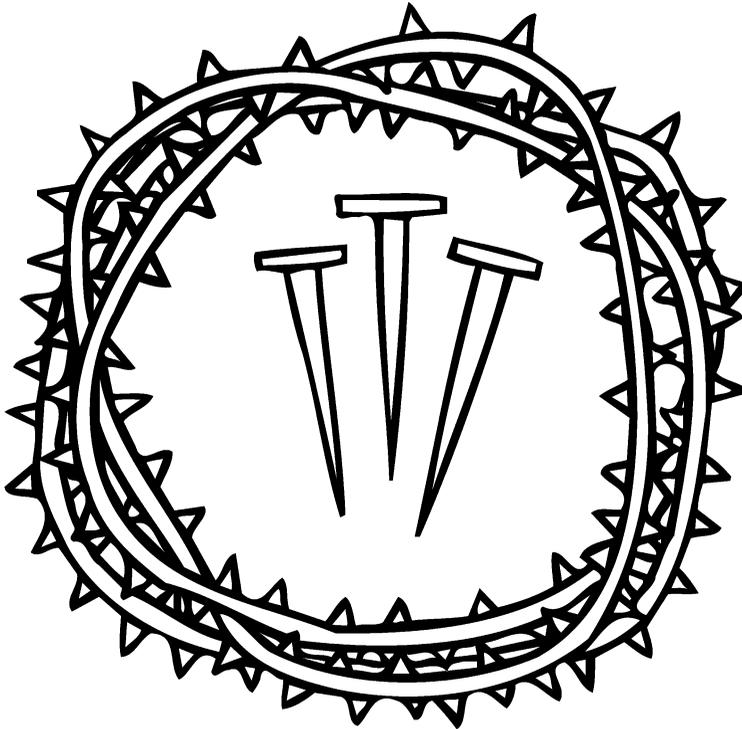


St. Paul Lutheran Church
Leader Copy



Good Friday
April 3, 2026

We gather in silence.

R1: Hear the words of the Prophet Isaiah:

¹Who 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.

P: We gather, tonight, in the shadow of the Cross to remember there is no limit to God's love.

A: Too often we are lost in the distractions, worries, and responsibilities of this world. Clear our minds now and help us to see and understand that this is where sin leads: to death.

P: But while we were still sinners, Christ died to save us. At the cross Jesus lived the example of faith for us to follow.

C: He asked us to pick up our own cross and follow him.

A: Not just to death but to life.

P: He asked us to follow him to the poor, the sick, the suffering.

A: He asked us to follow him to the grieving, the sinners, the hopeless.

C: He asked us to offer life to the hurting.

P: So tonight we stand in the presence of God, remembering the unthinkable:
The sin of this world crucified its Savior.

A: And we stand in awe that this is the depth of God's love for us.

C: Hear us, Lord Jesus.

Forgive us for our own sin, for not trusting in you, for not living by the example you set, for choosing hate over love. Forgive us for wanting mercy for ourselves but judgement for others. Forgive us for our wandering hearts and distracted minds. Center us here at the foot of your cross. Lead us through our darkest days, even when we watch for redemption. Amen.

P: Restore us, O God.

A: Restore us, O God.

C: Restore us, merciful God.

P: Isaiah wrote: “The righteous one, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their sins.” (Isaiah 53:11)

C: Thanks be to our God.

**Prayer of the Day:*

A: Bless this world, Lord Jesus, our Savior. Evil and sin led us to the cross. Even today, evil and sin still lead people into violence, oppression and death. Open us to your way of peace. Center us in you and your kingdom truth. Give us eyes to see and hearts that love. In you we pray:

C: Amen.

R2: A reading from Hebrews: (10:16-19, 21-25)

¹⁶“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord:

I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds,”

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

¹⁸Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

¹⁹Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.

²⁴And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 22

R2: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?

My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer; by night, but I find no rest.

