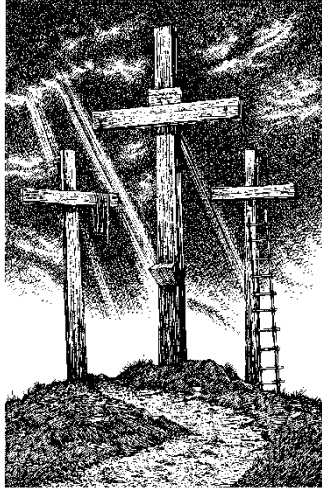


TENEBRAE – GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 3, 2026



REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Serving Absecon – Galloway Township

Pastor – Rev. Heidi Link

Brian Conover - Music Director

INTRODUCTION

We gather, as do Christians throughout the world, to hear the proclamation of the Passion, to pray for the life of the world, and to meditate on the life-giving cross. The ancient title for this day--the triumph of the cross--reminds us that the church gathers to offer thanksgiving for Christ who hung on the wood of the tree for our salvation.

In the service of Tenebrae (a Latin word meaning shadows or darkness), we hear the story of the Passion of our Lord. A feature of the service is the gradual extinction of all lights, except the Christ Candle. Even this is finally removed from view, leaving the church in darkness, symbolizing the apparent victory of the powers of darkness as our Lord suffers death. A loud noise is made, suggesting the earthquake of the Passion Narrative. The restoration of the Christ Candle is a foreshadowing of the Resurrection.

SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

* CALL TO WORSHIP

God said, “Let there be light;” but we still cling to the darkness.

We want darkness to cover our sins.

God sent his Son into the world not only to shed light upon our sins, but also to pay the price for them.

Let us then turn away from the darkness of sin; and in true, repentant humility, let us receive the light of hope in Christ Jesus.

* - Congregation Stands (If for any reason you are unable to stand during the service, please remain seated.)

*** CONGREGATIONAL SONG**

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross



1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the
2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the
3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and



prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that
love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and



count but loss and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ROCKINGHAM OLD, adapt. Edward Miller, 1731–1807

*** PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us confess our sin.

Gracious Father, time and again we turn to the shadows of sin, and away from the light of your love. Forgive us Lord. Help us to turn away from the paths of darkness, and to cling forever to the cross on which our Savior suffered and died for our salvation. We are not worthy Lord, but trusting in the loving promise of your Son; we pray that in hearing the story of his Passion, we may be cleansed by the fire of repentance, and made new through his blood. We humbly ask in the name of our Savior, your Son, who died that we might live. Amen.

*** RESPONSIVE READING**

Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrow:

Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted

But he was wounded for our transgression, and was bruised for our iniquities;

The chastisement that made us whole was upon him, by whose stripes we are healed.

Responsive Reading Continues

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to our own way;

And the Lord has laid on this servant the iniquity of us all. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.

*** CONGREGATIONAL SONG**

Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed



1 A - las! And did my Sav - ior bleed, and did my sov-'reign die?
2 Was it for sins that I had done he groaned up - on the tree?
3 Well might the sun in dark - ness hide and shut its glo - ries in



Would he de - vote that sa - cred head for sin - ners such as I?
A - maz - ing pit - y, grace un-known, and love be - yond de - gree!
when God, the might - y mak - er, died for his own crea - tures' sin.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
Music: MARTYRDOM, Hugh Wilson, 1764–1824

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

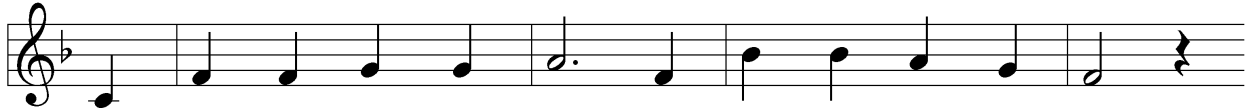
The Passion of our Lord in narrative form is divided into 15 readings. Following each reading, there is a time of silence, and a candle is extinguished after every reading. A hymn is sung after the 3rd, 7th, and 10th readings.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG AFTER 3rd READING

My Song Is Love Unknown



1 My song is love un - known, my Sav - ior's love to me,
2 He came from his blest throne, sal - va - tion to be - stow;
3 Some - times they strew his way and his sweet prais - es sing;



love to the love - less shown, that they might love - ly be.
but men made strange, and none the longed-for Christ would know.
re - sound-ing all the day ho - san - nas to their King.



