



Covenant Lutheran Church, ELCA



*We welcome you to Covenant this Good Friday
April 18, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.*

The People of Covenant are called to:

Gather, Grow and Go Serve

...With God's Love!

Welcome

Thank you for joining us in worship.

WORSHIP ORDER – Friday, April 18, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.

Congregation participation in bold in bulletin

ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymn Book,

Land Acknowledgment

Covenant Lutheran Church acknowledges and honors the Indigenous Peoples and their ancestral homelands on which we gather. We stand on stolen ancestral homelands of the Ho-Chunk and the many other Indigenous Nations that have been historical occupants here. We respect Native Americans as caretakers of this land and Mother Earth. We strive to emulate the stewardship they first demonstrated. We embrace Indigenous People in love and gratitude. May we always seek a greater understanding of the Native community and their history as a whole as we aspire to work in meaningful partnership.

Welcome and Introduction

We now call this day Good because we know the end of the story, for the Three Days carry us into the resurrection. Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday.

A custom of our Christian tradition is to keep vigil with Christ at different times and in different ways during Holy Week. One of the places from which we draw this custom is Jesus' request to his disciples to keep watch while he prayed and agonized in the Garden of Gethsemane.

We also know that there were those few—including Mary Magdalene, Jesus' mother Mary, and the apostle John—who stayed near the cross and kept watch as Jesus suffered and died. Despite the horror of what was taking place, those most intimate with Jesus stayed with him to the end.

Standing with the disciples at the foot of the cross, we pray tonight for the whole world in the ancient tradition of the Stations of the Cross with the understanding that Christ's death offers life to all.

Traditionally, there are fourteen Stations of the Cross—most of them taken directly from Scripture, along with a few that have been passed down in Christian tradition. In this worship service, all fourteen stations are included so that, as much as possible, we can experience Christ’s road to the cross as the long and arduous journey that it was.

I have also shaped the service with intentional scriptures, music and meditations that, I hope, will merge the reflection of Jesus’ journey to the cross with our own lives today.

This will be a virtual – as in using the visual screens – stations of the cross journey this evening rather than one where you are asked to walk around different displays or stations.

Scripture and a short meditation will be read as we pause at each station this evening. The meditation is an invitation to prayer, and a time of silence follows each meditation.

During the time of silent prayer tonight you are also invited to listen to what Christ might have to say to you at that station.

I will end each time of silent prayer with, “Lord, in your mercy”, and you are invited to respond: Hear our prayer.

Whatever is bolded in the service on the screen, you are invited to read together as a group.

At some stations we will pause to sing our prayers.

Let us walk prayerfully into these moments of meditation, watching and waiting with Christ through the darkness of his death and burial so that together we can share in the joy of his resurrection.

As we quiet our hearts and minds for worship this evening, we begin with our opening prayer and then begin our Stations of the Cross reflections.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Let us pray: **Lord Jesus, help me to feel your presence as I begin this journey to Calvary with you. Help me to find in your passion and death**

the strength to take up my cross and follow you, every day of my life.
Amen.

First Station: Jesus is condemned to death

No one can have greater love than to give his life for his friends.

John 15:13

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, so often I judge others and fail to be understanding or loving. Help me to see the people in my life through your eyes and not the eyes of those that condemn.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Second Station: Jesus Accepts His Cross

*Jesus said to everyone, "All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow me. **Luke 9:23 CEB***

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, you embraced your cross to redeem the world. Help me to embrace the "crosses" in my life — the struggles, temptations, disappointments, failures, and pain. Only by recognizing my own weakness can I discover your strength.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As we accompany Jesus through his final moments to the cross and his suffering on the cross, let us remember that this is a time Jesus stands in solidarity with all who are suffering, and in that solidarity, Jesus welcomes us with love, as we pray, let us sing.

Hymn

What a Friend we Have in Jesus

ELW 742

The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

¹³God has pierced my heart with shafts from the quiver. ¹⁴Everybody laughs at me; I am the butt of their songs all day. ¹⁵God has filled me with bitter herbs, and sated me with gall. ¹⁶God has broken my teeth

on the rocks and trampled me into the dirt. ¹⁷ There is no peace in my life; I have forgotten what prosperity is. ¹⁸ "My light is gone!" I cry; the Most High is my only hope. **Lamentations 3:13-18; TIB**

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, you know how often I fall trying to follow you. Yet, you are always there to lift me up. Help me always to trust in your loving care for me.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

Is my misfortune nothing to you— you who walk past me? Look around, do a search: is there anyone else who suffers my pain? Anyone else inflicted with these torments which God has given to me on this day of divine anger? **Lamentations 1:12; TIB, adapted**

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, your mother Mary's grief was only surpassed by her love for you. So often you come to me in the form of others, and their love gives me new life. Help me to see clearly the times you show your love for me through the people in my life.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

³⁵ When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me, ³⁶ and when I was naked, you gave me clothes to wear. When I was sick, you took care of me, and when I was in jail, you visited me.

