

Welcome – David

Welcome to this Good Friday service. Our worship today is the continuation of yesterday's Maundy Thursday service, the second of three holy days. We call this day Good, because we remember that God's love for us is so good, so great, that Jesus' willingly died on the cross for us, defeating anything that would separate us from God and one another, including sin and death.

On the first Good Friday, Jesus' followers were scattered in different locations, locked inside their rooms out of fear. This year, we are also separated from one another, and maybe we are afraid or uncertain about what lies ahead. Yet, we are also gathered together in this worship service, united as a church that stretches across the world, to remember that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ. And, so we pray, sing, and hear stories that remind us that God's faithfulness is especially good when we are most undeserving and in need.

Gathering Prayer – Naomi: Let us pray...

Jesus, today we pause to remember your sacrificial love that shone light into the darkness, that bore life from such emptiness, that revealed hope out of devastation, that spoke truth through incrimination, that released freedom in spite of imprisonment, and brought us forgiveness instead of punishment. Thank you that we can now walk in the light of your life, hope, truth, freedom and forgiveness, this day and everyday. Amen.

Give Me Jesus (ELW 770, verses 1-2)



Song Intro – Tim

The words to the next hymn, “Go to Dark Gethsemane,” have been used by Jesus’ followers for almost 200 years to observe this holy day. It is often sung one verse at a time between readings from Jesus’ Passion. The three verses we sing today follow Jesus from his agonizing prayer in the garden, to his unfair trial, and finally to his crucifixion.

Go to Dark Gethsemane (ELW 347, verses 1-3)

Song Intro – David

The story of Passover plays an important role in the Passion story. Just as Jewish houses were slaughtering a lamb for their Passover meal to remember how God saved them from a life of slavery in Egypt, Jesus was dying as an innocent victim to take away our sin and guilt. For this reason, Jesus is often called the Lamb of God. This next song offers a personal reflection on Jesus’ gift of self-less love, recognizing that we are all God’s lambs, cared for by the Great Shepherd.

Lamb of God (ELW 336)

Song Intro – Naomi

The origin of the words for “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” are almost 800 years old. For centuries, Jesus’ followers have sung these words to remember that, although we didn’t witness Jesus’ death, we continue to experience a connection to this important event both as the cause of Jesus’ suffering and as undeserving recipients of God’s grace.

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded (ELW 351, verses 1-3)

Gospel – Luke 23:32-43 – Tim

Kim Larson Reflection

How Deep the Father’s Love for Us (Townend, verses 1-2)

Song Intro – David

The last two songs are spirituals. For a community that has known great suffering, African-Americans have a special connection to the story of Jesus' innocent suffering and death. The first song, "They Crucified My Lord," confesses that even though Jesus suffered greatly, "he never said a mumbalin' word." That is, he never complained.

They Crucified My Lord (ELW 350, verses 1-3)

Song Intro – Naomi

Our final song, "Were You There," again reminds us that even though we didn't witness Jesus' crucifixion, we are forever connected to that pivotal moment in history. Jesus' experienced profound suffering because of God's undeniable and unending love for us. In the end, it's God's great love in Christ that causes us to still tremble with gratitude. We invite you to the conclusion of this song to observe a time of prayerful silence, and then to join us for the celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. Good Friday is not the end of our story.

Were You There (ELW 353, verses 1, 4, 5)