemed you from the house of bondage, and you have nailed your Savior to the cross. O My people.
- C: **Holy Lord God, holy and mighty God, holy and most merciful Redeemer; God eternal, leave us not to bitter death. O Lord, have mercy.**
- P: Thus says the Lord: What have I done to you, O my people, and wherein have I offended you? Answer Me. For I have conquered all your foes, and you have given Me over and delivered Me to those who persecute Me. For I have fed you with My Word and refreshed you with living water, and you have given Me gall and vinegar to drink. O My people.
- C: **Holy Lord God, holy and mighty God, holy and most merciful Redeemer; God eternal, allow us not to lose hope in the face of death and hell. O Lord, have mercy.**
- P: Thus says the Lord: What have I done to you, O My people, and wherein have I offended you? Answer Me. What more could I have done for My vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? My people, is this how you thank your God? O My people.
- C: **Holy God, holy and mighty God, holy and most merciful Redeemer; God eternal, keep us steadfast in the true faith. O Lord, have mercy.**

Passion Reading: Matthew 26:69-75

Reflect upon Peter's denial for a moment. How many times are we just like Peter, denying our Lord when pressed, cursing to prove that we do not know the man? At that moment our Lord looks at us in love and compassion and He forgives us.

- P: Let us pray, . . . Lord, You were denied even by Your own faithful disciple, Peter. When we deny You by our sinful actions, restore us in Your forgiving love, and never forsake us who so often forsake You.
- C: **Amen.**

(The fourth candles are extinguished.)

Hymn: “In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

LSB, hymn #427

In the cross of Christ I glory, Tow’ring o’er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o’ertake me, Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me; Lo, it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming Adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure, Joys that through all time abide.

PART 5: FORSAKEN BY PILATE
RESPONSIVE READING

(Psalm 17)

P: Hear, O Lord, my righteous plea; listen to my cry. Give ear to my prayer – it does not rise from deceitful lips.

C: **May my vindication come from You; may Your eyes see what is right.**

P: Though You probe my heart and examine me at night, though You test me, You will find nothing; I have resolved that my mouth will not sin.

C: **As for the deeds of men – by the word of Your lips I have kept myself from the ways of the violent.**

P: My steps have held to Your paths; my feet have not slipped.

C: **I call on You, O God, for You will answer me; give ear to me and hear my prayer.**

P: Show the wonder of Your great love, You who save by Your right hand those who take refuge in You from their foes.

C: **Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me in the shadow of Your wings**

P: from the wicked who assail me, from my mortal enemies who surround me.

C: **They close up their callous hearts, and their mouths speak with arrogance.**

P: They have tracked me down, they now surround me, with eyes alert, to throw me to the ground.

C: **They are like a lion hungry for prey, like a great lion crouching in cover.**

P: Rise up, O Lord, confront them, bring them down; rescue me from the wicked by Your sword.

C: **O Lord, by Your hand save me from such men, from men of this world whose reward is in this life.**

P: You still the hunger of those You cherish;

C: **their sons have plenty, and they store up wealth for their children.**

P: And I, in righteousness, I will see Your face;

C: **when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing Your likeness.**

Passion Reading: Matthew 27:11-26

Reflect upon Jesus as he is forsaken by the governing officials. Think of the injustices done to your Lord by the rulers. Realize that – although Christ was without sin – all of your sins, and the sins of all people, were charged to Him.

P: Let us pray, . . . Lord, even the secular power of this world recognized Your innocence, but forsook You to death anyway. May we ever hold fast to You, Lord, even in the face of pressure from within and without, that we may not desert You.

C: **Amen.**

(The fifth candles are extinguished.)

Special Music: “What Wondrous Love Is This”

Handbell Choir

PART 6: FORSAKEN AT THE CROSS
RESPONSIVE READING

(Isaiah 53)

P: He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.

C: **Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him and afflicted.**

P: But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.

C: **We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

P: He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth.

C: **By oppression and judgment He was taken away. He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people He was stricken.**

P: He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death, though He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.

C: **After the suffering of His soul, He will see the light of life and be satisfied.**

P: By His knowledge my righteous Servant will justify many and He will bear their iniquities.

