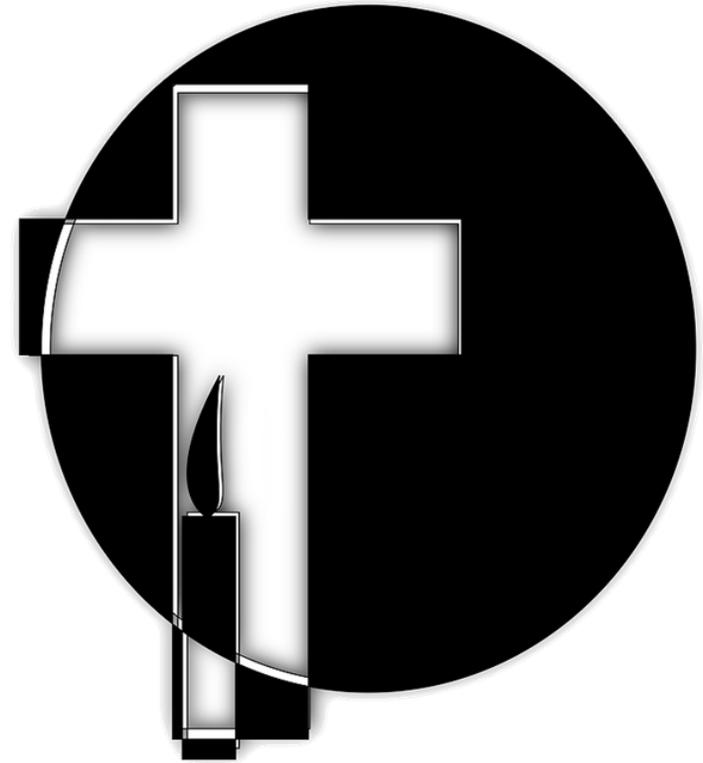


The Episcopal Church of the Atonement

THE MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Presider The Rev. Sandi Albom
Music Director Clifton J. Noble
Usher Mike Ehresman

And the members of the ECOTA Choir



Tenebrae A Service of Shadows

April 1, 2026
7:00 p.m.

This service is live-streamed on YouTube and Facebook.



The Episcopal Church
of the Atonement

Drawn in by Grace • Reaching out in Love

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Tenebrae

Tenebrae is Latin for “darkness” or “shadows.” That term is the name for an ancient Christian service that traditionally takes place early in Holy Week and foreshadows the events commemorated in the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services that follow it.

The *Tenebrae* service is structured around psalms, readings, songs, and responses. The service opens with candles lit and placed in a special triangular stand. Those candles are extinguished one by one as scripture and music tell the story of the final days of Jesus’s time on earth, from the Last Supper and to his burial.

The last candle, symbolic of Christ, remains lit. At the end of the final psalm, it is removed and hidden. Then there is a sudden loud noise representing the earthquake at the time of Christ’s death. The lighted candle is then restored to its original place, commemorating Christ’s eventual triumph over death.

Holy Saturday: The Great Vigil, April 4
(One service @ 7pm)

The Great Vigil of Easter is one of the oldest known rites of the Christian church, dating back to the second century. It brings worshippers, literally and symbolically, from darkness into light. Beginning in darkness after sunset on Holy Saturday, the vigil starts with the lighting of a fire, illuminating the darkness. The service is comprised of four parts: The Service of Light; The Service of Lessons; Christian Initiation (Holy Baptism) or the Renewal of Baptismal Vows; and the Eucharist (Holy Communion). It has been observed that the four sections of the service can be compared with fire, air, water, and earth, the four primal elements of the cosmos. The vigil’s history evokes that sense of the primal, of foundational beginning. The drama and ancient beauty of the Great Vigil of Easter opens for us the mystery and wonder of God in the Risen Christ. Alleluia!

Easter, the Day of Resurrection, Sunday, April 5
(Two services @ 8am & 10am)

Easter Day is the annual feast of the resurrection. Faith in Jesus’ resurrection on the Sunday, the third day following his crucifixion, is at the heart of Christian belief. This is the day when we mark that Christ is alive, and through his resurrection, we, too, are given the gift of life. Jesus breaks the bonds of death, breaking them on our behalf. Let the joy of our *Alleluias* ring!!

Holy Week 2026 at ECOTA

Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter, is a time of profound reflection and remembrance that focuses on the final days of Jesus' life leading to his crucifixion and resurrection. Below is more information about Holy Week and our services for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

Maundy Thursday, Thursday, April 2
(One service @ 7pm)

“Love one another, as I have loved you.” This is the new mandate (commandment) Jesus gave to his disciples this night. He washed their feet as a servant, and gave to them, and to us, the Holy Meal of The Eucharist (Communion). Jesus was shaping his disciples in servanthood to one another, the least and the outcast. And this servanthood is grounded on holy fellowship, with God and all humanity at the table he set for us. Maundy Thursday was only the beginning! We are called to be servants, Maundy Christians, every day.

Good Friday, Friday, April 3
(Two services @ 12pm & 7pm)

What's good about a Friday when Christ dies? The goodness is found in the Passion story in the Gospel according to John, a story we always read on Good Friday, one where the cross is not a defeat, but a victory over the powers of death, sin, and darkness. We leave the church this day in silence. It is an opportunity for each of us to meditate on Jesus' Passion and his great love and sacrifice for each of us.

“Love is at the heart of the meaning of the cross. Love is at the heart of the life Christ calls us to live. Love is at the heart of the movement Jesus began and which we live in our own time.”

—The Right Rev. Michael Curry

Opening Sentence

Officiant:

Jesus said, “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*”

—John 1:5

Opening Prayer

Officiant:

Let us pray.

