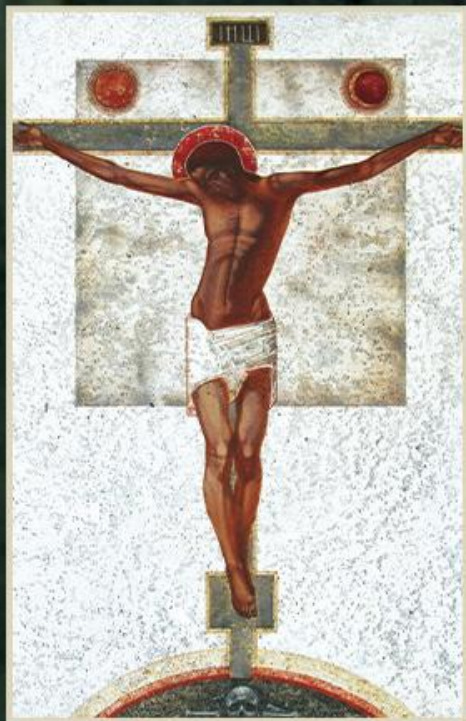


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*We have a livestream option on our website!
<https://felcdecatur.org/live>*



It is finished

JOHN 19:30

**April 3, 2026, at 7:00 pm
GOOD FRIDAY**

Come Experience God's Unlimited Grace, in a Most Welcoming Place

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

The preaching of the cross may be foolishness to the world, but to those who are saved it is the power of God. No wonder Charles Wesley declared in his anthem of praise, "Amazing love, how can it be, that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me!"

It is that powerful cross and the love displayed there that moves hearts from death to life. There is an old saying, "The ground is always level at the foot of the cross." It was in the first century, and it still is today. The foot of the cross is where paupers and princes, well-knowns and unknowns, generals and centurions, find level ground to kneel and embrace the Christ who died for them—and for us.

The men and women who witnessed the trial, crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ saw more than words can ever express. But what they saw in their lifetime, we have seen in the Scriptures. The book of Romans explains it this way: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (10:17).

If we have heard and believed, it mustn't end there. We must burn with the passion to know Him—the very passion of the apostle Paul, who wrote that his life's goal was "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Phil. 3:10).

May that desire burn in our hearts as well, that we might truly know the One who gave Himself for us.

--Bill Crowder

Reprinted from Our Daily Bread

P: Behold the cross of Christ

C: Who takes away the sin of the world
(repeat 3 times)

PRELUDE

INVOCATION **Isaiah 53:3-6**

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: He was despised and rejected by others;

C: a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;

P: and as one from whom others hide their faces

C: he was despised, and we held him of no account.

P: Surely he has borne our infirmities

C: and carried our diseases;

P: yet we accounted him stricken,

C: struck down by God, and afflicted.

P: But he was wounded for our transgressions,

C: crushed for our iniquities;

P: upon him was the punishment that made us whole,

C: and by his bruises we are healed.

P: All we like sheep have gone astray;

C: we have all turned to our own way,

P: and the LORD has laid on him

C: the iniquity of us all.

***GATHERING SONG**

“Go to Dark Gethsemane”

ELW #347

- 1 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.**
- 2 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.**
- 3 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.**
- 4 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.**

READINGS

A light will be extinguished after each reading.

FIRST READING John 18:1-12

NARR: After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. ²Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³So 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. ⁴Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them,

JESUS: "Whom are you looking for?"

NARR: ⁵They answered,

CROWD: "Jesus of Nazareth."

NARR: Jesus replied,

JESUS: "I am he."

NARR: Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. ⁶When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. ⁷Again he asked them,

JESUS: "Whom are you looking for?"

NARR: And they said,

CROWD: "Jesus of Nazareth."

NARR: ⁸Jesus answered,

JESUS: "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go."

NARR: ⁹This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." ¹⁰Then 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. ¹¹Jesus said to Peter,

JESUS: "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

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

ANTHEM

"In The Garden"

Carl Nygard

SECOND READING

John 18:13-27

NARR: 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,

WOMAN: "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?"

NARR: 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 was also standing with them and warming himself. ¹⁹Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰Jesus answered,

JESUS: "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."

NARR: ²²When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying,

POLICE: "Is that how you answer the high priest?"

NARR: ²³Jesus answered,

JESUS: "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"

NARR: ²⁴Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. ²⁵Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him,

SOLDIER: "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?"

