

# WELCOME

## to Bethel Lutheran Church!

Life and death stand side by side as we enter into Good Friday.

At the heart of worship today, is the Passion story of Jesus according to Matthew. The ancient title for the day—the triumph of the cross—reminds us that the church gathers not to mourn this day, but to celebrate Christ’s life-giving passion, and to find strength and hope in the Tree of Life.

\* You are invited to stand as you are able.

Prelude: Selections from “Seven Last Words” Joseph Haydn

The Welcome

\*The Pastoral Greeting & Call to Worship:

Leader: We come to the cross in the name of the Triune God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

L: We come to the cross on which the Lord of Life was crucified.

**P: O Lord, give us Your presence to stay with You in Your suffering and death.**

L: We stay with the cross that we may know the depth of God’s love for us in Christ.

**P: O Lord, out of the depths of sin and death we cling to Your mercy and love.**

L: We enter into a world of death and destruction as we live in the Light of the cross.

**P: O Lord, we live in the shadow of the cross and its hiddenness in grace and glory.**

L: We follow from our Good Friday vigil to live in the promise of its gift of life.

**P: O Lord, You call us to follow. You walk with us. You lead us to serve You in love.**

\*The Prayer of the Day:

L: Almighty God...

**P: Look with loving mercy on Your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.**

\*The Hymn: “Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed” #337  
(vss. 1,2,3 & 5)

The Old Testament Responsive Reading: Isaiah 53:3-6

L: He was despised and rejected of all, a man of sorrows,  
acquainted with grief, and we hid our faces from Him.  
He was despised, and we knew Him not.

**P: Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.  
Yet we knew Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.**

L: But He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for  
our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon  
Him, and by His bruises we are healed.

**P: All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned each  
of us to our own ways, and God has laid on Him the  
iniquity of us all.**

The New Testament Reading: Hebrews 10:16-25

The Children’s Message: Pastor Keith Ruehlow

The Passion of Our Lord: Matthew 26:36-27:61

**The First Word: “Watch”**

A reading from Matthew 26:36-45

*Silence*

The Responsive:

L: He was wounded for our transgressions

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The first light is extinguished.

**The Second Word: “Betrayal”**

A reading from Matthew 26:47-56

*Silence*

L: He was wounded for our transgressions

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The second light is extinguished.

**The Hymn: “Go to Dark Gethsemane” #347**  
(vss.1-2)

**The Third Word: “Denial”**

A reading from Matthew 26:57-75

*Silence*

L: He was wounded for our transgressions

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The third light is extinguished.

**The Fourth Word: “Guilt”**

A reading from Matthew 27:1-5

*Silence*

L: He was wounded for our transgressions

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The fourth light is extinguished.

**The Hymn: “Ah Holy Jesus” #349**  
(vss. 1,2 & 4)

**The Fifth Word: “Judgement”**

A reading from Matthew 27:11-26

*Silence*

L: He was wounded for our transgressions

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The fifth light is extinguished.

**The Sixth Word: “Crucifixion”**

A reading from Matthew 27:27-44

*Silence*

L: He was wounded for our transgressions,

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The sixth light is extinguished

**The Seventh Word: “Death”**

A reading from Matthew 27:45-50

*Silence*

L: He was wounded for our transgressions

**P: by His bruises we are healed.**

The seventh light is extinguished.

Music Ministry: “I Thirst”  
Theodore Dubois  
Robert Wills, bass-baritone; Skip James, piano

The Message: “Torn Apart in Death” Pastor Keith Ruehlow

**The Hymn: “Were You There” #353**  
(vss. 1-3,5)

The Reading: Matthew 27:57-61

**\*The Good Friday Reflection:**

- L: You went before us in a pillar of cloud...
- P: **But we led You to the judgment hall of Pilate.**
- L: You made us branches of Your vineyard and gave us the water of salvation...
- P: **But when You were thirsty, we gave You vinegar and gall.**
- L: You came to us as the least of our brothers and sisters...
- P: **But we did not welcome You.**
- L: You called us to go and bring forth fruit...
- P: **But we cast lots for Your clothing.**
- L: You gave us a royal scepter and bestowed on us the keys to Your Kingdom...
- P: **But we gave You a crown of thorns.**
- L: You accepted the cup of suffering and death for our sakes...
- P: **But we scattered, denied, and abandoned You.**
- L: Lord, have mercy on our souls.
- P: **Lord, have mercy on our souls.**
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- P: **Lord, have mercy on our souls.**