³⁷ Then the ones who pleased the Lord will ask, "When did we give you something to eat or drink? ³⁸ When did we welcome you as a stranger or give you clothes to wear ³⁹ or visit you while you were sick or in jail?"

⁴⁰ *The king will answer, “Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me.”*

For I was hungry, and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me; ³⁶ naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me; in prison and you came to visit me.’

³⁷ *Then these just will ask, ‘When did we see you hungry and feed you, or see you thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in, or clothe you in your nakedness?*

³⁹ *When did we see you ill or in prison and come to visit you?’ ⁴⁰ The ruler will answer them, ‘The truth is, every time you did this for the least of my sisters or brothers, you did it for me.’*

Matthew 25:35-40; CEB

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, sometimes I am apathetic and indifferent to the needs of others. I even neglect the ones I love. Help me to see that in loving and serving others I love and serve you.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Sixth Station: A Woman Wipes the Face of Jesus

There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. He was despised and rejected — a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.

We turned our backs on him and looked the other way.

He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!

Isaiah 53:2b-4

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, at times I am afraid to reach out to others. I do nothing when I should act. I say nothing when I should speak out. Give me a

deeper and more courageous faith. Help me to trust that you are with me.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." **Matthew 11:28**

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, failure and disappointment sometimes lead me to despair. I hide behind my pride and self-pity, withdrawing from you and others. Give me the hope I need and help me never to fear beginning again.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We continue to pray as we sing:

Hymn

Softly and Tenderly

ELW 608

The Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem

A large crowd trailed behind, including many grief-stricken women. But Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, don't weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." **Luke 23:27-28**

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, your unceasing compassion for others overwhelms me. I feel petty and selfish when I think of you and the way you love. Help me to pour out my love, that I might be filled with your love.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

"For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." **Luke 14:11**

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, your failing strength makes me see just how helpless I am. Without you, I can do nothing. Help me to rely on your strength and to see always my need for you.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them.

Luke 14:11

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, seeing you humiliated so cruelly makes me realize how I cling to my possessions, my accomplishments, and my selfish ways. Help me to let go of those things in my life that prevent me from growing closer to you and those things that hinder my relationships with others.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."

Luke 23:34

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, when I see you crucified I can never doubt your great love for me. Help me to see your cross as a sign of your love and forgiveness.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We sing:

Hymn

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

ELW 335

*We Pause our Stations of the Cross Reflections
as we pause beneath the cross of Jesus*

Psalm: Psalm 22 *(Led by Pastor Wendy, read responsively)*

¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

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

²**My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer;
by night, but I find no rest.**

³Yet you are the Holy One, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴**Our ancestors put their trust in you,
they trusted, and you rescued them.**

⁵They cried out to you and were delivered;
they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

⁶**But as for me, I am a worm and not human,
scorned by all and despised by the people.**

⁷All who see me laugh me to scorn;
they curl their lips; they shake their heads.

⁸**“Trust in the Lord; let the Lord deliver;
let God rescue him if God so delights in him.”**

⁹Yet you are the one who drew me forth from the womb,
and kept me safe on my mother’s breast.

¹⁰**I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born;
you were my God when I was still in my mother’s womb.**

¹¹Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is no one to help.

¹²**Many young bulls encircle me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me.**

¹³They open wide their jaws at me, like a slashing and roaring lion.

- 14 I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint;
my heart within my breast is melting wax.**
- 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; my tongue sticks to the roof
of my mouth; and you have laid me in the dust of death.
- 16 Packs of dogs close me in, a band of evildoers circles round me;
they pierce my hands and my feet.**
- 17 I can count all my bones while they stare at me and gloat.
- 18 They divide my garments among them;
for my clothing, they cast lots.**
- 19 But you, O Lord, be not | far away; O my help, hasten to my aid.
- 20 Deliver me from the sword, my life from the power of the dog.**
- 21 Save me from the lion's mouth!
From the horns of wild bulls you have rescued me.
- 22 I will declare your name to my people;
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.**
- 23 You who fear the Lord, give praise! All you of Jacob's line, give glory.
Stand in awe of the Lord, all you off-spring of Israel.
- 24 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.**
- 25 From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the Lord.
- 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied, Let those who seek the Lord give
praise! May your hearts live forever!**
- 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the Lord, who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, 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.

³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the Lord,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying to them, "The Lord has acted!"

Pastoral Reflection

Pastor Wendy Moen

Silence for personal reflection

Pastoral Prayer written by John W. Vest, posted on John Vest. (johnvest.com)

Prayer for Good Friday

God of mystery and wonder,
because we know the ending of the story,
it's tempting for us
to ignore the darkness of this day.
It's tempting for us
to go about our business as usual.
It's tempting for us
to move too quickly
to the dawn of light on Easter morning.
But give us courage and strength on this day
to live for a while in the darkness,
to set aside comfort and pleasure,
to feel the darkness
in which so many of your children dwell,
the darkness into which your son Jesus entered.
As we reflect on the frailty of Christ,
remind us of the frailty of all life.
As we cringe at the suffering of Christ,
make us mindful of suffering throughout the world.

