

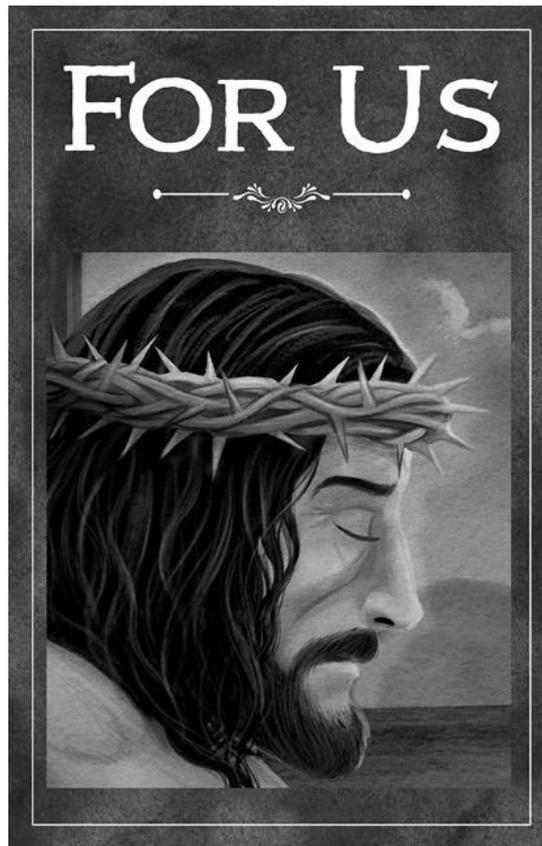


*Bethlehem Lutheran Church—William Penn
Founded 1860—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*

FOURTH WEDNESDAY IN LENT

MARCH 18, 2026

7:00 PM



Pastor

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Organist

Ann Sommer

Ushers

Michael Kettler
Wayne Klussmann
Don Koester

Acolyte

Wyatt Schramme

Fourth Wednesday in Lent

March 18, 2026 – 7:00 PM



Compline: Prayer at the Close of the Day

Order of Service: *Lutheran Service Book*, pp 253-259

The congregation assembles in silence.

HEALING FROM DEMONS

We talked about angels during Midweek of Lent 1. Tonight, we will talk about the darker side of the story—that is, demons. Demons are fallen angels who rebelled against God and His giving of Himself to us. Demons, with Satan chief among them, seek to undermine everything God is and does, even today. In our sermon tonight, we will hear how Jesus heals a man with a demon (Mark 5:1–13) and how that work of healing continues today.

Stand

LSB 253

P The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.



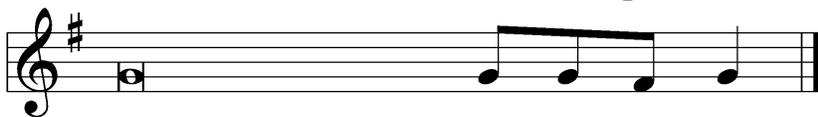
C A - men.

P It is good to give thanks to the Lord,



C to sing praise to Your name, O Most High;

P to herald Your love in the morning,



C Your truth at the close of the day.

✠ CONFESSIO ✠

LSB 254

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for self-examination.

P Holy and gracious God,

C I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.

P By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We rest now in His peace and rise in the morning to serve Him.

C Amen.

✠ PSALMODY ✠

Psalm 71:1-8

In You, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame!

In Your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline Your ear to me, and save me!

Be to me a rock of refuge, to which I may continually come;

You have given the command to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress.

Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.

For You, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

Upon You I have leaned from before my birth;

You are He who took me from my mother's womb.

My praise is continually of You.

I have been as a portent to many, but You are my strong refuge.

