

Good Friday

April 3, 2026

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This holy day recalls the last hours of Jesus’ life as the suffering servant is nailed to the cross, fulfilling his mission as the sacrificial Lamb of God. The sinless One takes on humanity’s sin as he is betrayed by his closest companions, arrested and sentenced to a shameful death, even as Pontius Pilate finds no fault in him. We see ourselves in the angry crowd and lament our own denial of our Lord.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 52:13—53:12 **Pierced for Our Transgressions**

Isaiah spoke of the one to come who would suffer for our sin, despised and rejected, afflicted and crushed by our iniquities. Like a lamb to the slaughter, so this innocent one would be put to death for the sins of the wicked. Many would be counted as righteous because of his intercessory suffering.

Psalm 22 **Why Have You Forsaken Me?**

The psalmist cried out to the Lord in the midst of feelings of being rejected and forsaken. The same words that Jesus would utter from the cross are first heard here in this psalm of lament. Mocked, scorned, and put to shame, the psalmist still confessed the Lord as God and cried for help even as his body wasted away.

Second Reading: Hebrews 4:14–16; 5:7–9 **Jesus, Our Great High Priest**

Jesus Christ, our great high priest, understands fully this human life, having lived as a man, suffered for our transgressions even though he was without sin, and cried for deliverance as he was hanging on the cross. This Jesus offers us undeserved mercy and grace even as his suffering has become the source of our eternal salvation.

Gospel Reading: John 18:1—19:42 **Betrayal, Arrest, and Crucifixion of Jesus**

Though it was unlawful for religious people to carry out any executions, the people surrounding Jesus pushed for his trial and crucifixion. The Roman leaders were all too satisfied to oblige, even if just to quell the unrest among the Jewish pilgrims.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: Black (or none)

- Use the Kyrie.
- Omit the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Apostles’ Creed.

Keep the chancel simplified following the previous worship’s stripping of the altar. Place black shrouds on the altar and all other appropriate furniture in the worship space.

Consider lighting the chancel space with multiple candles instead of electric light to create a solemn mood as the sun goes down and the worship space grows dark.

You will find the Bidding Prayer for Good Friday on the Lent Season page of SOWeR.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Beneath the Cross of Jesus	107	---	---	338	142	142
Ah, Holy Jesus	123	---	---	349	133	133
Go to Dark Gethsemane	109	---	436	347	145	145
Were You There?	92	---	456	353	147	147
Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed	98	---	437	337	143	143
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded	117	---	449	352	116	116
In the Hour of Trial	106	---	---	---	141	141
Jesus, in Thy Dying Woes	112	---	447	---	113	113
The Old Rugged Cross	---	---	---	---	139	139
What Wondrous Love is This	385	---	543	666	254	254

*The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”*

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles:
Betrayed with a Kiss (CCLI# 4816209)
Lord, I Need You (CCLI# 5925687)
At the Cross (Love Ran Red) (CCLI# 7017786)
Worthy is the Lamb (CCLI# 3217555)
Above All (CCLI# 2672885)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.