As we witness the death of Christ,
bring us back full circle to the beginning of Lent,
to the wisdom of Ash Wednesday:
the awareness of our mortality
and the mortality of those we love.

Gracious God,
deep in the human heart
is an unquenchable trust
that life does not end with death.

Like a seed which is buried
in order to bring forth life,
Christ goes to the tomb
to usher in new life.

We trust that we too will be raised to new life,
in this world, here and now,
and in the mystery of what lies beyond physical death.

We trust that the whole world will be born anew,
that your kingdom is coming
as a new heaven
and a new earth.

On this day of darkness, it is for this kingdom that we boldly pray.
Our Father... *(continue directly to Lord's Prayer)*

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily
bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the
kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen**

Hymn

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

ELW 338

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies Upon the Cross

*⁷ Instead Jesus gave up everything and became a slave, when he
became like one of us. ⁸ Christ was humble. He obeyed God and even*

died on a cross. ⁹ Then God gave Christ the highest place and honored his name above all others. ¹⁰ So at the name of Jesus everyone will bow down, those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.

Philippians 2:7b-10; CEV

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, your broken and lifeless body calls me to a deeper faith. You chose death, even death on a cross, to be the atoning act of sacrifice for my sin. Although I will never be able to repay that debt, help me to receive my “crosses” as a way of loving you.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

⁹God’s love was revealed in our midst in this way: by sending the Only Begotten Son into the world, that we might have faith through the Anointed One. ¹⁰ Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God, but that God has loved us and has sent the Only Begotten Son to be an offering for our sins.

1 John 4:9-10; TIB adapted

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, seeing your body taken down from the cross reminds me how fearful I am of letting go of my own life. I am scared when I think of being unimportant, useless and helpless. Help me to see my life in your hands.

Silence held for reflection

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives.

John 12:24

Meditation:

Lord Jesus, when I see the great stone sealing your tomb, I feel alone and abandoned. Even though you sometimes seem distant or absent, help me always to believe in your nearness and loving presence.

Silence held for reflection

Closing reflection:

In a culture that tells us that we should get what we want and what we're entitled to, and that we ought to live our happiest, best life, it definitely goes against the grain to dwell on something sorrowful. And yet, the words of our closing hymn invite us to take a journey through the last days and hours of Christ's life.

And so, we join the crowd huddled on the sides of the streets, or at the foot of the cross, or in front of a sealed grave. We are brought together because of our trembling and our tears.

Geography, time, culture – none of these hinder our togetherness in the body of Christ.

And so as we sing this hymn, we gather with Christians around the world, remembering as we lift our voices with the entire body of Christ in all times and all places, our voices filled with mourning, but also with hope. For we know that the journey of Good Friday ultimately ends with an open and empty tomb, where the earthquake causes us to tremble in awe and praise.

Hymn

Were You There

ELW 353

Candles extinguished during final verse

We now continue our prayers on our own as we follow those who carry Jesus' body to the tomb and wait in silence as Jesus' body is laid there and the tomb is sealed.

Silence held for reflection

As we are ready, depart in silence, prepared to watch and wait with Christ until Resurrection Sunday.

Announcements:

- ✝ Thank you for being here! Learn about more events and Worship opportunities at Covluth.org
- ✝ **Easter Flower Order *Thank you!*** Flowers available for pick up April 20 after Easter Worship
- ✝ **Easter Sunday is April 20**, Join for a small breakfast and a Children's Egg Hunt before Worship
- ✝ **The office will be closed April 21 – May you enjoy this holiday in safety and peace**
- ✝ **New Member reception April 27 in Worship**, please join to welcome our newest members
- ✝ Join to watch a movie about **Bonhoeffer Sunday April 27** in the Cinema, after Worship
- ✝ **Covenant Book Group** 2nd Thur at 1pm **May 8** Gateway Room, everyone is invited to join
- ✝ **Feed our Souls-** the 2nd Fri of the month- **May 12** 10:30a-1:30p at St. Marks in Madison
- ✝ **Women's Coffee at Covenant May 17 9-10:30am** *Join for a heart full of love & laughter*



Care to contribute to our Church and ministries?
 Scan this QR Code to give digitally with Vanco Online Giving.
 Or visit www.covluth.org and click 'On-line Giving'!
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WORSHIP NOTES

Pastor: *Pastor Wendy Moen*; **Assistant Minister:** *Deb Oakland*;
Lector: *Beth Gardner*;
Greeter/s: *Karen Hanson-Cook, Sam Smith*;
Organist/Pianist: *Meghann Proper*;
Ushers: *Mark Herbst, Rhetta Smith, Bill Cook*;
Altar Guild: *Jean Sime*; **Sound/projection:** *Jude Surrell*;
Communion Assistant: *Jean and Norm Sime, Philayne Chose*

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