My mouth is filled with Your praise,

and with Your glory all the day.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Sit



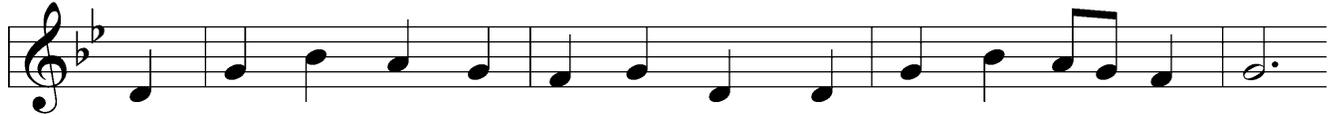
OFFICE HYMN

In Silent Pain the Eternal Son

LSB 432



1 In si - lent pain the e - ter - nal Son Hangs der - e - lict and still;
 2 He died that we might die to sin And live for righ - teous - ness;
 3 For strife He came to bring a sword, The truth to end all lies;



In dark - ened day His work is done, Ful - filled, His Fa - ther's will.
 The earth is stained to make us clean And bring us in - to peace.
 To rule in us, our pa - tient Lord, Un - til all e - vil dies:



Up - lift - ed for the world to see He hangs in strang - est vic - to - ry,
 For peace He came and met its cost; He gave Him - self to save the lost;
 For in His hand He holds the stars, His voice shall speak to end our wars,



For in His bod - y on the tree He car - ries all our ill.
 He loved us to the ut - ter - most And paid for our re - lease.
 And those who love Him see His scars And look in - to His eyes.

Text: Christopher M. Idle, 1938. Tune: John L. Bell, 1949. Text: © 1992 The Jubilate Group, admin. Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005013. Tune: © 1988, 1997 Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community, Scotland, admin. GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005013

✠ PASSION READING IV: THE PRAETORIUM ✠

Portions selected from Matthew 26:15-27:66, Mark 14:12-15:47, Luke 22:7-23:56, and John 13:1-19:42, arranged chronologically to tell the story of the arrest, trials, suffering, crucifixion, death, and burial of our Lord Jesus.

*Events occur on Thursday and Friday, 13-14 Nissan (April 2-3), 33AD,
 in and around Jerusalem*

When they had bound Jesus, they led him from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment and gave him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor. It was early. They themselves did not go into the judgment hall, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

Pilate then went out to them, and said, “What charge do you bring against this man?”

They answered and said to him, “If he were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.”

Then Pilate said to them, “Take him, then, and judge him according to your law.”

The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." So the word of Jesus was fulfilled, signifying by what death he should die.

The charges they brought against him were: "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Jesus answered him, "Do you say this for yourself, or did others say it to you about me?"

Pilate answered, "Do you take me for a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have given you over to me. What have you done?"

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would have fought that I should not be given over to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not of this world."

Pilate therefore said to him, "Are you a king then?"

Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. I was born and I came into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears my voice."

Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no fault in this man."

The chief priests kept laying one charge after another against him, but he answered not a word. Pilate questioned him again, saying, "Do you answer nothing? See how many charges they lay against you." Jesus answered him not a word. Pilate was utterly amazed. He said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no case against this man."

They pressed their charges more vehemently: "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judaea, beginning from Galilee to this place."

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. When he learned that he belonged in Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him on to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem for those days.

When Herod saw Jesus, he was delighted, for he had long wished to see him because of what he had heard of him, and he hoped to see him do a miracle. He questioned Jesus repeatedly, but he gave him no answer. The chief priests and scribes stood there and vehemently accused him. Herod and his soldiers mocked him. They put a splendid robe on him and sent him back to Pilate.

Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that same day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, "You have brought this man before me as one subverting the people. See now, I have examined him before you and have found nothing in this man guilty of any of your charges against him, and neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Mark this, he has done nothing worthy of death. I will have him punished and release him."

Now at the feast it was the governor's custom to release to the crowd any one prisoner whom they asked for. They had then a notorious prisoner named Barabbas. He was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection in the city. Pilate knew that it was out of malice that the chief priests handed Jesus over. Therefore he said to them, "Do you want me to release for you Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?"

The chief priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

Pilate asked them again, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?"

And they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release for us Barabbas."

While Pilate was sitting in the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message: "Do not have anything to do with that man; I have suffered much over him today in a dream."

Again Pilate addressed them, for he wished to release Jesus. He said to them, "What shall I do then with Jesus who is called Christ? What shall I do with him whom you call the King of the Jews?"

They all cried out, "Crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found no guilt worthy of death in him; I will therefore punish him and let him go."

