

Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

325 E. Warwick Dr. ~ Alma, Michigan ~ 48801

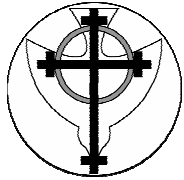
463-5754 ~ www.peacealma.org

Email: contact@peacealma.org

Rev. Thomas C. Messer, Pastor

Home: 463-3093 ~ Cell: (989) 388-2037

Email: pastor@peacealma.org



Good Friday Service

The Office of Tenebrae

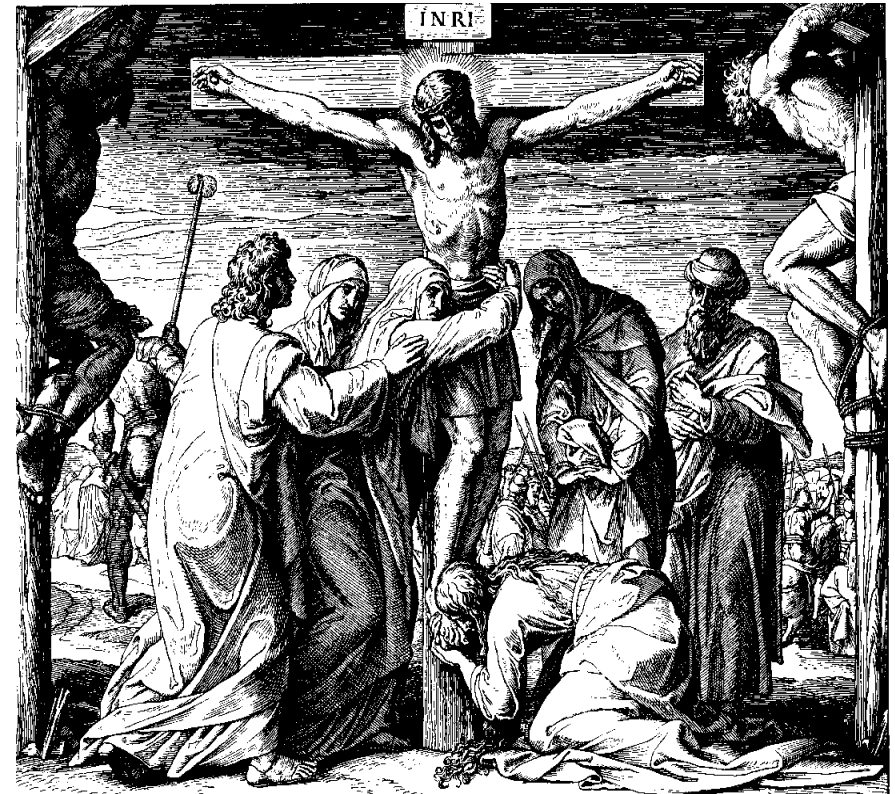
10 April Anno † Domini 2009 ~ 7:30 p.m.

Welcome

Welcome to the Lord's House on this Most Sacred Night for our Good Friday Service. Good Friday is not observed as a funeral for Christ. It is a day for repentance over sin and restrained joy and praise for the redemption Christ accomplished for us on the cross. It is a good day, for it was on this day that our Lord suffered and died in our place. What we deserved for our sins, He willingly and lovingly bore for our sake. To properly meditate upon our Lord's Sacred and Sorrowful Passion, we must, all of us, realize that we share in the guilt of those responsible for His execution. The hymn asks, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Yes, you were. So was I. We all were. We were there spitting on Him, scourging Him, and driving the nails through His Holy Body, shedding His Holy Blood, with our sins. If anything should sadden us this evening, it is that realization, namely that we, yes we—all of us—are guilty of putting our Lord to death. Do not mourn for Christ. He lives! Instead, mourn for your sins. Repent! And then, gaze in faith upon that sacred cross and see your salvation. For He died for you, that you might live. He suffered the wrath and punishment you deserve to set you free. He was forsaken by the Father so that you might never be forsaken. Rejoice, then, dear Christian, for it is true that you killed your Lord with your sins, but it is also true that He allowed you to do so, for He humbled Himself to death on the cross for you! Your sins have been crucified with Him. They are gone. You, who look upon the Crucified Christ in repentance and faith, have forgiveness, life, and everlasting salvation! That is why this Friday is Good—Oh so Good! May God richly bless your meditation this evening. Please take the time to fill out the **Record of Fellowship form** that is in the pew. If you are visiting with us this evening, we want you to know that we are overjoyed that you are here. Please make your visit known to us by signing the guest book that is in the hallway on the left as you leave the nave. The Lord be with us on this Most Sacred Night!

