

seeking:

*Why have you
forsaken me?*



Good Friday

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

April 3, 2026

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April 3, 2026 | 8:00 PM

Of all the questions in our series, this one remains the most unanswerable. Jesus' final lament gives voice to all those who have been forsaken – those who suffer injustice, those who are abandoned, those who are unjustly convicted. Instead of trying to answer this question with logic or theology, we are invited to live it, to sit with it. Sitting with this unsettling question unearths and unveils many more questions: What do we do in the face of unimaginable suffering? Can we sit in the silence of death and trust that God is there? Will we be in solidarity with those who suffer and grieve?

The congregation gathers in silence.

PRELUDE

Air from Suite in D, J. S. Bach

INVITATION

Pr. Allison Bengfort

The congregation may stand.

HYMN

Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth



1. Lord Christ, when first you came to earth, up-on a
2. O awe - some Love, which finds no room in life where
3. New ad - vent of the love of Christ, will we a -
4. O wound - ed hands of Je - sus, build in us your



cross they bound you, and mocked your sav - ing king - ship's worth by
sin de - nies__ you, and, doomed to death shall bring to doom the
gain re - fuse__ you, till in the night of hate and war we
new cre - a - tion; our pride is dust, our vaunt is stilled we

thorns with which they crowned you. And still our wrongs may
 pow'r that cru - ci - fied___ you, till not a stone is
 per - ish as we lose___ you? From an - cient doubts our
 wait your rev - e - la___ tion. O Love that tri - umphs
 fash - ion now new thorns to pierce that stead - y brow, and
 left___ on stone, and then the na - tions pride, o'er thrown, will
 minds re - lease to seek the king - dom of___ your peace, by
 o - ver loss, we bring our hearts be - fore___ your cross; come,
 robe of sor - row round___ you. _____
 ne - ver - more de - fy___ you! _____
 which a - lone we choose you. _____
 fin - ish your sal - va - tion. _____

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Loving God, as we remember the betrayal, arrest, abandonment, trials, mocking, and painful execution of Jesus, we are reminded that you are with us in every form of suffering. Be with all who continue to cry out, "Why have you forsaken me?" Be with us in the profound brokenness of this world, and remind us that death will never have the last word, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The congregation is seated.

FIRST READING: Prayer, Betrayal, and Arrest at Gethsemane Matthew 26:36-56

³⁶Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took with him Peter and

the two sons of Zebedee and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸Then he said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." ³⁹And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My God, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not what I want but what you want." ⁴⁰Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴²Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My God, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Now the hour is at hand, and the Chosen One is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Get up, let us be going. Look, my betrayer is at hand."

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹Suddenly one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the attendant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Do you think that I cannot appeal to God, who will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" ⁵⁵At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a rebel? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

The first candle is extinguished.

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" ⁶²The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" ⁶³But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶What do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷Then they spat in his face and struck him, and some slapped him, ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A female servant came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." ⁷¹When he went out to the porch, another female servant saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus the Nazarene." ⁷²Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." ⁷³After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. ⁷⁵Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

The second candle is extinguished.

Sung responsively with congregation singing vs. 1, 3 & 5, and soloist singing vs. 2 & 4.

THIRD READING: Trial before Pilate

Matthew 27:1-23

¹When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. ²They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

³When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. ⁴He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." ⁵Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. ⁶But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." ⁷After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. ⁸For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, ¹⁰and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

¹¹Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." ¹²But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. ¹³Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" ¹⁴But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

¹⁵Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. ¹⁶At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. ¹⁹While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for

today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.”²⁰Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed.²¹The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.”²²Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!”²³Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

The third candle is extinguished.

HYMN

Jesus, Remember Me | ELW 616

FOURTH READING: Jesus Is Mocked and Crucified

Matthew 27:27-44

²⁷The soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him.²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him,²⁹and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!”³⁰They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head.³¹After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

³²As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.³³And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),³⁴they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.³⁵And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;³⁶then they sat down there and kept watch over him.³⁷Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

³⁸Then two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.³⁹Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads⁴⁰and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”⁴¹In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him,



¹⁴I am poured out like water; all my bones are | out of joint;
my heart within my breast is | melting wax.

¹⁵**My strength is dried up like a potsherd;
my tongue sticks to the roof | of my mouth;
and you have laid me in the | dust of death.**

¹⁶Packs of dogs close me in, a band of evildoers | circles round me;
they pierce my hands | and my feet.

¹⁷**I can count | all my bones
while they stare at | me and gloat.**

¹⁸They divide my gar- | ments among them;
for my clothing, | they cast lots.

¹⁹**But you, O LORD, be not | far away;
O my help, hasten | to my aid.**

²⁰Deliver me | from the sword,
my life from the power | of the dog.

FIFTH READING: The Death of Jesus

Matthew 27:45-56

⁴⁵From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." ⁴⁸At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." ⁵⁰Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. ⁵¹At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵²The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. ⁵³After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake

and what took place, they were terrified and said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

⁵⁵Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. ⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

The fifth candle is extinguished.

Silence for contemplation.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SIXTH READING: The Burial of Jesus

Matthew 27:57-66

⁵⁷When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who also was himself a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶²The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³and said, “Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’

⁶⁴Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise, his disciples may go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead,’ and the last deception would be worse than the first.” ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.” ⁶⁶So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

The sixth candle is extinguished.

MEDITATION

Ave verum corpus, W. A. Mozart

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

The final candle is removed, signifying the death and burial of Christ.

SOLO

Were You There, African American spiritual

The congregation departs in silence. Our worship continues on Sunday at 9:30 am.

Serving Tonight in Worship

Liturgists: Libby & Joe Calhoun

Lighting: Steve Christiansen

Musicians: Pr. Allison Bengfort, violin

John Gladen, voice

Karl Gustafson, organ & piano

Jon Thorpe, cello

Altar Guild: Liz Hardy

Zoom Host: Marlan Bell

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