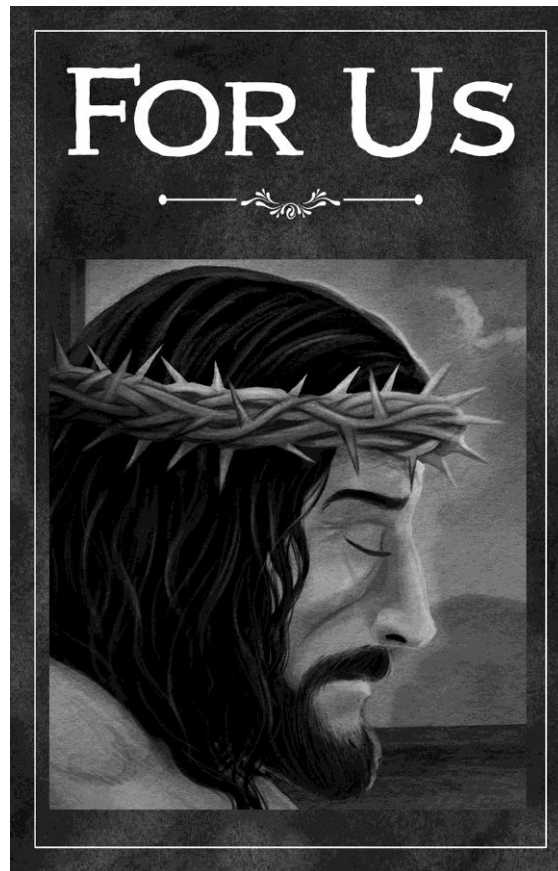




*Bethlehem Lutheran Church—William Penn
Founded 1860—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*

FIFTH WEDNESDAY IN LENT

**MARCH 25, 2026
7:00 PM**



Pastor

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Ann Sommer

Ushers

Charles Meyer
Paul Richter
Colin Schomburg
Rallin Wellmann

Acolyte

Dillion Nowicki

Fifth Wednesday in Lent

March 25, 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.

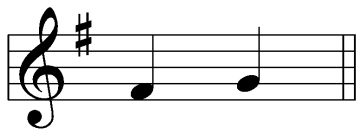
FOR US BETRAYED

Jesus foretells His own betrayal, death, and resurrection in today’s text (Mark 8:31–9:1). This shows us that the way of salvation only comes through the path of suffering (Hebrews 2:10). Jesus’ suffering, His Passion, does not simply mean that He sympathizes with us. Rather, it means that He participates in our suffering, and we in His. His betrayal, the crown of thorns, the shameful cross—all of these lead to how Jesus “gave His dying breath,” as we sing in the series hymn. In the Passion reading, we will also hear how He dies (Mark 15:33–47) and what that means for us today.

Stand

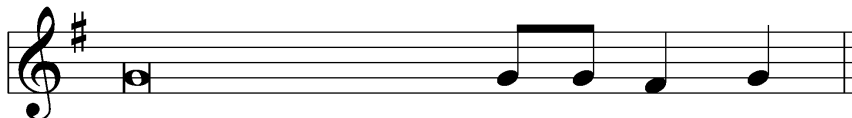
LSB 253

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



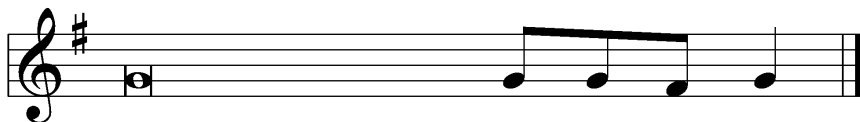
C A - men.

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 41

Blessed is the one who considers the poor!

In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;
the LORD protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land;
You do not give him up to the will of his enemies.

The LORD sustains him on his sickbed;
in his illness You restore him to full health.

As for me, I said, “O LORD, be gracious to me;
heal me, for I have sinned against You!”

