

WE are Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church (elca)

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WELCOME TO ALL WHO WORSHIP WITH US TODAY.

We welcome all visitors this morning to our service of Word and Sacrament. ALL are invited to receive the bread and the wine. Please know that at CELC this common meal is for all who feel moved to receive. This sacrament is God's gift to all, and is not tied to membership, doctrine or creed.

Good Friday The Seven Last Words

April 18, 2025
6:00pm

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.

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

HYMN ELW 336 **“Lamb of God”**



1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, but you have
2 Your gift of love we cru - ci - fied. We laughed and
3 I was so lost, I should have died, but you have



sent him from your side to walk up - on this guilt - y
scorned him as he died. The hum - ble king we named a
brought me to your side to be led by your staff and



sod and to be - come the Lamb of God. O Lamb of
fraud and sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God.
rod and to be called a lamb of God.



God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the ho - ly Lamb of God. Oh, wash me



in your pre-cious blood, my Je-sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

* PRAYER OF INVOCATION

P: Let us pray.

Merciful God - as we remember how your son Jesus bore our sins in his body on the cross, how seven times he spoke, seven words of love, we ask you to bless our hearing.

Father, as we recall how all three hours His silence cried for mercy on the souls of all, we ask you to help us to understand the mystery of your love, and make us into a people who are ever more worthy of it. **Amen.**

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS

THE FIRST WORD

Luke 23:33-34

When they came to the place called "The Skull", they nailed Jesus to the cross there, and the two criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Jesus said "Forgive them, Father! They do not know what they are doing."

* Meditation on the First Word

"They do not know what they are doing"
They do not know? They ...who killed Jesus?
Who is "they"?

It is so easy to name others
to blame others
the Romans
the crowd
Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas
they all played their part
and conspired against Jesus
or simply followed orders to maintain the peace
to keep Jesus' kingdom from infringing on theirs.

And yet where are we when Jesus' kingdom infringes on ours?
on our peace and our order?
on our prosperity and our security?

Where are we when the victims of our peace cry for justice?
when those disenfranchised by our order call for compassion?
when the hungry and the lonely beg us to share our prosperity
our security
our power?

Where are we when Christ is crucified among us?

Surely he should have raged
at the sinners who nailed him to the tree.
Surely he should have raged at us for the evil we do,
the evil we do both knowing and unknowing,
Yet compassion is there in the first words that he utters
He intercedes for us before the Father.

Compassion that called him into being in his mother's womb
Compassion that compelled him to the cross

Compassion that brings incredible, unbelievable grace
Compassion that echoes through the centuries
to all who participate in the killing of Christ:
Compassion that cries out from the cross:
"Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing"
P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.
C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MUSIC

THE SECOND WORD

Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals hanging there threw insults at him:
"Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" The other
one, however, rebuked him, saying: "Don't you fear God? Here
we are all under the same sentence. Ours, however, is only
right, for we are getting what we deserve for what we did;
but he has done no wrong." And he said to Jesus, "Remember
me, Jesus, when you come as King!" Jesus said to him, "I
tell you this: Today you will be in Paradise with me."

* Meditation on The Second Word

How much are we like the first thief?
Full of anger - because we are not rescued from our sin?
Full of hate - because we suffer because of the sins of others?

How much do we want God to snap his fingers
And make right what we have made wrong?
What we have allowed others to make wrong?

How easy it is to cry "save us"
and to rail against God
when there is no magic cure
no miraculous recovery
no legions of angels
to take away pain and bring wholeness.

How easy it is to scorn the Messiah,
to mock the goodness of the world
and condemn the light of the world
because we are unwilling to face what we we have done?

Yet there is goodness
There is a cure for sin
a cure that does not promise magical solutions

but promises that the pain of sin is not the end,
that when all this is over
when the suffering is finished
that the final word is not torture and defeat
but life -- life springing out of the ashes
life transformed and fulfilled in Paradise.