Our Mission Statement

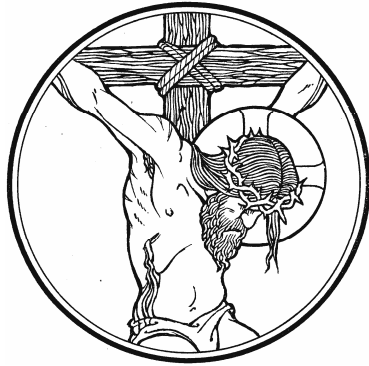
The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and to nurture our members with God's Holy Word and Sacraments.



"He Was Pierced for Our Transgressions!"

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

10 April Anno † Domini 2009



The Congregation Assembles in Silence on this Most Sacred Night

The Ringing of the Somber Bells

The somber bells set the tone for our Service this evening. They will ring forty times in two sets of twenty rings. Each ring of the bell symbolizes a lash to our Savior's body when He was scourged for our sins. When the second set of twenty rings begins, the congregation stands and turns to face the processional cross in the rear of the sanctuary. The congregation continues to face the cross throughout the processional liturgy which follows:

The Good Friday Procession

The First Reproach and Response

(From the rear of the nave)

P Thus says the Lord: What have I done to you, O my people, and wherein have I offended you? Answer me. For I have raised you up out of the prison house of sin and death, and you have delivered up your Redeemer to be scourged. For I have redeemed you from the house of bondage, and you have nailed your Savior to the cross. O my people.

C Holy Lord God, holy and mighty God, holy and most merciful Redeemer; God eternal, leave us not to bitter death. O Lord, have mercy.

Choral Response: 434 "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy" (stanza 1)

Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer, Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer. All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us: Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

of the Light of the World. When the seventh candle is extinguished, the chancel area is left in complete darkness, with the exception of the Christ candle, symbolizing the darkness that fell upon Jerusalem for the final three hours Christ hung on the cross. *The Sermon* concludes this portion of the liturgy as we are led by the proclamation of the Gospel to focus on the Good News that Christ's suffering and death for our sins accomplished our salvation.

The Bidding Prayer, the form of prayer from the ancient liturgy of Western Christendom, then follows. On the day when Christ died for the salvation of the world, we fittingly pray systematically for all people everywhere. The Bidding Prayer concludes with *The Lord's Prayer*, prayed by all.

Following the Prayers, the Service comes to a dramatic, climactic conclusion. After the congregation sings the *Hymn of Contemplation*, we hear from the prophet *Isaiah (52:13-53:12)*, who was inspired by the Holy Spirit to record a stunning, detailed account of our Lord's Passion seven centuries before it took place. This is followed by our response, which is culminated by the proclamation that our salvation is found in these words: "**O dire dread, God's Son is dead!**"

At the word "dead," the *strepitus* (pronounced STREP-ee-toose), which means, "loud noise," is sounded. This "loud noise" symbolizes the earth shaking and rocks splitting (Matt. 27:51) at Jesus' death, and foreshadows the "violent earthquake" (Matt. 28:2) at the opening of Jesus' tomb on Easter morning. As the *strepitus* is sounded, the *Christ candle is extinguished and removed* from the sanctuary and all the lights in the sanctuary are turned off, leaving it in complete darkness for a *brief silence*. This darkness symbolizes the removal of the Light of the World at the death of the Son of God. After the silence, the *Christ candle is re-lit and returned* to its place on the altar, symbolizing the Resurrection of the Lord, for the darkness of death cannot keep its hold on Him. After the Christ candle is returned, the congregation departs in silence with confident hope and eager expectation of the Resurrection. Those who wish may remain for meditation and prayer for as long as they like.

The Offerings are gathered at the door this evening following the Service.

The Good Friday Service: An Introduction

The Good Friday Service is a continuation of the Maundy Thursday Service. What was begun then continues this night as we journey with our Savior from the Last Supper, the stripping and humiliation, to the cross and tomb.

The Good Friday Liturgy is marked with austerity, silence and reflection. The chancel area, which was stripped bare the previous evening, remains free of any ornamental beauty and is now adorned in black. There is no organ music except to accompany the hymns. Everything focuses on our adoration of the crucified Christ, reigning from the throne of the cross.

Our liturgy begins with the ringing of the *somber bells*, which sets the tone for our Service this evening. They will ring forty times in two sets of twenty rings. Each ring of the bell symbolizes a lash to our Savior's body when He was scourged for our sins. When the second set of twenty rings begins, the congregation stands and turns to face the processional cross in the rear of the sanctuary. The congregation continues to face the cross throughout the processional liturgy which follows.

At the conclusion of the bells, our liturgy continues with the *Good Friday Procession*, which includes the ancient *Reproaches*, dating back to the 4th century. The words of reproach come from Christ Himself and are directed against us, His people, whose sins and unbelieving conduct made it necessary for Him to die on the cross. Each Reproach is followed by a congregational and choral response, both of which plead for the Lord's mercy. The Reproaches and Responses used during the Good Friday Procession serve to remind us in a powerful and meaningful way that it was our sins that caused the Lord's death.