**The Stripping of the Altar:**

*Please leave in silence. You are welcome to remain in the sanctuary as long as you wish as well as come forward to reverence the cross before departing.*

**About the Service of Tenebrae:**

*You are about to participate in one of the oldest services in Christian Tradition. The Tenebrae (darkness) Service is a series of Scripture readings and hymns designed to call attention to the significance of Jesus' words from the cross.*

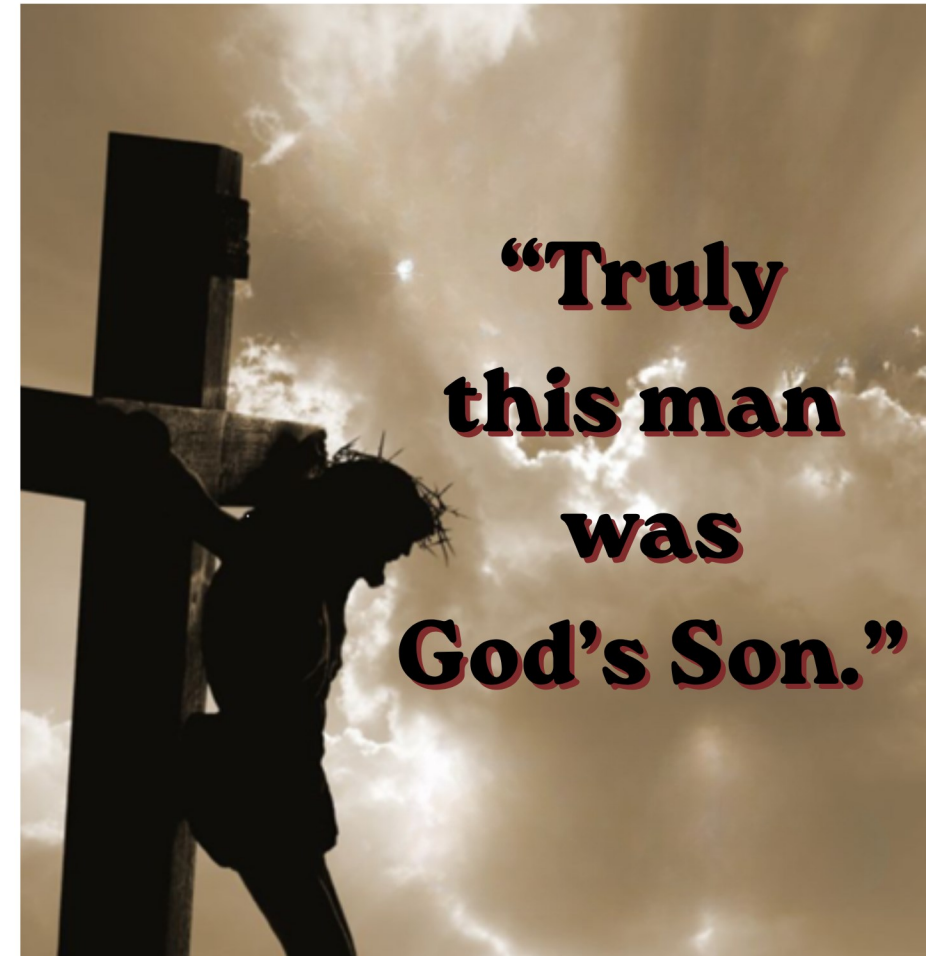
*The service begins with a fully lighted altar and church.*

*As the words of Jesus are remembered in Scripture and in hymns, the lights are dimmed in progression. The complete darkness is a sign of the darkness of Christ's three days in the tomb.*

"Good Friday is a day to join with Jesus in his fierce grief and sorrow over the sin of the world, to lament the forces of evil and cry out to God to bring healing to our sin-sick world."

—Amanda Benckhuysen

**Easter Sunday, April 5:**  
6:30 AM | Downtown Campus  
8:00 AM | Downtown Campus  
9:30 AM | Downtown Campus  
9:30 AM | Highlands Campus  
11:00 AM | Highlands Campus



**GOOD FRIDAY  
APRIL 3, 2026  
1:00 PM DOWNTOWN CAMPUS**

**Pastor Keith Ruehlow, Preacher  
Pastor Ladd Sonnenberg, Worship Leader**

Radio: WEVR (1550 AM/106.3 FM)  
Bethel service's are livestreamed on Bethel's website & Bethel's YouTube page.

Bethel's Mission to Connect, Grow, and Serve, Continues...

**WAYS TO GIVE**

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