NARR: 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,

SLAVE: "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"

NARR. ²⁷Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

HYMN

"Ah, Holy Jesus"

ELW #349

- 1 Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended
that we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted.**
- 2 Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee.
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee;
I crucified thee.**
- 3 Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered;
the slave hath sinned, and the Son hath suffered;
for our atonement, while we nothing heeded,
God interceded.**
- 4 For me, kind Jesus, was thine incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion,
for my salvation.**
- 5 Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will ever pray thee;
think on thy pity and thy love unswerving,
not my deserving.**

THIRD READING John 18:28-19:16

NARR: 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,

PILATE: "What accusation do you bring against this man?"

NARR: ³⁰They answered,

CROWD: "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you."

NARR: ³¹Pilate said to them,

PILATE: "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law."

NARR: The Jews replied,

CROWD: "We are not permitted to put anyone to death."

NARR: 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,

PILATE: "Are you the King of the Jews?"

NARR: ³⁴Jesus answered,

JESUS: "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?"

NARR: ³⁵Pilate replied,

PILATE: "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?"

NARR: ³⁶Jesus answered,

JESUS: "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."

NARR: ³⁷Pilate asked him,

PILATE: "So you are a king?"

NARR: Jesus answered,

JESUS: "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."

NARR: ³⁸Pilate asked him,

PILATE: "What is truth?"

NARR: After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them,

PILATE: "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?"

NARR: ⁴⁰They shouted in reply,

CROWD: "Not this man, but Barabbas!"

NARR: Now Barabbas was a bandit. 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,

CROWD: "Hail, King of the Jews!"

NARR: and striking him on the face. ⁴Pilate went out again and said to them,

PILATE: "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him."

NARR: ⁵So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them,

PILATE: "Here is the man!"

NARR: ⁶When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted,

CROWD: "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

NARR: Pilate said to them,

PILATE: "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him."

NARR: ⁷The Jews answered him,

CROWD: **"We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."**

NARR: ⁸Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. ⁹He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus,

PILATE: "Where are you from?"

NARR: But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰Pilate therefore said to him,

PILATE: "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?"

NARR: ¹¹Jesus answered him,

JESUS: "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."

NARR: ¹²From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out,

CROWD: **"If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."**

NARR: 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,

PILATE: "Here is your King!"

NARR: ¹⁵They cried out,

CROWD: **"Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!"**

NARR: Pilate asked them,

PILATE: "Shall I crucify your King?"

NARR: The chief priests answered,

CROWD: "We have no king but the emperor."

NARR: ¹⁶Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

ANTHEM

"Ah, Holy Jesu"

Shaw

FOURTH READING

John 19:17-25a

NARR: So they took Jesus; ¹⁷and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. ¹⁸There 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." ²⁰Many 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,

CROWD: "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'"

NARR: ²²Pilate answered,

PILATE: "What I have written I have written."

NARR: 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,

CROWD: "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it."

NARR: 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.

**1 Your only son, no sin to hide,
But you have sent him from your side
To walk upon this guilty sod
And to become the Lamb of God**

Refrain:

**O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God.
Oh, wash me in your precious blood,
My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.**

**2 Your gift of love we crucified.
We laughed and scorned him as he died.
The humble king we named a fraud
And sacrificed the Lamb of God. *Refrain***

**3 I was so lost, I should have died,
But you have brought me to your side
To be led by your staff and rod
And to be called a lamb of God. *Refrain***

FIFTH READING John 19:25b-27

NARR: 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,

JESUS: "Woman, here is your son."

NARR: ²⁷Then he said to the disciple,

JESUS: "Here is your mother."

NARR: And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

- 1 Beneath the cross of Jesus
I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock
within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and burdens of the day.**
- 2 Upon the cross of Jesus,
my eye at times can see
the very dying form of one
who suffered there for me.
And from my contrite heart, with tears,
two wonders I confess:
the wonder of his glorious love
and my unworthiness.**
- 3 I take, O cross, your shadow
for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by,
to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame,
my glory all, the cross.**

Text: Elizabeth C. Clephane, 1830-1869

SIXTH READING John 19:28-30

NARR: ²⁸After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture),

JESUS: "I am thirsty."

NARR: 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. ³⁰When Jesus had received the wine, he said,

JESUS: "It is finished."

NARR: Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

HYMN

"Were You There"

ELW #353

- 1** 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?

- 2** 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?

- 3** 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?

- 4** 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?

- 5** 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?

