



The Seven
Last Words
of Christ

théodore dubois

with Choir and Orchestra

Good Friday at 7pm

SAINT LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH

9100 COLESVILLE ROAD | SILVER SPRING, MD 20910 | WWW.SAINTLUKE.US
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GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE OF TENEBRAE

April 3, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.

We are about to participate in one of the oldest services of Christendom. This service consists entirely of scripture readings, hymns, and music designed to call attention to the fact that we have been accomplices to the sufferings of Christ and yet received his abundant love and mercy.

Our salvation has been purchased by Christ for a huge price and an eternal purpose. This service is a dramatic reminder of this costly sacrifice. Jesus Christ has paid for our salvation with his own life. The silence and darkness of this service reflects the gloom of Good Friday. On that day, even the sun hid its face. The earth trembled! The stark solemnity of this night draws a firm contrast with the Easter liturgy to come. The one candle with which tonight's service ends will once again pierce the darkness of the church nave, and we shall wait in a vigilant and steady hope for the news.

The service begins with a fully lighted Tenebrae Hearse (7 candles). Jesus has been crucified. It seems that he has lost the battle against death and the devil, succumbing after progressive trials of torment in the bewildering onslaught of evil. Each stage of this fearsome experience is marked by the extinguishing of candles until a darkened nave bears witness to the ultimate consequences of human selfishness. Before the service ends, however, even as the darkness becomes more intense, a new light of hope tells us that the powers of darkness cannot overcome the light of Jesus Christ. He who died in our stead reminds us that he will come to us, even in the depths of despair, and draw us to him.

It is written in John's Gospel . . . *That light has come into the world, and the darkness cannot overcome it . . .* even on Good Friday! Christ Jesus is the hope of the world.

THE GATHERING

PRELUDE

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
Schola Cantorum, Piano & Cello

arr. Joel Raney (b. 1956)

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES AND THE VERSICLES

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Christ has humbled himself and become obedient unto death, even the death on the cross.

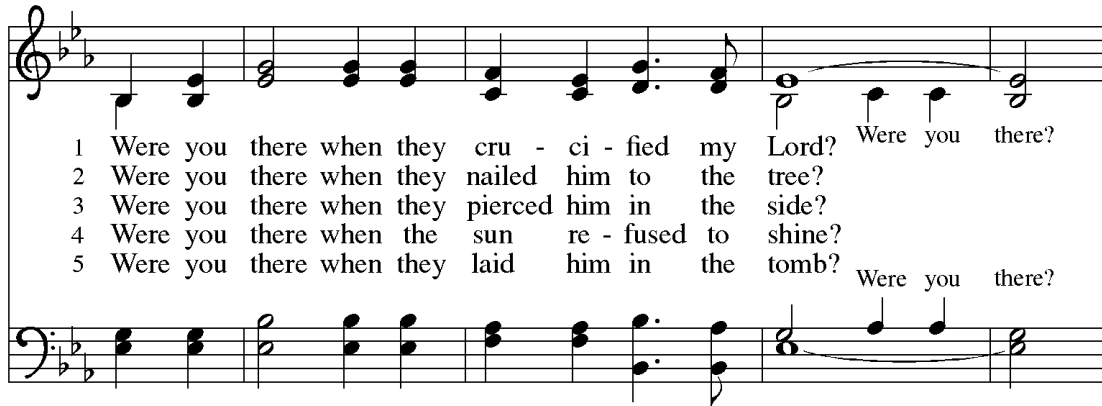
At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

And every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

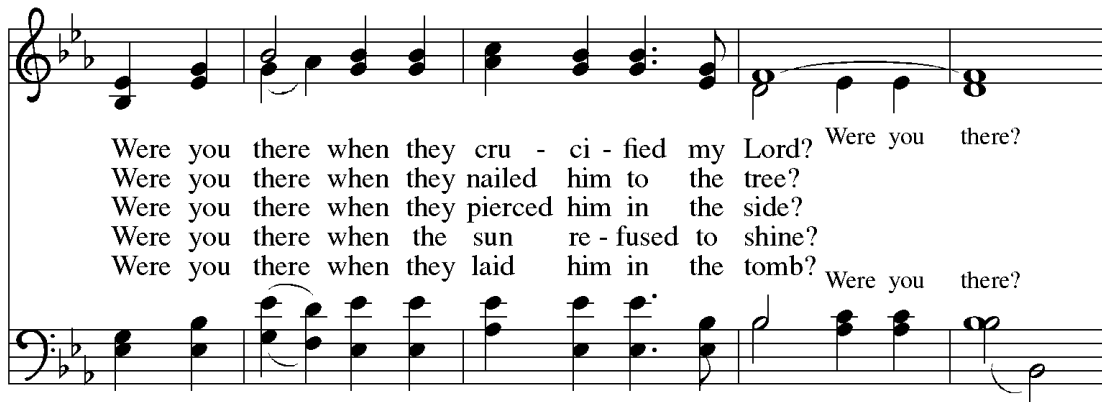
Silence is kept for reflection.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW 353 – Were You There

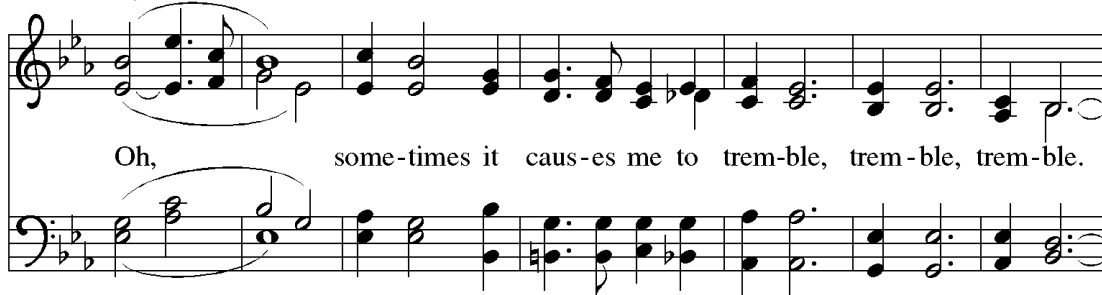


1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there?
2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
4 Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
5 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there?