To the compassionate thief
To the one who could still recognize the good in the world
To the one who tried to comfort and protect that good
To the one who sought good -- Comfort was given

"Today, you will be in paradise with me."

P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.

C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MUSIC

THE THIRD WORD

John 19:25-27

Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

* Meditation on the Third Word

Who can grasp the grief?
the grief of Mary watching her son suffer?
the grief of Mary watching him die?

And who can grasp the grief of the son?
The son who must see his mother mourn?

What gift can a man give his mother?
What can he offer when he is gone?
How can he help her?
Hold her?
Comfort her?
Honour her?

"Woman, here is your son"

Here is one I love, to love you, and for you to love.
One who knows me
One who is my brother and who can speak of me.
One Who can hold you,
 comfort you,
 and honour you;
One who shares your grief

"Here is your mother"

Here is one I love, for you to love, and to love you.
The one who taught me,
the one who fed me,
the one who wiped away my tears
the one who hugged me,
the one who grieves with you.

Women, behold your children; children, behold your mothers.

P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.

C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MUSIC

THE FOURTH WORD

Mark 15:33-34

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over
the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour
Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Elo-i, elo-i, lama
sabach-thani?" which means, "My God, my God, why hast thou
forsaken me?"

* Meditation on the Fourth Word

Of all the agony of that tortuous day
the lacerations of the scourging
the chafing of the thorns around his head
the convulsions of his tormented, dehydrated body
as it hung in the heat all the day
Nothing reaches the depth of this anguished cry of desolation
"My God, my god, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Jesus, who found his purpose and strength in the presence of God
who was sustained by the immediacy of his relationship with God
and who endured all by the tangible power of God always at work
within him ,
always a centre of vitality and peace,
found himself totally alone on the cross.

Jesus, whose very being was God,
found himself utterly,
 absolutely,
 despairingly.
cut off from all that gives life and breath
cut off from all that gives purpose and hope
cut off from the source of his being
cut off, even from himself
plumbing the depths of the human condition
to walk in the place of the utter absence of God,
in the place of sinners
in the place of those who reject God.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In these words is the central mystery of the crucifixion
which cannot be fully comprehended,
that there is no despair so deep
or evil so overwhelming
or place so far removed from joy, light, and love
from the very heart of God
that God has not been before us,
and where God cannot meet us
and bring us home.

P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.

C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MUSIC

THE FIFTH WORD

John 19:28

After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said
(to fulfil the scripture), "I thirst."

* Meditation on the Fifth Word

There is a kind of timelessness about hanging on a cross.
It is not a quiet death,
over in an instant in one glorious moment of martyrdom
like being torn apart by lions.
A cross is as much an instrument of torture
as it is a gallows from which to hang,

And as the day wears on
seconds stretch into minutes which stretch into hours
until there comes a point when time can no longer be measured
except in the gradual weakening of the body
and its ever more insistent demands
for that substance which is so vital to life
so foundational to all living things
so basic to existence as we know it: -- water.

Water to moisten a parched mouth
Water to free a swollen tongue
Water to open a rasping throat that cannot gasp enough air.
Water to keep hope alive
to keep life alive just a few moments longer.

Water, to a crucified man, is life.

"O God, thou art my God, I seek thee,
my soul thirsts for thee;
my flesh faints for thee
as in a dry and weary land where no water is."

Who can tell if these words from Psalm 63 went through Jesus mind
but a thirst for water is a thirst for life
and a thirst for life is a thirst for God
who promises streams in the desert
mighty rivers in the dry land
and living water to wash away every tear.

Here, at the end of it all those promises seem far away, -
distant.

And yet Jesus - forsaken by God
still clings to the memory and the hope of life.

"I thirst."

P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.

C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MUSIC

THE SIXTH WORD

John 19:29-30

A bowl was there, full of cheap wine mixed with vinegar, so a sponge was soaked in it, put on stalk of hyssop and lifted up to his lips. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished";

* Meditation on the Sixth Word

What a sigh of relief!