C: **Therefore I will give Him a portion among the great, because He poured out His life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

Passion Reading: Matthew 27:27-44

Reflect upon the insults and abuses that your Lord endured for you. He carried the burden of the cross – it pressed down hard upon His bloody, beaten shoulders. Realize that your sins are involved in the load.

P: Let us pray, . . . Lord Jesus, on the cross You were taunted by those who crucified You, by those who stood by and watched, and by those crucified with You. The world still taunts You and forsakes You; by Your Spirit, let us look upon Your cross and find strength to witness boldly in Your name.

C: **Amen.**

(The sixth candles are extinguished)

Hymn: “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted”

LSB, hymn #451

Stricken, smitten, and afflicted,	See Him dying on the tree!
'Tis the Christ, by man rejected;	Yes, my soul, 'tis He, 'tis He!
'Tis the long-expected Prophet,	David's Son, yet David's Lord;
Proofs I see sufficient of it:	'Tis the true and faithful Word.

Tell me, ye who hear Him groaning,	Was there ever grief like His?
Friends through fear His cause disowning,	Foes insulting His distress;
Many hands were raised to wound Him,	None would intervene to save;
But the deepest stroke that pierced Him	Was the stroke that justice gave.

Ye who think of sin but lightly	Nor suppose the evil great
Here may view its nature rightly,	Here its guilt may estimate.
Mark the sacrifice appointed,	See who bears the awful load;
'Tis the Word, the Lord's anointed,	Son of Man and Son of God.

Here we have a firm foundation,	Here the refuge of the lost:
Christ, the Rock of our salvation,	Is the name of which we boast;
Lamb of God, for sinners wounded,	Sacrifice to cancel guilt!
None shall ever be confounded	Who on Him their hope have built.

PART 7: FORSAKEN BY GOD
RESPONSIVE READING

(Psalm 22 and 69)

P: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

C: **Why are You so far from saving Me, so far from the Words of My groaning?**

P: O My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer,

C: **by night, and am not silent.**

P: Yet You are enthroned as the Holy One;

C: **You are the praise of Israel.**

P: Save Me, O God, for the waters have come up to My neck.

C: **I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold.**

P: I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me.

C: **I am worn out calling for help; My throat is parched.**

P: My eyes fail, looking for My God.

C: **Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of My head;**

P: many are My enemies without cause, those who seek to destroy Me.

C: **I am forced to restore what I did not steal.**

P: You know My folly, O God;

C: **My guilt is not hidden from You.**

P: May those who hope in You not be disgraced because of me, O Lord, the Lord Almighty

C: **may those who seek You not be put to shame because of me, O God of Israel.**

P: Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.

C: **God did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.**

P: Christ became obedient for us unto death.

C: **Even the death of the cross!**

Passion Reading: Matthew 27:45-54

Reflect now with all your soul on what happened at Golgotha. Jesus takes all of your sins upon Himself – He is forsaken by God. Jesus pays your debt so that you can be right with God again.

P: Let us pray, . . . Almighty God, we ask You to look with mercy upon Your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and 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.**

(The seventh candles are extinguished.)

Litany: *As the Litany is read, the church is darkened, the Christ candle is extinguished and removed, signifying the apparent victory of the powers of darkness over our Lord.*

Darkness: *The “Strepitus” is heard reminding us of the earthquake when the Son of God died and indicating the closing of the tomb.*

Musical Reading: “Were You There?”

The Lord’s Prayer *(quietly)*

Return of the Light: *The Christ-candle re-enters. The Light was not put out, but was only in the grave for three days. We are left in darkness save for that One Light of Hope, the Light of the World who rose from the dead to live and reign assuring us of forgiveness and life. The Christ candle is returned.*

THE BENEDICTUS

(portion of Luke 1:68-79)

P: Praise be to the God of Israel! For He has turned to His people, saved them and set them free, and has raised up a deliverer of victorious power from the house of His servant David.

So He promised: age after age He proclaimed by the lips of His holy prophets, that He would deliver us from our enemies, out of the hands of all who hate us; that He would deal mercifully with our fathers, calling to mind His solemn covenant.

Such was the oath He swore to our father Abraham, to rescue us from enemy hands, and grant us, free from fear, to worship Him with a holy worship, with uprightness of heart, in His presence, our whole life long.

THE EXHORTATION

P: It is finished! You are redeemed - bought back from yourselves, from sin, from death, and from the devil. Go, my friends, my redeemed brothers and sisters. Go, and Live!