Oh, who am I, that for my sake my Lord should take frail
But, oh, my friend, my friend in - deed, who at my need his
Then "Cru - ci - fy!" is all their breath, and for his death they



flesh and die? My Lord should take frail flesh and die?
life did spend; who at my need his life did spend!
thirst and cry, and for his death they thirst and cry.

Text: Samuel Crossman, c. 1624–1683
Music: RHOSYMEDRE, John D. Edwards, 1806–1885

CONGREGATIONAL SONG AFTER 7th READING

In the Cross of Christ I Glory



1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and



o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
love up - on my way, from the cross the



sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
ra - diance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.

Text: John Bowring, 1792–1872
Music: RATHBUN, Ithamar Conkey, 1815–1867

CONGREGATIONAL SONG AFTER 10th READING

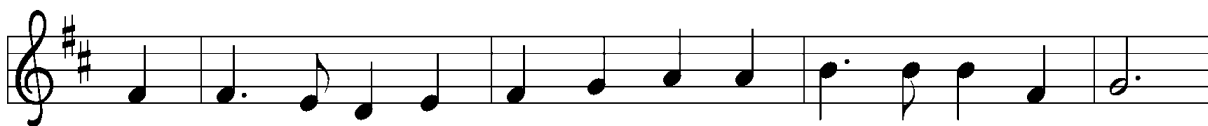
Beneath the Cross of Jesus



1 Be - neath the cross of Je - sus I long to take my stand;
2 Up - on the cross of Je - sus, my eye at times can see
3 I take, O cross, your shad - ow for my a - bid - ing place;



the shad - ow of a might - y rock with - in a wea - ry land,
the ver - y dy - ing form of one who suf - fered there for me.
I ask no oth - er sun - shine than the sun - shine of his face;



a home with - in a wil - der - ness, a rest up - on the way,
And from my con - trite heart, with tears, two won - ders I con - fess:
con - tent to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,



from the burn - ing of the noon - tide heat and bur - dens of the day.
the . . . won - der of his glo - rious love and my un - wor - thi - ness.
my . . . sin - ful self my on - ly shame, my glo - ry all, the cross.

Text: Elizabeth C. Clephane, 1830–1869

Music: ST. CHRISTOPHER, Frederick C. Maker, 1844–1927

During the final reading, following the death of Jesus, the Christ Candle is removed leaving the nave in darkness. The congregation quietly meditates on the death of Christ as a solo voice sings, “Were You There”.

THE CANDLE RETURNS, and the congregation kneels in prayer.

PRAYER (kneeling)

Behold, the life giving cross on which was hung the salvation of the whole world

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Forgive us gentle Savior. The darkness around us mirrors the darkness within us. Carelessly, we turned our backs on your light. Thoughtlessly, we have closed our eyes to your love and the sacrifice you made for us. Flood our dark souls with your light, dear Lord. Help us keep the images of your suffering and death always before us, so that we no longer stray into the darkness of sin. In honest repentance, we offer ourselves to you, precious Lord. Make us truly yours; for we pray in your name.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*CONGREGATIONAL SONG

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded



1 O sa - cred head, now wound - ed, with grief and shame weighed down,
2 How art thou pale with an - guish, with sore a - buse and scorn;
3 What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank thee, dear - est friend,



now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, thine on - ly crown;
how does that vis - age lan - guish which once was bright as morn!
for this thy dy - ing sor - row, thy pit - y with - out end?



O sa - cred head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was thine!
Thy grief and bit - ter pas - sion were all for sin - ners' gain;
Oh, make me thine for - ev - er, and should I faint - ing be,

Song Continues



Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call thee mine.
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but thine the dead - ly pain.
Lord, let me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to thee.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, based on Arnulf of Louvain, c. 1250; tr. composite
Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, German melody, c. 1500, adapt. Hans L. Hassler, 1564–1612

***BLESSING**

May the Light of Christ, who died that we might live, dwell in your hearts from this night forward and forever. Go in his peace. **Amen.**

***** ALL DEPART IN SILENCE *****



Please leave the nave and church quietly this evening reflecting on the Passion of Our Lord and his great love for you. You may remain in the nave following the service, for personal prayer and meditation.

Good Friday & Lenten Offerings may be given in the offering plates at the church doors as you leave church this evening.