They cried out all the louder, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers of the governor led him away into the praetorium. They gathered the whole band of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a purple robe on him. When they had woven a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and a reed in his right hand, and they knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. They knelt down and did him homage.

Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I bring him out to you that you may know I find him not guilty." So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"

When the chief priests and officers saw him, they cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I do not find him guilty.”

The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”

When Pilate heard this, he was more afraid and went again into the judgment hall and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to crucify you, and I have power to release you?”

Jesus answered, “You would not have any power at all over me, unless it had been given to you from above. For that reason he who handed me over to you has the greater sin.”

This prompted Pilate to go on trying to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king sets himself against Caesar.”

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement or, in Hebrew, Gabbatha. It was the Preparation of the Passover, about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your king!”

They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!”

Pilate said unto them, “Shall I crucify your king?”

The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but rather a riot was under way, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this man; see to it yourselves.”

Then all the people responded, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

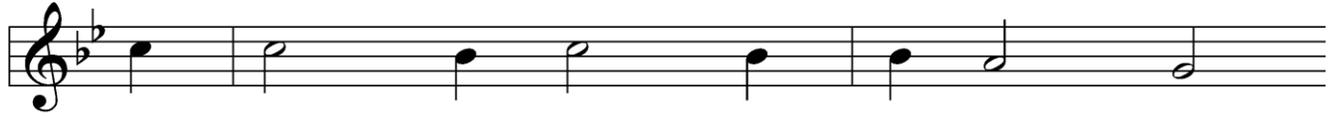
Then Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, gave sentence that it should be as they demanded. He released to them Barabbas for whom they asked, the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder. He had Jesus flogged and then gave him over to their will to be crucified. The soldiers mocked him, stripped him of the purple robe, put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.



HYMN OF THE DAY

O Love, How Deep

LSB 544 sts. 1–4



1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high,
 2 He sent no an - gel to our race,
 3 For us bap - tized, for us He bore
 4 For us He prayed; for us He taught;



Be - yond all thought and fan - ta - sy,
 Of high - er or of low - er place,
 His ho - ly fast and hun - gered sore;
 For us His dai - ly works He wrought,



That God, the Son of God, should take
 But wore the robe of hu - man frame,
 For us temp - ta - tion sharp He knew;
 By words and signs and ac - tions thus



Our mor - tal form for mor - tals' sake!
 And to this world Him - self He came.
 For us the tempt - er o - ver - threw.
 Still seek - ing not Him - self but us.

Text: attr. Thomas à Kempis, 1380–1471; tr. Benjamin Webb, 1819–85, alt. Tune: English, 15th cent. Text: Public domain

✠ SERMON ✠

When Christ Commands the Darkness

Mark 5: 1-13

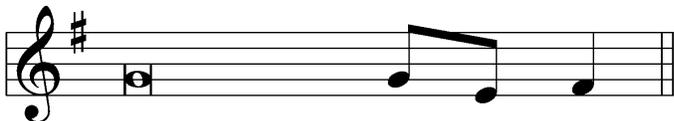
¹They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ²And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. ⁶And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before Him. ⁷And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have You to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure You by God, do not torment me.” ⁸For He was saying to him, “Come

out of the man, you unclean spirit!”⁹ And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.”¹⁰ And he begged Him earnestly not to send them out of the country.¹¹ Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside,¹² and they begged Him, saying, “Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.”¹³ So He gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

Stand

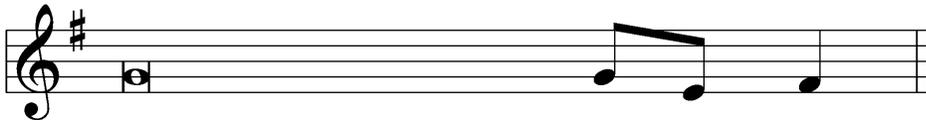
✠ PRAYER ✠
LSB 256

P Hear my prayer, O Lord;



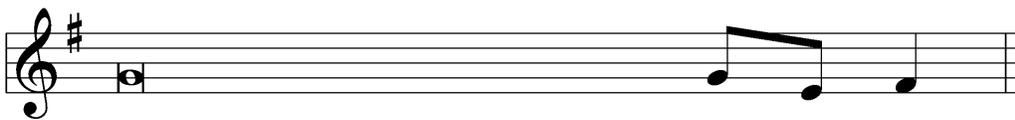
C listen to my cry.