Yet you are the Holy One, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

**C: Our ancestors put their trust in you,
they trusted, and you rescued them.
They cried out to you and were delivered;
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.
But as for me, I am a worm and not human,
scorned by all and despised by the people.**

R2: All who see me laugh me to scorn;
they curl their lips; they shake their heads.
“Trust in the Lord; let the Lord deliver;
let God rescue him if God so delights in him.”
Yet you are the one who drew me forth from the womb,
and kept me safe on my mother’s breast.

**C: I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born;
you were my God when I was still in my mother’s
womb.
Be not far from me, for trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.**

R2: Many young bulls encircle me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me.
They open wide their jaws at me,
like a slashing and roaring lion.
I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint;
my heart within my breast is melting wax.

C: My strength is dried up like a shard of broken pottery; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; and you have laid me in the dust of death.

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

R2: I can count all my bones
while they stare at me and gloat.
They divide my garments among them;
for my clothing, they cast lots.

**C: But you, O Lord, be not far away;
O my help, hasten to my aid.
Deliver me from the sword,
my life from the power of the dog.
Save me from the lion's mouth!
From the horns of wild bulls you have rescued me.**

R2: I will declare your name to my people;
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.
You who fear the Lord, give praise! All you of Jacob's
line, give glory.
Stand in awe of the Lord, all you offspring of Israel.
For the Lord does not despise nor abhor the poor in
their poverty; neither is the Lord's face hidden from
them; but when they cry out, the Lord hears them.

**C: From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who
fear the Lord.**

**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the Lord give praise!
May your hearts live forever!**

R2: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn
to the Lord;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.
For dominion belongs to the Lord,
who rules over the nations.

**C: Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow
down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead,
shall kneel before the Lord.
Their descendants shall serve the Lord,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.
They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people
yet unborn, saying to them, "The Lord has acted!"**

P: *Gospel Readings:* John 18:1-24

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 men 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?”

¹²So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

¹³First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. ¹⁴Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

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

¹⁸Now 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.

¹⁹Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰Jesus 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. ²¹Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.” ²²When 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.

Silent Reflection

Hymn: # 351, v. 1 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”

**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.**

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, based on Arnulf of Louvain, d. 1250; tr. composite

R1: John 18:25-19:7

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.”

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

²⁸Then 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.²⁹So Pilate went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?”³⁰They answered, “If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.”³¹Pilate 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.)

³³Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”³⁴Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?”³⁵Pilate 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?"

³⁶Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from 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."³⁷Pilate 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."³⁸Pilate 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."³⁹But 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?"⁴⁰They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

^{19:1}Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ²And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.³They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face.

⁴Pilate 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."⁵So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"⁶When 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.”

⁷The 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.”

Silent Reflection

Hymn: # 351, v. 2 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”

**2 How pale thou art with anguish,
with sore abuse and scorn;
how does thy face now languish,
which once was bright as morn!
Thy grief and bitter passion
were all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression,
but thine the deadly pain.**

P: John 19:8-27

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.”

¹²From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.”

¹³When 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.

¹⁴Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!”¹⁵They 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 the emperor.” ¹⁶Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. 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. ¹⁹Pilate 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.

²¹Then 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.’”²²Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

²³When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.²⁴So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.” This was to fulfill what the scripture says, “They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

²⁵And 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.²⁶When 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.

Silent Reflection

Hymn: # 351, v. 3 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”

**3 What language shall I borrow
to thank thee, dearest friend,
for this thy dying sorrow,
thy pity without end?
Oh, make me thine forever,
and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
outlive my love to thee.**

R1: John 19:28-42

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I am thirsty.”²⁹ A 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.³⁰ When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. ³¹Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed.³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him.

³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.³⁵ (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.)³⁶ These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.”³⁷ And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”

³⁸After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.³⁹ Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.⁴⁰ They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.⁴¹ Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.⁴² And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Silent Reflection

Hymn: # 351, v. 4 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”

**4 Lord, be my consolation;
shield me when I must die;
remind me of thy passion
when my last hour draws nigh.
These eyes, new faith receiving,
from thee shall never move;
for all who die believing
die safely in thy love.**

**The Prayers of the Church*

P: On this night when Jesus gave us a new commandment to love one another, let us bring our prayers before the One whose love knows no bounds.