The liturgy continues with the *Sentences and Collects* in which we recognize our Lord's Passion and pray for God to behold us as His family and to bestow His grace upon us that we may faithfully meditate upon the Holy Passion of His Son. The *Hymn of Preparation* follows to enable us to prepare ourselves for the Gospel message of Good Friday.

The core of the Good Friday Service is found in the *Office of Tenebrae* (which means "darkness" or "shadows"). This is a Good Friday tradition dating back to the 7th or 8th century. The candles of the church are progressively extinguished as portions of the Passion Account are read and responsive hymn stanzas are sung, reminding us of the gradual abandonment of Jesus by all those who had followed Him, and the extinguishing

The Second Reproach and Response

(From the middle of the nave)

- P** Thus says the Lord: What have I done to you, O my people, and wherein have I offended you? Answer me. For I have conquered all your foes, and you have given me over and delivered me to those who persecute me. For I have fed you with my Word and refreshed you with living water, and you have given me gall and vinegar to drink. O my people.
- C** **Holy Lord God, holy and mighty God, holy and most merciful Redeemer; God eternal, allow us not to lose hope in the face of death and hell. O Lord, have mercy.**

Choral Response: 434 "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy" (stanza 2)

Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer, Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer. All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us: Have mercy on us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

The Third Reproach and Response

(From the front of the nave)

- P** Thus says the Lord: What have I done to you, O my people, and wherein have I offended you? Answer me. What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? My people, is this how you thank your God? O my people.
- C** **Holy Lord God, holy and mighty God, holy and most merciful Redeemer; God eternal, keep us steadfast in the true faith. O Lord, have mercy.**

Choral Response: 434 "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy" (stanza 3)

Lamb of God, pure and holy, Who on the cross didst suffer, Ever patient and lowly, Thyself to scorn didst offer. All sins Thou borest for us, Else had despair reigned o'er us: Thy peace be with us, O Jesus! O Jesus!

Sentences and Collects

- P** He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him,
- C** **and by His stripes we are healed.**
- P** Almighty God, graciously behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, to be given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

- P** We all, like sheep, have gone astray;
C **and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**
P Almighty and most merciful God, give us grace so to contemplate the Passion of our Lord that we may find in it the forgiveness of our sins; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.
C **Amen.**

The Congregation is seated

The Office of Tenebrae

Hymn of Preparation: 440 “Jesus, I Will Ponder Now”

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to St. John

The First Reading

John 18:1-11 (Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus)

450 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” (1-4)
(The first candle is extinguished)

The Second Reading

John 18:12-27 (Jesus before the High Priest and the Denial of Peter)

450 “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” (5-7)
(The second candle is extinguished)

The Third Reading

John 18:28-40 (Jesus before Pilate)

448 “O Darkest Woe” (1-2)
(The third candle is extinguished)

The Fourth Reading

John 19:1-16a (Jesus Prepared for Crucifixion)

448 “O Darkest Woe” (3-4)
(The fourth candle is extinguished)

The Fifth Reading

John 19:16b-24 (The Crucifixion of Jesus)

448 “O Darkest Woe” (5-7)
(The fifth candle is extinguished)

The Sixth Reading

John 19:25-30 (Jesus’ Mother and His Death)

456 “Were You There” (1-2)
(The sixth candle is extinguished)

The Seventh Reading

John 19:31-42 (Jesus’ Side Is Pierced)

456 “Were You There” (3-4)

(The seventh candle is extinguished leaving the chancel area in darkness with the Christ candle as its only light)

The Sermon

The Congregation stands

The Bidding Prayer

A Let us pray . . . **P** . . . through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **C** **Amen.**
*At the last petition, the pastor will say, “Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray . . .” and all will pray **The Lord’s Prayer** together.*

The Congregation is seated

Hymn of Contemplation: 451 “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted”

The Reading of Isaiah 52:13-53:12

The Response to the Reading:

- P** What have you to say in response to this, dear friends?
C **It is true, He was pierced for our transgressions. He paid our punishment and died the death we deserved. But, He is our Savior and by His Holy Cross we have been redeemed.**
P You are right. Your salvation is found in these words:

“O dire dread, God’s Son is dead!”

(At the word “dead,” the strepitus is sounded and the Christ candle is extinguished and removed from the sanctuary leaving it in complete darkness. A brief silence is observed to allow all to meditate upon the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. After the silence, the Christ candle is re-lit and returned to its place on the altar. The congregation departs the sanctuary in silence with confident hope and eager expectation of the Resurrection. Those who wish to remain and meditate upon our Lord’s Passion may do so for as long as they like.)

Soli Deo Gloria!

Offerings: *For any who wish to leave an offering, you may do so by placing it in the offering plate by the door as you depart.*