SEVENTH READING

John 19:31-42

NARR: 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. ³²Then 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. ³⁴Instead, 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.) ³⁶These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." ³⁷And 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. ³⁹Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹Now 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.

⁴²And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

CLOSING PRAYER

O God, the deed is done; betrayed, crucified, died; have mercy on your family for whom he gave his life; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen

Silent Prayer

*The chime is struck 33 times for the years of Jesus' life.
The timpani drum is struck to signify the closing of the tomb.
The congregation may remain for silent prayer.*

Please depart in silence and peace

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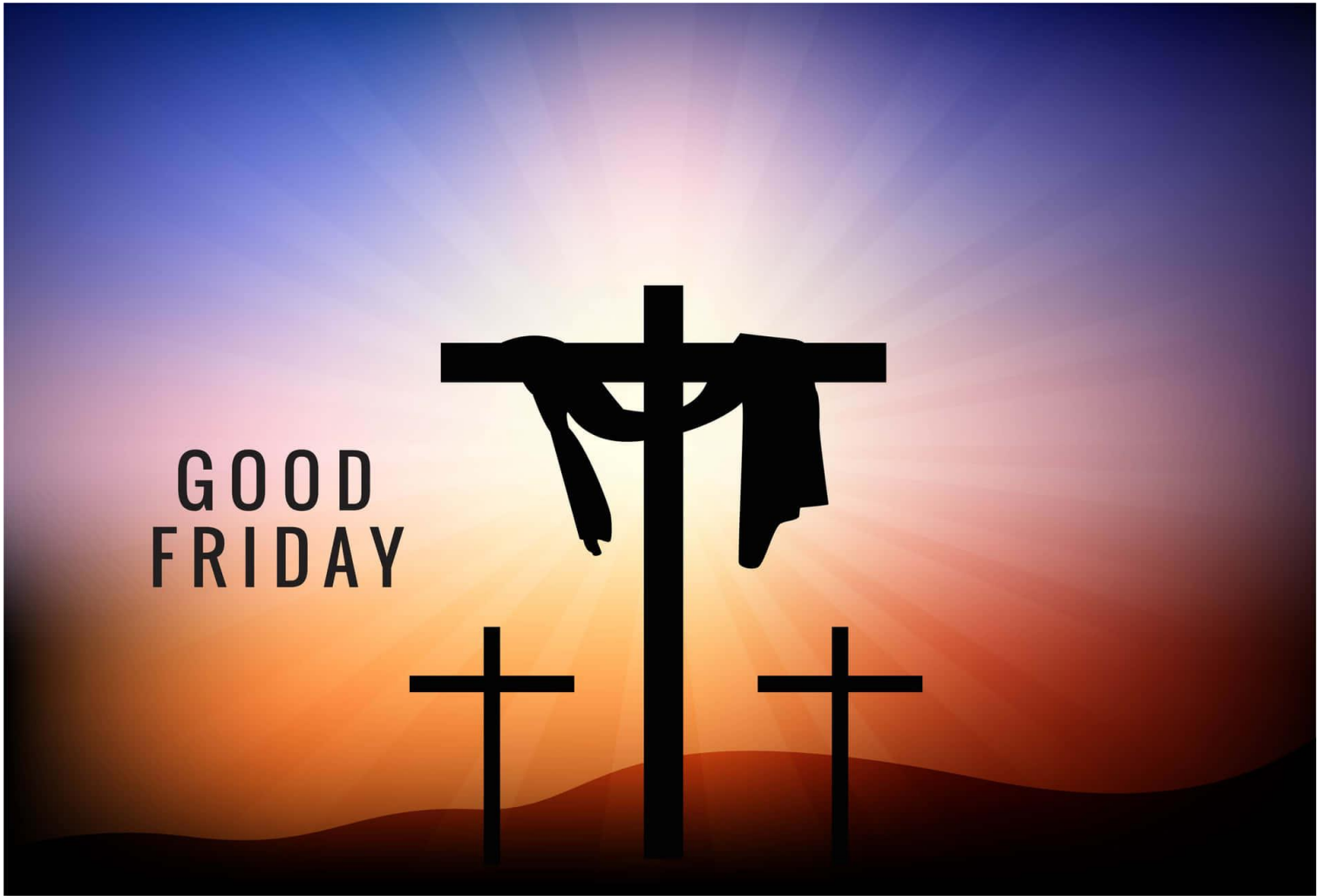
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Please depart in silence and peace