Silent prayer.

A: Gracious host, you knelt to wash your disciples' feet. Cleanse us from pride and self-centeredness, and teach us to love one another as you have loved us. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Creator God, the earth is yours and everything in it.
Awaken us to care for all you have made and
conserve the rich diversity of your good creation.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: God of the nations, guide the world's leaders in the
ways of justice and peace. Where they wield power
unjustly, confront them. Where they are indifferent
to suffering, awaken their conscience.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Compassionate One, embrace all who are lonely or
in captivity, comfort the grieving, and relieve those
in pain. Draw near to all who suffer.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Blessed redeemer, we give you thanks for this
community of faith, for all who gather around your
table of grace, and for your presence here with us.
Unite us in love for you and for one another.
Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Eternal God, we praise you for the great cloud of witnesses who now rest from their labors. At the last, gather us together with them at your heavenly banquet. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, confident that you will strengthen us by your Spirit to love one another as Christ has loved us. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

P: Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask.

**C: 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.**

(Please stand and face the cross as it is brought forward from the back of the church)

P: Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.

C: Oh, come, let us worship him.

P: Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.

C: Oh, come, let us worship him.

P: Behold, the life-giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world.

C: Oh, come, let us worship him.

*After the cross is placed on the altar, please be seated.
A brief period of silence follows.*

As the Solemn Reproaches are read, the lights in the sanctuary will slowly begin to fade, just as the light of Christ faded from our world as he hung dying on the cross.

At the end of the service, only the Pascal Candle will remain lit and it will be carried out of the church. It is the symbol of hope as we await the promised resurrection of our Savior.

Solemn Reproaches of the Cross

P: O my people, O my church, what have I done to you, or in what have I offended you? Answer me. I led you forth from the land of Egypt and delivered you by the waters of baptism, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

R1: I led you through the desert for forty years and fed you with manna: I brought you through trials and repentance and gave you my body, the bread of heaven, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

R2: What more could I have done for you that I have not done? I planted you, my chosen and fairest vineyard, I made you branches of my vine; but when I was thirsty, you gave me vinegar to drink and pierced with a spear the side of your Savior, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: I went before you in a pillar of cloud, and you have led me to the judgment hall of Pilate. I scourged your enemies and brought you to a land of freedom, but you have scourged, mocked, and beaten me. I gave you the water of salvation from the rock, but you have given me gall and left me to thirst, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

R1: I gave you a royal scepter and bestowed the keys of the kingdom, but you have given me a crown of thorns. I raised you on high with great power, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

R2: My peace I gave, which the world cannot give, and washed your feet as a sign of my love, but you draw the sword to strike in my name and seek high places in my kingdom. I offered you my body and blood, but you scatter and deny and abandon me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: I sent the Spirit of truth to guide you, and you close your hearts to the Counselor. I pray that all may be one in the Father and me, but you continue to quarrel and divide. I call you to go and bring forth fruit, but you cast lots for my clothing, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: I came to you as the least of your brothers and sisters; I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

C: Lord, have mercy.

*We stand and turn toward the candle as the procession exits, as we turn toward Christ as our hope and light. All depart in silence, without benediction.
Remain and pray as long as you wish.*

Thank you to those serving this evening:

Worship Leader: Pastor Kristy Buyok

Lay Readers: The members of St. Paul

Assisting Minister: Lynn Moomaw

Cross Bearer: Ernie Buyok

Pianist: Joe Hennell

This Week

Sunday: Easter Worship 9:30 a.m.
Easter Egg Hunt following

Monday: *Pastor's Day Off*
Office Closed

Tuesday: Quilting 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday: Dinner
Choir
Handbells

Next Sunday: Worship 9:30 a.m.