

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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The Seven Last Words



Good Friday
7:00pm April 3, 2026

We begin this service in silence as Good Friday continues our worship from Maundy Thursday. We worship through the Triduum; the Three Days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil. Together, they are one continuous worship service, each retelling the central events of the last days of Jesus' life and the mystery of God's salvation through Christ.

The Service of Tenebrae (which means "darkness" or "shadows") is a Holy Week devotion which dates back to the seventh or eighth century A.D. and is characterized by the successive extinguishing of candles as the service progresses.

Théodore Dubois (1837–1924), a prominent French Romantic composer, organist, and choirmaster, composed *Les Sept Paroles du Christ* (*The Seven Last Words of Christ*) in 1867 while serving as maître de chapelle at the church of Sainte-Clotilde in Paris. Written for soloists, chorus, and orchestra (later often performed with organ, timpani, and harp), the sacred cantata sets the seven final utterances of Jesus on the cross in Latin, drawn from the Gospels and enriched with traditional Holy Week liturgical texts such as the *O vos omnes* from Lamentations and excerpts from the *Stabat Mater*.

The work received its first performance on Good Friday, April 19, 1867, and quickly became a beloved staple of Parisian Lenten and Holy Week observances, performed annually at churches including La Madeleine for nearly a century. Structured in nine movements—an introductory soprano lament followed by one movement per "Word," concluding with a serene *Adoramus te, Christe*—Dubois's setting blends dramatic choral writing, expressive solo passages, and rich Romantic harmonies that convey both the agony and redemptive grace of the Passion.

Its emotional depth and accessible yet sophisticated style have made it one of Dubois's most enduring and frequently performed choral works, offering congregations and audiences a profound musical meditation on Christ's suffering and triumph. Today, more than 150 years after its creation, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* continues to resonate in churches and concert halls as a poignant reflection on sacrifice, forgiveness, and eternal hope during the solemn season of Holy Week.

SILENT PROCESSIONAL

HYMN

Go to Dark Gethsemane

ELW #347



1 Go to dark Geth-sem - a - ne, all who feel the tempt - er's pow'r;



your Re-deem - er's con - flict see. Watch with him one bit - ter hour;



turn not from his griefs a - way; learn from Je - sus Christ to pray.

DEPARTURE TO THE GARDEN AND ARREST

Luke 22:39-54a

HYMN

Lamb of God

ELW #336



Your on-ly Son, no sin to hide, but you have sent him from your



side to walk up-on this guilt-y sod and to be-come the Lamb of



God. O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the



ho - ly Lamb of God. Oh, wash me in your pre-cious



blood, my Je - sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

TRIAL 1

ANTHEM*Carillons, dir. Nolan Oltjenbruns*

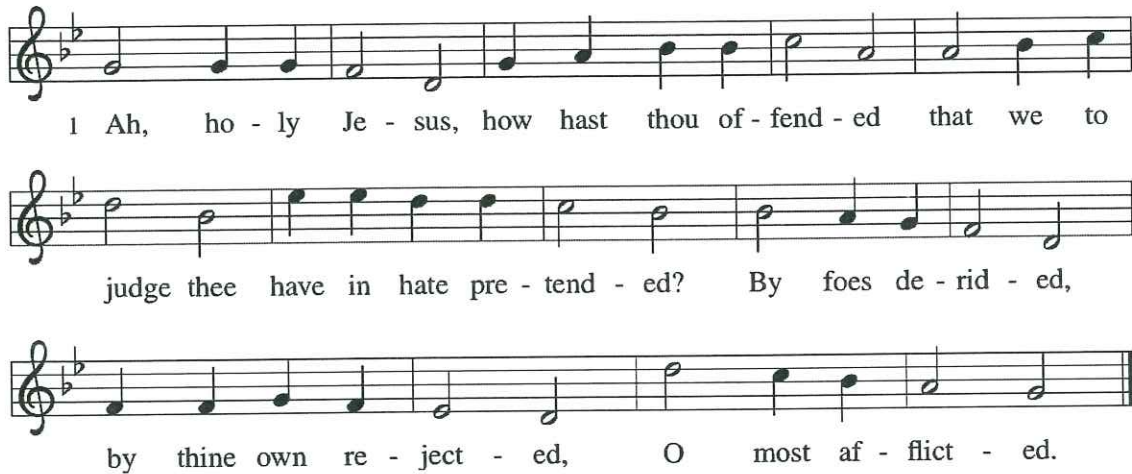
Ah, Holy Jesus

arr. Sandra Eithun

BEATING**HYMN**

Ah, Holy Jesus

ELW #349



1 Ah, ho - ly Je - sus, how hast thou of - fend - ed that we to
judge thee have in hate pre - tend - ed? By foes de - rid - ed,
by thine own re - ject - ed, O most af - flict - ed.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Robert Bridges, 1844–1930, alt.
Music: HERZLIEBSTER JESU, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

