

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church – ELCA



Good Friday Service

Friday, April 3rd, 2026

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday. In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death. Standing with the disciples at the foot of the cross, we pray for the whole world in the ancient bidding prayer, as Christ's death offers life to all. We gather in solemn devotion, but always with the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life. We depart silently, and we anticipate the culmination of the Three Days in the Easter Vigil.

Call To Worship

L: We have tasted the goodness of the word of God.

C: And yet, we often fall away from it, crucifying Jesus anew.

L: Again and again, we tell the story.

C: And again and again, we find ourselves here—in the story.

L: For as often as necessary, let us relive it so that, with God's help, we will no longer repeat it.

Invocation

Holy God, as we journey through this familiar story, help us to understand it anew. Show us, O God, where and why we find ourselves here again and again, and move us toward a more just future.

Amen

Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter's power; your redeemer's conflict see. Watch with him one bitter hour; turn not from his griefs away; learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

Station 1: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane**Matthew 26:36-41**

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." ³⁹ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." ⁴⁰ Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹ Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

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 suffering, shame, or loss; learn from him to bear the cross.

Station 2: Jesus is Betrayed by Judas & Arrested**Mark 14:43-46**

⁴³ Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." ⁴⁵ So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁴⁶ Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.

Again and again, we betray one another and God. We confess our part in the brokenness of the human family, and we lament our brokenness.

Time of Silence for Reflection & Prayer**Station 3: Jesus is denied by Peter****Matthew 26:69-75**

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

The good that we would do, we do not do. Even when we are not willfully malicious, we fail the human family through our fear and timidity. We neglect to stand up for what's right or come to another's aid. Sometimes, we just don't want to be bothered with the world's ills. We lament that others suffer when we seek self-preservation.

Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. While the hope of endless glory fills my heart with joy and love, teach me ever to adore thee; may I still thy goodness prove.

Station 4: Jesus is Judged by Pontius Pilate

Mark 15:1-5, 15

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ² Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." ³ Then the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." ⁵ But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

C: Again and again, our lips and laws bear false witness against our neighbors. Holy One, save us from this appetite for injustice, and turn our hearts toward truth.

Station 5: Jesus is scourged at the pillar & crowned with thorns

John 19:1-3

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.

Hymn

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

ELW #351 Verse 1

O Sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down, now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown; O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine! Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.

Station 6: Jesus is Crucified

John 19:16-22

So they took Jesus; ¹⁷ and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. ¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. ¹⁹ Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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.'" ²² Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

Time of Silence for Reflection & Prayer

Station 7: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to a Thief

Luke 23:39-43

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³ He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Hymn

Jesus, Remember Me

ELW# 616 Sing Twice

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Station 8: Jesus Speaks to his Mother & The Beloved Disciple

John 19:25-27

²⁵ 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. 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." ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

L: Who is my mother?

C: Those who suffer the greatest losses, yet commit to doing the greatest good.

L: Who are my siblings?

C: Those who bind our wounds in our time of need.

L: To whom must we turn our attention?

C: To the vulnerable and marginalized; To those who are in the crosshairs of food insecurity, exploitation, and discrimination; To the neighbors we have yet to fully behold. Again and again, Jesus calls us to see one another and be a family.

Station 9: Jesus dies on the cross

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 with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

Time of Silence for Reflection & Prayer

Station 10: Jesus is placed in the tomb

Matthew 27:57-60

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

Time of Silence for Reflection & Prayer

Hymn

Were You There

ELW #353

-Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
-Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?
-Were you there when they pierced him in the side? Were you there when they pierced him in the side? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
-Were you there when the sun refused to shine? Were you there when the sun refused to shine? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
-Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Dismissal

Do not look away. Do not rush to redeem this violence. Do not carry on as if nothing is wrong. Grieve this. Mourn this. Sit with this. And if you cannot, sit and mourn with those who mourn. Grieve with

those who grieve. Go in peace, understanding that peace is not the absence of tension, but the presence of justice. May God's Spirit direct you to create the kind of justice that was denied to Jesus on this day. Amen.

-You are welcome to stay for a time of Silence for reflection and prayer.

-Upon leaving the service, please remain in silence until you have exited the church building, to allow silence for those who remain. (Please Do Not Gather in Narthex) Thank you.

Bulletin Donated by: Martin Potts & Julie Waswick in Honor of "Our Beloved Savior"

Mission Statement of Gustaf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

To share the Good News of God's Word and to serve the community and the world.

Matthew 22:39 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord's real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ's name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament.

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