Almighty God,

whose beloved Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption:
give us courage to walk with him through the shadows of this holy night.

As the light fades and the story deepens,
open our hearts to the mystery of Christ's suffering love,
that we may watch with him in faith
until the dawn of resurrection.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

First Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant: Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

All: **Arise, O God, maintain my cause**

Psalm 69:1–9 (*in unison*)

Save me, O God,
for the waters have risen up to my neck.
I am sinking in deep mire,
and there is no firm ground for my feet.
I have come into deep waters,
and the torrent washes over me.
I have grown weary with my crying;
my throat is inflamed.
Those who hate me without a cause
are more than the hairs of my head.
But as for me, this is my prayer to you,
at the time you have set, O Lord:
“In your great mercy, O God,
answer me with your unfailing help.”

Taizé 9

Bless the Lord

Responsory

Officiant: Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked:

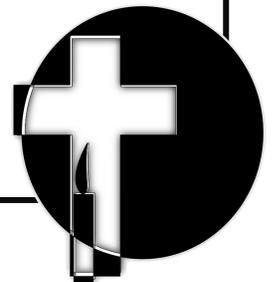
All: **From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.**

First candle extinguished

Silence.

*For you have been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings
I will rejoice.*

—Psalm 63



Closing Prayer

Officiant:

Lord Jesus Christ,
Who for our sake entered the darkness
of suffering and death:
Stay with us in the shadows of this holy night.
Hold the suffering of the world in your mercy
And keep watch with us until the dawn of resurrection.
Amen.

Streptitus

A loud noise is made.

Silence follows.

The Christ Candle Returns

*The candle is brought back and placed again on the stand.
Silence follows.*

Departure

All depart in silence.

Second Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant:

On the Mount of Olives Jesus prayed to the Father: "*Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*"

All: Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

First Lesson

Lamentations 1:1–5

How lonely sits the city
that once was full of people!
She weeps bitterly in the night,
with tears on her cheeks.
Among all her lovers
she has no one to comfort her.
Her foes have become the masters;
her enemies prosper.
For the Lord has made her suffer
for the multitude of her transgressions.

Taizé 12

Wait for the Lord

Responsory

Officiant: My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death; Remain here, and watch with me. Now you shall see the crowd who will surround me; you will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.

All: Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. You will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.

Second candle extinguished

Silence.

Third Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant: God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life.

All: **At Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling is in Zion.**

Psalm 88:1–7 (*in unison*)

O Lord, my God, my Savior,
by day and night I cry to you.
Let my prayer enter into your presence;
incline your ear to my lamentation.
For I am full of trouble;
my life is at the brink of the grave.
You have laid me in the depths of the Pit,
in dark places, and in the abyss.

Taizé 19

In God Alone

Responsory

Officiant: Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty, with no looks to attract our eyes. He bore our sins and grieved for us, he was wounded for our transgressions, and by his scourging we are healed.

All: **Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:
And by his scourging we are healed**

Third candle extinguished

Silence.

Psalm 51:1-17 (*Read responsively*)

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.
- 2 **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**
- 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 **Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**
- 5 Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- 6 **You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 8 **Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**
- 9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.
- 10 **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**
- 11 Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.
- 12 **Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.
- 14 **Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.**
- 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
- 16 **For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.**
- 17 The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Seventh Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant: O Death, I will be your death; O Grave,
I will be your destruction.

All: Let everything that has breath
praise the Lord.

Canticle of Hope

Lamentations 3:22–26

All:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”
The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.
It is good that we should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.

Seventh candle extinguished

Silence.

The Christ Candle *(All stand)*

The final candle is not extinguished, but removed and hidden.

Officiant: Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death on
a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and be-
stowed on him the Name which is above every name.

Fourth Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant: They shall mourn for him as one who mourns
for an only child; for the Lord, who is without
sin, is slain.

All: From the gates of hell, O Lord, deliver
my soul.

Second Lesson

Lamentations 2:10–11

The elders of daughter Zion
sit on the ground in silence.
They have thrown dust on their heads
and put on sackcloth.
My eyes are spent with weeping;
my stomach churns.
Because of the destruction of my people.

Taizé 29

Nada te turbe

Responsory

Officiant: Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?

All: Behold and see if there is any sorrow like
my sorrow.

Fourth candle extinguished

Silence.

Fifth Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant: My flesh also shall rest in hope.
All: You will not let our holy one see corruption.

Psalm 22:1–11 (*in unison*)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
and are so far from my cry
and from the words of my distress?
O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer;
by night as well, but I find no rest.
Yet you are the Holy One,
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
Our forefathers put their trust in you;
they trusted, and you delivered them.

Taizé 37

Within Our Darkest Night

Responsory

Officiant: When the Lord was buried,
they sealed the tomb,
All: rolling a great stone to the door of the
tomb; and they stationed soldiers
to guard him.

Fifth candle extinguished

Silence.

Sixth Nocturn

Antiphon

Officiant: Now the women sitting at the tomb made
lamentation, weeping for the Lord.
All: My eyes are spent with weeping; my heart is
poured out in grief because of the downfall of
my people.

Third Lesson

Lamentations 3:1–9

I am the one who has seen affliction
under the rod of God's wrath.
He has driven and brought me
into darkness without any light.
He has walled me about so that I cannot escape;
he has put heavy chains on me.
Though I call and cry for help,
he shuts out my prayer.

Taizé 42

Come and Pray in Us

Responsory

Officiant: My weary eyes look up to you;
All: Lord, be my refuge in my affliction.

Sixth candle extinguished

Silence.