STRIPPING THE ALTAR

Psalm 22

JESUS IS LEAD TO GOLGATHA

Luke 23:26-33

Chancel Choir, dir. Kirk Schjodt

Introduction - Soprano solo

O all ye who travel upon the highway, hearken to me, and behold me, was e'er sorrow like unto my sorrow?
(Lamentations 1:12)

For the Lord Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me. Call me now no more Naomi, from today call me Mara.
(Ruth 1:20)

First Word - Baritone and tenor solo, with Chorus

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)

And the people clamored: He is death-guilty; (Matthew 26:66)

take him, take him, let us crucify him! (Mark 15:13)

Be his blood on us, be upon us all, then.

Then they did crucify Jesus, and the two thieves, one at His right hand, the other at His left hand. (Luke 23:33)

Second Word - Tenor and baritone duet, with Chorus

Verily, thou shalt be in Paradise today with me. Amen, so I tell thee. (Luke 23:43)

Hear me, O Lord, and remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. (Luke 23:42)

Third Word - Soprano, tenor, baritone solo, with Chorus

See, O woman! here behold thy son beloved. (John 19:26-27)

See yon mother, bowed in anguish, who beside the cross doth languish, where on high her son is borne.

Is there mortal, who not feeleth to behold her where she kneeleth, so woeful and all forlorn?

Fourth Word - Baritone solo

God, my Father, why hast Thou forsaken me? (Matthew: 27:46 and Mark 15:34)

*All those who were my friends, all have now forsaken me, and they that hate me do now prevail against me;
and he whom I have cherished, he hath betrayed me.*

*Even the vine that I have chosen, and that I have planted: wherefore art thou now so strangely turned into
bitterness, that I by thee am crucified?*

Fifth Word - Tenor and baritone solo, with chorus

I am athirst! (John 19:28)

*And the people then passing by him, all did rail upon him, and wagging their heads at him, they said unto him:
Ah! Thou wouldst fain destroy*

*the temple; If thou be Jesus, Son of the Father, now from the cross descend thou, that we behold it, and
believe on thee when we behold it.*

If thou art king over Israel, save thyself, then! (Mark 15:29-30)

Sixth Word - Tenor solo and chorus

Father, into Thy hands I commend my soul. (Luke 23:46)

For Thou art my God and my Father; Thou art my Savior. (Psalm 89:26)

Seventh Word - Soprano, tenor and baritone solo, with Chorus

*And with a loud voice Jesus cried, exclaiming: "It is finished!" And He did bow His head, and rendered up
His spirit* (John 19:30)

*And it was about the sixth hour; and the sun was darkened, and darkness covered the earth, until about the
ninth hour;*

and the veil of the temple was rent, and all the earth did quake; (Luke 23:44)

and the rocks were rent, and all the graves were opened wide. (Matthew 27:52)

*Christ, we do all adore Thee, and we do praise Thee forever; for on the holy cross hast thou the world from sin
redeemed.*

PROCESSION OF THE CROSS

Please stand as you are able, and face the center aisle as the cross is carried in.

REVERENCING THE CROSS

Were You There

arr. Ron Mallory

Carillons, dir. Nolan Oltjenbruns

HYMN

Were You There

ELW #353

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

THE BURIAL

Please stand and face the Paschal Candle as it recesses.

HYMN

Were You There

*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

The congregation leaves in silence.

Holy Week at Bethany:

Journey with Jesus

Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Palm Sunday 3/29

8:30am and 10am

Festival Worship with
Palms

The Crucifixion of Our Lord

Good Friday 4/3

12pm Tenebrae Service

7pm Tenebrae Service

Dubios' Seven Last Words

The Last Supper

Maundy Thursday 4/2

7pm Worship Service

First Communion Milestone

Resurrection of Our Lord

Easter Saturday 4/4, 5pm

Easter Sunday 4/5

8am, 9:30am, 11am

Festival Worship Service

We invite you to join Bethany's Holy Week worship services as we walk with Jesus through his final days. Each service adds a new part of the story, drawing us deeper into the mercy God gives in Christ. Come and follow the story step by step, so that Easter might meet you not as an idea, but as God's promise for you.