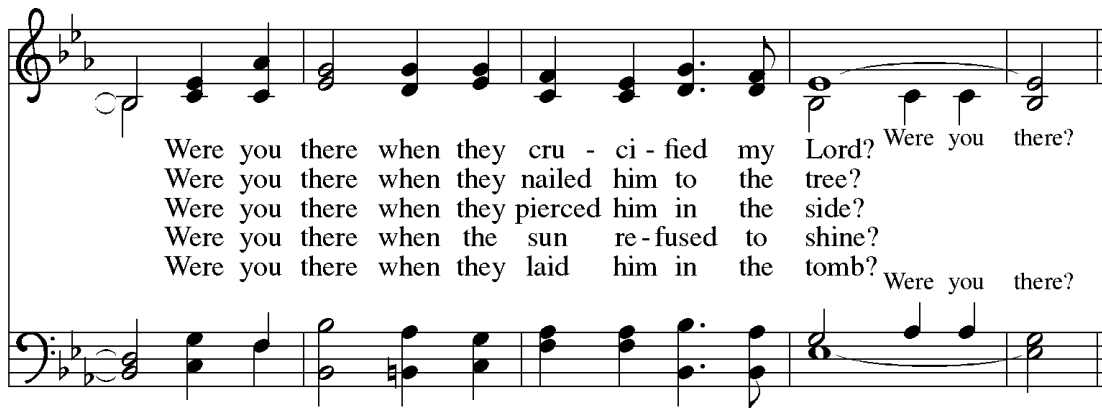


Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there?

Refrain



Oh, some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble.



Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when the sun re - fused to shine?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you there?

INTRODUCTION

Soprano Solo

FIRST WORD

Father, forgive them

Saint Luke 23:32-38

He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity, and as one from whom others hide their face he was despised, and we held him of no account. (Isaiah 53:3)

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

Baritone & Tenor Solo, with Chorus

The first candle is extinguished.

SECOND WORD

Thou shalt be in Paradise today with me

Saint Luke 23:39-43

Therefore, I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out himself to death and was numbered with the transgressors, yet he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:12)

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Tenor & Baritone Duet, with Chorus

The second candle is extinguished.

THIRD WORD*See, o woman! Behold thy son, beloved*

Saint John 19: 23-27

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with affliction. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the Lord shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. (Isaiah 53:10-11)

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So, they said to one another, "Let us not tear it but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Soprano, Tenor, Baritone Solo, with Chorus

The third candle is extinguished.

FOURTH WORD*My God, why hast thou forsaken me*

Saint Matthew 27:45-49

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

Baritone Solo

The fourth candle is extinguished.

FIFTH WORD*I am thirsty*

Saint John 19:28-29

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So, they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

Tenor & Baritone Solo, with Chorus

The fifth candle is extinguished.

SIXTH WORD*Father, into thy hands I commend my soul*

Saint Luke 23:44-46

By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. (Isaiah 53:8-9)

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

Tenor Solo, with Chorus

The sixth candle is extinguished.

SEVENTH WORD*It is finished*

Saint Matthew 27:50-54

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases, yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Soprano, Tenor, and Baritone Solo, with Chorus

All candles are extinguished.

SILENT MEDITATION

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.

The light returns.

THE SENDING

SILENT PROCESSION

All depart in silence.

We give thanks for all those leading tonight's service; pastors, lectors, soloists, choir, and instrumentalists, without whom this worship experience would not have been possible.

The Rev. Connie A. Miller, *Senior Pastor*
Becky Unkenholz, *Crucifer, Candle Bearer*

Mr. Adam Scott Graham, *Director of Music*
Schola Cantorum

Bethany Brookshire, Soprano
Wayne Jennings, Tenor
Sean Link, Baritone
Carol Feather Martin, Organist

Dr. Tanya Greenfield, Harp
Kathleen Jacobi, Flute
Zoila Holtzer, Oboe
Nehemiah Russell, Timpani

Michelle Ruiz, Violin I
Lerna May-Frandsen, Violin II
YaShauna Swan, Viola
Matthew Paiz, Cello
Gary Richardson, String Bass

Soprano
Bethany Brookshire
Margaret Neily
Sarah Pfanz
Becky Unkenholz

Alto
Leefolia Brunt
Tacy Downing
Alix Evans
Sarah Hanson
Donna Nelson

Tenor
Ellen Miller
Ralph Watkins

Bass
Brock Beamer
Rob Grace
William Leader
William Schultz
Willard Unkenholz

Easter Sunday Festival Worship 8:45 & 11:15am, (English), 1:00 p.m. (Spanish)



EASTER SUNDAY

**8:45 a.m. FESTIVAL WORSHIP (ENGLISH)
10:00 a.m. EASTER RECEPTION**

**11:15 a.m. FESTIVAL WORSHIP (ENGLISH)
12:15 p.m. EASTER RECEPTION**

**1:00 p.m. FESTIVAL WORSHIP (SPANISH)
2:00 p.m. EASTER RECEPTION**