My enemies say of me in malice,
“When will he die and his name perish?”

And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity;

when he goes out, he tells it abroad.

All who hate me whisper together about me;
they imagine the worst for me.

They say, “A deadly thing is poured out on him;
he will not rise again from where he lies.”

Even my close friend in whom I trusted,
who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

But You, O LORD, be gracious to me, and raise me up, that I may repay them!
By this I know that You delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.

But You have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in Your presence forever.

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.

**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.**

OFFICE HYMN

O Christ, You Walked the Road

LSB 424



1 O Christ, You walked the road Our wan - d'ring feet must go.
2 No bread of earth a - lone Can fill our hun - g'ring hearts.
3 No blind - ing sign we ask, No won - der from a - bove.
4 When lures of eas - y gain With prom - ise bright - ly shine,
5 O Christ, You walked the road Our wan - d'ring feet must go.



You faced with us temp - ta - tion's pow'r And fought our an - cient foe.
Lord, help us seek Your liv - ing Word, The food Your grace im - parts.
Lord, help us place our trust a - lone In Your un - swerv - ing love.
Lord, help us seek Your king - dom first; Our wills with Yours a - lign.
Stay with us through temp - ta - tion's hour To fight our an - cient foe.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr., 1923–2007. Tune: William Daman, c. 1540–1591. Text: © 1997 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005013. Tune: Public domain

✠ PASSION READING V: CALVARY ✠

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 Nisan (April 2-3), 33AD, in and around Jerusalem

The soldiers now had charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out of the city to a place called Skull Hill, in Hebrew, *Golgotha*. As they led him away, they laid hold of Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country. On him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus. Following him was a great company of people and of women who bewailed and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said,

“Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. The days are surely coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck.’ Then they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do these things with a green tree, what will happen with a dry one?”

There were also two others, criminals whom they led along to be put to death with him. When they came to the place called Golgotha, they gave him wine mingled with gall to drink, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.

It was the third hour, and there they crucified him.

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

The two criminals they also crucified with him—one on his right, the other on his left, with Jesus in the middle. The Scripture was then fulfilled which says, “And he was numbered with the transgressors.”

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they cast lots to divide his clothes and decide what each should take. They made four parts, one for each soldier. There remained his tunic, which was without seam, woven in one piece from the top to the bottom. They said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to decide who shall have it." The Scripture was thus fulfilled which says, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." These things the soldiers did and, sitting down, they kept watch over him there.

Over his head was put the charge against him. Pilate wrote the notice to be put on the cross. It read, JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS. This title was read by many of the Jews, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city, and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. The chief priests of the Jews then said to Pilate, "You should not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but 'This man said, I am the King of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

People stood by, watching. Those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him to one another saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross that we may see and believe. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

The soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself." The thieves who were crucified with him also reviled him. And one of the criminals who hung there with him railed at him:

"Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us."

But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God since you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are getting what we deserve for what we have done; but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Near to the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

When some of them that were standing there heard it, they said, "He is calling for Elijah."

After this, Jesus knew that all things were accomplished. Fulfilling the Scripture he said, "I thirst." There was a jar of wine standing there. One of them ran immediately to get a sponge. He filled it with wine, put it on a reed, held it up to his mouth, and gave it to him to drink.

Others said, "Wait and see if Elijah will come and save him."

When Jesus had received the wine, he cried with a loud voice, "It is finished!" Then he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he died, he said, "Truly, this man was the Son of God."

All the people who had gathered to see the sight, when they saw what had happened, turned away beating their breasts. Those who had known him stood at a distance, as also the women who had followed him from Galilee. Among them was Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

It was the day of Preparation before the Sabbath, and this was Passover Sabbath. Therefore, so that the bodies should not remain on the crosses during the Sabbath, the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies removed. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. One who saw it is our witness, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth that you also may believe. These things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of his bones shall be broken." And again, another Scripture says, "They shall look on him whom they pierced."

