



## **Good Friday Tenebrae**



**St. John's Lutheran Church, Ruma IL  
& St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Evansville IL  
Joint Good Friday Tenebrae Service  
April 18, 2025**

**Tenebrae** is the Latin word which means darkness of shadows. This worship is one of the oldest devotional services of the Christian Church. It dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Century AD and it is characterized by the successive extinguishing of candles as the service progresses. No service during the entire church year is more Biblical; every word of Tenebrae is taken verbatim from the scriptures. Therefore, it consists only of scripture readings and hymns.

Its purpose is to call attention to the fact that we have been accomplices in the death of Christ, and to allow us to relive the terrible darkness that followed His death when the Light of the World went out from among us. Each stage of this fearsome experience is marked by the progressive dimming of the lights and extinguishing of the candles until only the Gospel candle remains lighted. This light will be carried out by the acolyte to symbolize Christ's exit from the land of the living into the realm of the dead. (1 Peter 3:18-20)

Worshippers are asked to refrain from all conversation until they have left the building. The pastor will not greet you at the door to symbolize the silence of God while Jesus was in the grave. It is suggested for your devotion this evening that you return home immediately and avoid television and other activities that might detract from a quiet ending to this day.

**PRE-SERVICE SILENCE** (Please observe silence in preparation of Worship.)

**TOLLING OF THE BELL**

**PRAYER**    *(Please Stand)*

L:     Almighty God, we ask You to look with mercy on Your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and 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.

C:     **Amen**

***Silence for confession and meditation on the cross of Christ.***

**HYMN**    “Jesus Refuge of the Weary” [LSB 423 vs. 1 & 2]

**READINGS FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH**

**LECTION**    Isaiah 52:1-12

**RESPONSE**

L:     O Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me!

C:     **Many are saying of me, God will deliver him.**

L:     But You are a shield around me, O Lord!

C:     **To the Lord I cry aloud, and He answers me from His Holy Hill.**

**HYMN**    “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted” [LSB 451 vs. 1 & 2]

**LECTION**    Isaiah 53:1-10

**RESPONSE**

L:     My servant will act wisely; He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

C:     **Just as there were many who were appalled at Him -- His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and His form marred beyond human likeness.**

L:     So will He sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of Him.

C:     **For what they were not told, they will see; and what they have not heard, they will understand.**

**HYMN** “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted” [LSB 451 vs. 3 & 4]

**READINGS FROM THE GOSPELS**  
**OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

**LECTION** Matthew 26:57-68

**RESPONSE**

**L:** But I, by Your great mercy, will come to Your House; in reverence will I bow down toward Your holy temple.

**C:** **Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies – make straight Your way before me.**

**HYMN** “A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth” [LSB 438 vs. 1-2]

**LECTION** John 18:15-18, 25-27

**RESPONSE**

**L:** O Lord, do not rebuke me in Your anger or discipline me in Your wrath.

**C:** **Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony.**

**HYMN** “My Song is Love Unknown” [LSB 430 vs. 1 – 2]

**LECTION** John 18:28-38

**RESPONSE**

**L:** O Lord, O Lord, how majestic is Your Name in all the earth!

**C:** **You have set Your glory above the heavens.**

**L:** From the lips of children and infants You have ordained praise

**C:** **because of Your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.**

**HYMN** “O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken”  
[LSB 439 vs. 1 - 3]

**LECTION**    Matthew 27:15-26

**RESPONSE**

**L:**     To the Lord I cry aloud,

**C:**     **and He answers me from His Holy Hill.**

**L:**     I lie down to sleep; I wake again because the Lord sustains me.

**C:**     **I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.**

**HYMN**    “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”     [LSB 450 vs. 1-3]

**LECTION**    Matthew 27:27-36

**RESPONSE**

**L:**     He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering.

**C:**     **Like one from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.**

**HYMN**        “Lamb of God”     [LSB 550]

**LECTION**    John 19:18-22; Luke 23:39-43; John 19:25-27

**RESPONSE**

**L:**     All who see Me mock Me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads;

**C:**     **He trusts in the Lord; Let the Lord rescue Him. Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him.**

**HYMN**        “Were You There”     [LSB 456 vs. 1 & 2]

**LECTION**    Matthew 27:45-49; Luke 23:46; John 19:30b

**HYMN**        “Were You There”     [LSB 456 vs. 3 & 4]

**LECTION**    Matthew 27:51-56; John 19:31-42

**PRAYER**      *(Please stand)*

**ALL:** If my sins give me alarm and my conscience grieve me,  
let Your cross my fear disarm; peace and pardon give  
me. Grant that I may trust in You and Your holy  
passion. If His Son forgives anew, God must have  
compassion. Amen.

**CHRIST CANDLE IS REMOVED**

*Now there is darkness and utter silence. We hear the sound of a  
book being closed as we ponder the sacrifice our Savior made for  
us on the cross.*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**      *(whispered softly by all)*

*There is no blessing – service concludes with the Twenty-Third  
Psalm spoken by all.*

**Psalm 23**

*The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie  
down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters.  
He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of  
righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through  
the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art  
with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou  
preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:  
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely  
goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I  
will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

The congregation now exits the church in silence.

