

Advent Lutheran Church (E.L.C.A.)

1416 Vernon Road. LaGrange, GA 30240. 706-882-0130.

April 3, 2026 – Good Friday

(Gathering music, church announcements, lighting of candles, and words of welcome may precede the following liturgy.)

Gathering

The congregation gathers in silence.

At the heart of the Good Friday liturgy is the passion according to John, which proclaims Jesus as a triumphant king who reigns from the cross. The ancient title for this day—the triumph of the cross—reminds us that the church gathers not to mourn this day but to celebrate Christ's life-giving passion and to find strength and hope in the tree of life. In the ancient bidding prayer we offer petitions for all the world for whom Christ died. Today's liturgy culminates in the Easter Vigil tomorrow evening.

Processional

The Lighting of the Seven Candles

(The Acolyte now proceeds to the altar to light the seven candles and Christ candle)

(The minister will proceed to the altar in silence)

Prayer of the Day

[P] Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, 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. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah:

¹³See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.

¹⁴Just as there were many who were astonished at him — so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals —

¹⁵so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

²For 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.

³He 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.

⁴Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.

⁵But 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.

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

⁸By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

⁹They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

¹¹Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹²Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (52:13—53:12)

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Hymn: “Go to Dark Gethsemane” #347 Red Book

John 18:1-19:16

¹ [Jesus] went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.² Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³ 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. ⁴ Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” ⁵ They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. ⁶ When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. ⁷ Again he asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” ⁸ Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these people go.” ⁹ This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.” ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

¹² So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. ¹³ First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. ¹⁴ Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

¹⁵ 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, ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” ¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." ²² 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?" ²³ Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

²⁵ 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." ²⁶ 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?" ²⁷ Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

²⁸ 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. ²⁹ So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." ³¹ 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." ³² (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

³³ Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" ³⁵ 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?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to 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." ³⁷ 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." ³⁸ 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. ³⁹ 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?" ⁴⁰ They shouted in reply, "Not this man but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a rebel.

^{19:1} Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. ³ They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face. ⁴ 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.” ⁵ So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” ⁶ 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.” ⁷ 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.”

⁸ Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. ⁹ He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ 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?” ¹¹ 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.” ¹² From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar.”

¹³ 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. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” ¹⁵ 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 Caesar.” ¹⁶ Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** (*Please remain standing as we sing “Lamb of God.”*)

Agnus Dei: Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sermon

The "bidding prayer" is an ancient responsive prayer interceding for the needs of the church and the needs of the world.

The ancient service of "Tenebrae," a Service of Shadows, begins and ends in silence and commemorates the final hours of our Lord's life on earth as he suffered death on the cross.

As the light fades we remember the fading loyalty of the disciples and friends of Jesus.

The seven candles represent the final scenes of Christ's life as recorded in the Gospels. As the candles are extinguished, one by one, we are reminded of the spiritual darkness that would exist if Christ, the light of the world, had not come.

The exit of the Christ candle, at the close of the service symbolizes Christ's death and burial. The loud sound of the book closing suggests the closing of the tomb. The Christ candle, however, is not put out, because it is a sign of the eternal light of God's love and a sign of the promise of the Resurrection.

Bidding Prayer

[A] Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy church throughout the world.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. By your Holy Spirit guide the Church and gather it throughout the world. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your name, and bring the good news of salvation to people everywhere. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for our bishops, for our pastor and other ministers, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people of God.

Silent prayer

[P] Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy. Strengthen and uphold our bishops, pastors, other ministers, and our lay leaders. Keep them in health and safety for the good of the church, and help each of us to do faithfully the work to which you have called us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for those preparing for baptism.

Silent prayer

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you continually bless the church. Increase the faith and understanding of those preparing for baptism. Give them new birth as your children and keep them in the faith and communion of your holy church. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for all our sisters and brothers who share our faith in Jesus Christ.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you give your church unity. Look with favor on all who follow Jesus your Son. Make all the baptized one in the fullness of faith and keep us one in the fellowship of love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, long ago you gave your promise to Abraham and your teaching to Moses. Hear our prayers that the people you called and elected as your own may receive the fulfillment of the covenant's promises. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, gather into your embrace all those who call out to you under different names. Bring an end to inter-religious strife, and make us more faithful witnesses of the love made known to us in your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for those who do not believe in God.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you created humanity so that all may long to know you and have peace in you. Grant that all may recognize the signs of love and grace in the world and in the lives of Christians, and gladly acknowledge you as the one true God and Father of us all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A]Let us pray for God's creation.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you are the creator of a magnificent universe. Hold all the worlds in the arms of your care and bring all things to fulfillment in you. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A] Let us pray for those who serve in public office.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you are the champion of the poor and oppressed. In your goodness, give wisdom to those in authority so that all people may enjoy justice, peace, freedom, and a share in the goodness of your creation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A]Let us pray for those in need.

Silent prayer.

[P] Almighty and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. Heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travelers, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and deliver your world from falsehood, hunger, and disease. Hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble, that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[A]Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask.

The Lord's Prayer

[P] O, Lord remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

Procession of the Cross

The congregation stands to face the cross as it is brought forward.

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

[C] Oh, come, let us worship him.

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

[C] Oh, come, let us worship him.

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

[C] Oh, come, let us worship him.

Please be seated

The Service of Tenebrae—Jesus' Last Words From The Cross

The First Word—Luke 23:32-34

³²Two others also who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³When 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. ³⁴Then Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”** And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

“Jesus, Remember Me” #616 Red Book

The first candle is extinguished

The Second Word—Luke 23:35-43

³⁵And 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!”

³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”

³⁸There was also an inscription over him. “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰But the other rebuked him, saying. “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?”

⁴¹And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

“Jesus, Remember Me” #616 Red Book

The second candle is extinguished

The Third Word—John 19:25-27

²⁵Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.”

²⁷Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

“Jesus, Remember Me” #616 Red Book

The third candle is extinguished

The Fourth Word—Mark 15:33-34

³³When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

“Jesus, Remember Me” #616 Red Book

The fourth candle is extinguished

The Fifth Word—John 19:28-29

²⁸After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), **“I am thirsty.”**

²⁹A 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.

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

“Jesus, Remember Me” #616 Red Book

The fifth candle is extinguished

The Sixth Word—John 19:30

³⁰When Jesus had received the wine, he said, **“It is finished.”** Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

“Jesus, Remember Me” #616 Red Book

The sixth candle is extinguished

The Seventh Word—Luke 23:44-46

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

Meditation, Silence, Prayer

Please stand

“Were You There” #353 Red Book

The seventh candle is extinguished

The Exit of the Christ Candle Closing of the Book

Silence for meditation and prayer.

Worshippers may show reverence to the cross and depart in silence.



Today's scripture readings are appointed by the *Revised Common Lectionary*, an ecumenical resource first published in 1992 and summarized in pages 18-53 of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, 2006. For more information about the *Revised Common Lectionary*, please visit lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/faq/

Today's communion preface is composed based upon the lectionary readings.

All other material is from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.