By this time evening had come. A respected member of the council, Joseph of Arimathea, was one who was looking for the kingdom of God, a good and righteous man who had not consented to their purpose and deed. He was a disciple of Jesus secretly, for he feared the Jews. Now he took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Pilate was astonished that he could be dead already. He called for the centurion and asked him whether Jesus was already dead. When he was assured by the centurion that it was so, Pilate granted Joseph the corpse and commanded that it be given over to him.

Joseph bought fine linen and came and took the body of Jesus. Nicodemus came also, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight. It was he who had first come to Jesus by night. They then took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb, where no one had ever been buried. Joseph laid the body in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock, and rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed.

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were sitting there opposite the sepulcher and saw where he was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath day they rested according to the commandment.

On the next day, the day after the Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees went together to Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that imposter said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command that the sepulcher be made secure until the third day to stop his disciples from coming and stealing him and saying to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' making the final deception worse than the first."

Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go and make it as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting a watch.

HYMN OF THE DAY

O Love, How Deep

LSB 544 sts. 1–5

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;
 5 For us by wick - ed - ness be - trayed,
 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,
 For us, in crown of thorns ar - rayed,
 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
 He bore the shame - ful cross and death;
 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.
 For us He gave His dy - ing breath.

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

✠ SERMON ✠

“Echoes of a Dying Breath”

Mark 8:31 – 9:1

³¹And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²And He said this plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³But

turning and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

³⁴And He called to Him the crowd with His disciples and said to them, “If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. ³⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. ³⁶For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? ³⁷For what can a man give in return for his life? ³⁸For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

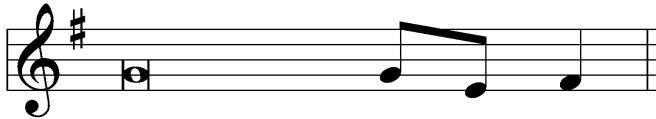
^{9:1}And He said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”

Stand

✠ PRAYER ✠

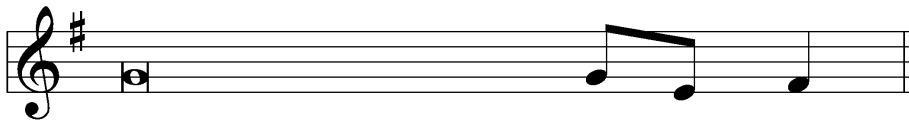
LSB 256

P Hear my prayer, O Lord;



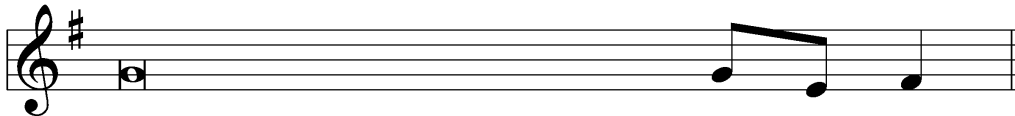
C listen to my cry.

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.**

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

Abide with Me

LSB 878



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
2 I need Thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
3 Come not in ter - rors, as the King of kings,
4 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.
What but Thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
But kind and good, with heal - ing in Thy wings;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
Who like Thy - self my guide and stay can be?
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev - 'ry plea.
Change and de - cay in all a - round I see;



Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
Through cloud and sun - shine, O a - bide with me.
Come, Friend of sin - ners, thus a - bide with me.
O Thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.

- 5 I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me!
- 6 Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793–1847, alt. Tune: William H. Monk, 1823–89. 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 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>Easter Sunrise Service (Amphitheater)</i>
	<i>8:00 AM</i>	<i>Easter Breakfast</i>
	<i>9:00 AM</i>	<i>Sunday School, Adult Bible Class</i>
	<i>9:30 AM</i>	<i>Easter Egg Hunt</i>
	<i>10:15 AM</i>	<i>Easter Celebration Service</i>