

**Good Friday**  
**April 2, 2026**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**✠ Tenebrae ✠**  
**(Service of Darkness)**

**As We Gather**

Tonight's service of darkness, also known as Tenebrae (the name means "darkness" or "shadows"), is a Holy Week devotion that dates back to the seventh or eighth century A.D. and is characterized by the successive extinguishing of candles as the service progresses. There are many different forms that the service may take, and they are designed to make the service an especially powerful witness of the suffering and death of Christ for our sins. The service is best understood when coupled with the Easter Vigil service. Where Tenebrae ends in darkness, and death, Easter Vigil returns the light, because Christ is risen. Where tonight all is bear and empty, Easter Vigil replaces the vestments of the Altar, and brings great joy in the Holy Supper. The contrast between the services form "bookends" with which to celebrate this most holy time.

The offering will be gathered during the singing of the opening anthem. There will be no "traditional sermon" this evening, instead there will be a short lesson to be drawn from each reading.

Then, after the final reading, the *strepitus* is heard, a harsh noise indicating the closing of the tomb. The final candle will be removed, symbolizing our Lord's death and burial. During this we close the service with the singing of the *Angus Dei* or "Lamb of God." This is sung without any music, in the darkness, while the candle is being carried out.

*At the completion of the service, feel free to sit in the darkness of the sanctuary for a few minutes for meditation. When you are ready, please leave silently, maintaining the spirit of solemnity befitting this solemn occasion.*

**Opening Solo** "Were You There"

LSB 456 Solo st. 1

**Offerings**

(offering to be received, and will be held in the back of the church)

**Invocation**

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

C: Amen

*Psalm of Confession together*

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
- 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.
- 5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- 6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts ; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.
- 7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.
- 10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- 11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.
- 14 Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.
- 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
- 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
- 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- 18 In your good pleasure make Zion prosper; build up the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then there will be righteous sacrifices, whole burnt offerings to delight you; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins.

As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

**Choir Anthem** *What Love*

arr. Patrick Liebergen and David Johnson

## *Service of Progressive Darkness*

### **Reading Part I** John 1:1-17

Lesson of the Passion

#### **449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

- 1 O sacred Head, now wounded,  
With grief and shame weighed down,  
Now scornfully surrounded  
With thorns, Thine only crown.  
O sacred Head, what glory,  
What bliss, till now was Thine!  
Yet, though despised and gory,  
I joy to call Thee mine.

### **Passion Reading Part II** Matthew 26:36-56

Lesson of the Passion

#### **449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

- 2 How pale Thou art with anguish,  
With sore abuse and scorn!  
How doth Thy face now languish  
That once was bright as morn!  
Grim death, with cruel rigor,  
Hath robbed Thee of Thy life;  
Thus Thou hast lost Thy vigor,  
Thy strength, in this sad strife.

### **Passion Reading Part III** Matthew 26:57-75

Lesson of the Passion

#### **449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

- 3 What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered  
Was all for sinners' gain;  
Mine, mine was the transgression,  
But Thine the deadly pain.  
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!  
'Tis I deserve Thy place;  
Look on me with Thy favor,  
And grant to me Thy grace.

### **Passion Reading Part IV** John 18:28-40

Lesson of the Passion

#### **449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

- 4 My Shepherd, now receive me;  
My Guardian, own me Thine.  
Great blessings Thou didst give me,  
O Source of gifts divine.  
Thy lips have often fed me  
With words of truth and love;  
Thy Spirit oft hath led me  
To heav'nly joys above.

### **Passion Reading Part V** John 19:1-16

Lesson of the Passion

#### **449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

- 5 What language shall I borrow  
To thank Thee, dearest Friend,  
For this Thy dying sorrow,  
Thy pity without end?  
O make me Thine forever!  
And should I fainting be,  
Lord, let me never, never,  
Outlive my love for Thee.

**Passion Reading Part VI** Luke 23:26-43

Lesson of the Passion

**449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

6 My Savior, be Thou near me  
When death is at my door;  
Then let Thy presence cheer me,  
Forsake me nevermore!  
When soul and body languish,  
O leave me not alone,  
But take away mine anguish  
By virtue of Thine own!

**Passion Reading Part VII** Matthew 27:32-54

Lesson of the Passion

**449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

7 Be Thou my consolation,  
My shield, when I must die;  
Remind me of Thy passion  
When my last hour draws nigh.  
Mine eyes shall then behold Thee,  
Upon Thy cross shall dwell,  
My heart by faith enfold Thee.  
Who dieth thus dies well

**Passion Reading The Burial** John 19:31-42

*( Sung without accompaniment, in the darkness )*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

*You may sit in the darkness and meditate on the Passion of our Lord. When you are ready, please leave in silence. Please return on Easter Morning, to the joy of the empty tomb, and the Risen Christ.*

**Acknowledgments**

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