See You In Worship Easter Sunday!

(The congregation now leaves in silence, remembering the Light which lingers and casts hope through the gloom and solemnity of Good Friday, while anticipating the joys of Easter.)

(The Offering will be collected at the door as you leave the church.)

Holy Week Service Schedule	
SATURDAY - NO WORSHIP SERVICE - April 4th	
EASTER SUNDAY - JESUS IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD FOR US!!	
Sunday, April 5 th	6:00 a.m. Communion (Downtown Church Campus)
	9:00 a.m. Communion (Downtown Church Campus)
	11:00 a.m. Communion (Downtown Church Campus)

Serving In God's House Today

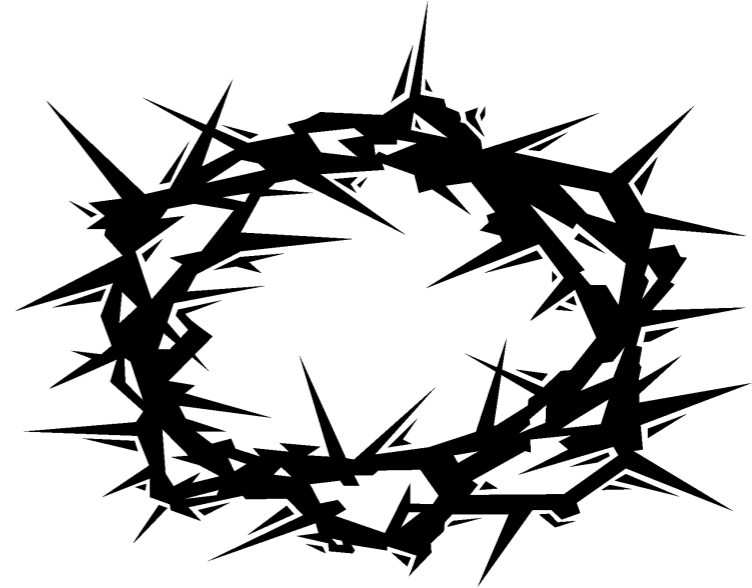
- Preacher:** Pastor Karl Koeppen
Liturgist: Pastor Roger Drinnon
Organist: Nadine Engel
Lay Minister: Rich Engel
Acolytes: Luke Stirnaman, Quinn Styck
Trustee: Rob Wood
Ushers: Bill Burger, Mike Callan, Hill Love, Brian Milton

Handbell Choir:

Matt Callan, Bill Dyche, Diane Dyche, Nancy Eden, Isaac Fabbro, Ruth Fabbro, Lynda Koeppen, Judy Kronos, Liz Lesch, Heidi Ostrowski

Hosanna Choir:

Natalie Cherry, Liz Deck, Katrina Drinnon, Brent Eden, Nancy Eden, Rick Einfeldt, Nadine Engel, Isaac Fabbro, Ruth Fabbro, Duane Ferree, Adele Hinze, Elayne James, Sandy James, Melody McDonald, Heidi Ostrowski, Sharla Ronchetto, Cindy Rubin, Eugene Wachholz,



ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rev. Karl J. Koeppen Senior Pastor	Rev. David Baker Missionary to Mongolia
Rev. Roger A. Drinnon Associate Pastor	Rev. Ross Engel Adopt-A-Chaplain
Mr. Brian Porter Principal	Church & School Office: 932-0312
Church Campus 348 E. Merchant, Kankakee	
School Campus and Church & School Office 1780 Career Center Road, Bourbonnais	
Church & School Website www.stpaulslutheran.net	

Visitors . . . Please help us by signing the guest book in the narthex. A visitor information packet is available near the guest register. Please introduce yourself to one of the pastors. We sincerely hope to have you worship with us again.

COPYRIGHT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

(PK)

Portions of this service copyrighted under: CREATIVE WORSHIP for the Lutheran Parish, Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968. **HYMNS:** LSB426 - When I Survey the Wondrous Cross: Text and Music: Public domain; LSB437 - Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed: Text (sts. 1-5) and Music: Public domain; LSB436 - Go to Dark Gethsemane: Text and Music: Public domain; LSB427 - In the Cross of Christ I Glory: Text (sts. 1-4) and Music: Public domain; LSB451 - Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted; Text and Music: Public domain;