P Keep me as the apple of Your eye;



C hide me in the shadow of Your wings.

P In righteousness I shall see You;



C when I awake, Your presence will give me joy.

P Be present, merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of life may find our rest in You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

P O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in Your mercy grant us a safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

P Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

P Visit our dwellings, O Lord, and drive from them all the snares of the enemy; let Your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let Your blessing be on us always; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

P Eternal God, the hours both of day and night are Yours, and to You the darkness is no threat. Be present, we pray, with those who labor in these hours of night, especially those who watch and work on behalf of others. Grant them diligence in their watching, faithfulness in their service, courage in danger, and competence in emergencies. Help them to meet the needs of others with confidence and compassion; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

P Abide with us, Lord, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Abide with us and with Your whole Church. Abide with us at the end of the day, at the end of our life, at the end of the world. Abide with us with Your grace and goodness, with Your holy Word and Sacrament, with Your strength and blessing. Abide with us when the night of affliction and temptation comes upon us, the night of fear and despair, the night when death draws near. Abide with us and with all the faithful, now and forever. **C** Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LSB 162

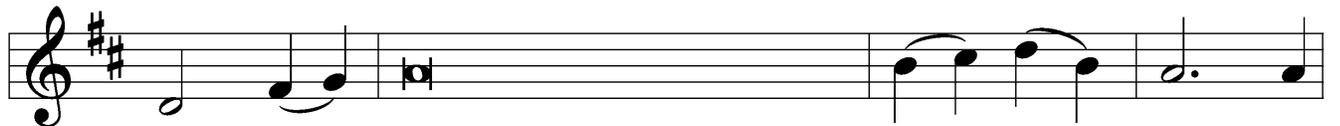
P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses

as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

NUNC DIMITTIS

LSB 199



C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -



cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,



which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,

a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
 peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
 to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

BENEDICTION

LSB 259

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

C Amen.

Sit

CLOSING HYMN

Not All the Blood of Beasts

LSB 431

1 Not all the blood of beasts On Jew - ish al - tars slain
 2 But Christ, the heav'n - ly Lamb, Takes all our sins a - way;
 3 My faith would lay its hand On that dear head of Thine,
 4 My soul looks back to see The bur - den Thou didst bear
 5 Be - liev - ing, we re - jice To see the curse re - move;

Could give the guilt - y con - science peace Or wash a - way the stain.
 A sac - ri - fice of no - bler name And rich - er blood than they.
 While as a pen - i - tent I stand, And there con - fess my sin.
 When hang - ing on the curs - ed tree; I know my guilt was there.
 We bless the Lamb with cheer - ful voice And sing His bleed - ing love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt. Tune: William Daman, c. 1540–1591. Text and tune: Public domain



Bells & Silent Prayer

*Please remain seated while the acolyte extinguishes the altar candles.
The offering and attendance cards will be collected at the door.*

2026 Lent, Holy Week, and Easter Schedule



DATE	TIME	SERVICE
<i>Wednesday, March 18</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Wednesday Lent Worship</i>
<i>Sunday, March 22</i>	<i>10:15 AM</i>	<i>Fifth Sunday in Lent</i>
<i>Wednesday, March 25</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Wednesday Lent Worship</i>
<i>Sunday, March 29</i>	<i>10:15 AM</i>	<i>Palm Sunday with Confirmation</i>
<i>Thursday, April 2</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Holy (Maundy) Thursday</i>
<i>Friday, April 3</i>	<i>7:30 PM</i>	<i>Good Friday Tenebrae</i>
<i>Sunday, April 5</i>	<i>7:00 AM</i> <i>8:00 AM</i> <i>9:00 AM</i> <i>9:30 AM</i> <i>10:15 AM</i>	<i>Easter Sunrise Service (Amphitheater)</i> <i>Easter Breakfast</i> <i>Sunday School, Adult Bible Class</i> <i>Easter Egg Hunt</i> <i>Easter Celebration Service</i>