What a cry of deliverance,

that finally,

after seemingly endless pain

and gasping torment,

it is over at last.

The suffering is ended.

The ordeal is finished

and nothing remains

but the blessed peace of the absence of all sensation.

When all there is, is pain

its ceasing is the greatest blessing of all

even when its ceasing comes only with death.

But Jesus' cry is more than just welcoming the ending of pain

it is more than joy at the deliverance death brings.

He does not merely say, "it is over"

he says, "it is accomplished,

fulfilled,

achieved"

Jesus's cry isn't a cry of defeat and despair

It is a cry of success and triumph

- even at the moment of death -

that the race has been run

that he has endured to the end

that the strife is over

and the battle is won.

Jesus' cry is a cry of relief to be sure
but it is also a cry of victory:

"The work I came to do is complete"
there is nothing more to add
"it is finished"

P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.

C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MUSIC



1. On a hill far a - way stood an old rug - ged cross, the ___
2. O the old rug - ged cross, so de - spised by the world, has a
3. In the old rug - ged cross, stained with blood so di - vine, a ___
4. To the old rug - ged cross I will ev - er be true; Its ___



em - blem of suf - f'ring and shame; And I love that old cross, where the
won - drous at - trac - tion for me; For the dear Lamb of God left His
won - drous beau - ty I see; For 'twas on that old cross Je - sus
shame and re - proach glad - ly bear. Then He'll call me some day to my

CHORUS



dear - est and best for a world of lost sin - ners was slain. So I'll cher - ish the old rug - ged
glo - ry a - bove to ___ bear it to dark Cal - va - ry.
suf - fered and died to ___ par - don and sanc - ti - fy me.
home far a - way, where His glo - ry for - ev - er I'll share.

10 $A\flat$ $A\flat/C$ $D\flat$ $A\flat$

cross, _____ till my tro - phies at last I lay down. I will

13 $D\flat$ $A\flat/E\flat$ $E\flat^7$ $A\flat$

cling to the old rug - ged cross, _____ and ex - change it some day for a crown. _____

THE SEVENTH WORD

Luke 23:46

Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

* Meditation on the Seventh Word

It is the end, the very end
 the end of the ordeal
 the end of the suffering
 and Jesus
 alone on the cross
 tortured
 exhausted
 abandoned by his friends
 forsaken by God
 gasps for a last breath
 and gathers the strength for one final cry.

Why would he choose to speak
 so close to the end?
 Why would he muster the last energy he had
 to cry out with a loud voice?
 Couldn't God have heard his thoughts?

Unless God wasn't the only one intended to hear.

Unless his voice was pitched loud
so that we too might hear this final dedication of his soul.

A dedication made despite the pain,
despite the mocking,
despite the agony,
despite the sense of horrible aloneness he felt.

A dedication made to God
before the resurrection,
before the victory of the kingdom,
before any assurance other than that
which faith could bring.

Jesus entrusts his spirit -- his life --
and all that has given it meaning --
to God in faith,
even at the point of his own abandonment
when the good seems so very far away
he proclaims his faith in God,
the darkness cannot overcome it.

"Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit"

P: Lord Jesus - you gave your life for us.

C: **You suffered and died that we might be made whole.**

MESSAGE – PASTOR KIM

HYMN: ELW 353 "Were You There" (verses 1, 2, & 5)

*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 laid in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid in the tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?*

Prayer of Dedication:

P: Lord God, you have given us everything.
You have not held anything back.
Help us in like manner to give of ourselves
Sanctify us Christ's name.
Bless us and all that we think, feel, say, and do that we,
like Jesus, may be a blessing unto others,
We ask this and all things that we ask of you through him,
saying the prayer that he taught us...

Our Father who art in heaven....

BENEDICTION

Depart now in peace - and may the Spirit of Christ, go with you,
may his faith and trust abide within you, and may the knowledge
of his love support you both now and forevermore,

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