



THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
A United Church of Christ

GOOD FRIDAY

April 3, 2026 — 12:00 Noon

In many Christian traditions, the Good Friday service focuses on the last words of Jesus from the cross. Today we hear those words of compassion and forgiveness, despair and commitment. We hear, too, the words of contemporary witnesses—Pope Leo XIV, Choctaw Elder and Episcopal Bishop Steven Charleston, and Episcopal Bishop Mariann Budde—who call us to that compassion, forgiveness, and commitment in our time.

The service ends with a time of prayer for God's people and the closing hymn, followed by the benediction. We invite you to leave as the Spirit moves you.

In our worship today, may we find God's message of hope and love for us and for this world. Thank you for sharing in this time.

WE GATHER AT THE CROSS

Prelude

Nun komm der Heiden Heiland

Bach-Busoni

Welcome and Breathing in God's Gifts

*Spiritual 229

Were You There? (vs. 1-2)

African American

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

*Silence

*The Call to Worship from the Prophet Isaiah (**cong. bold**)

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

For he grew before the Lord like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by all, one of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom we hide our faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

*Song

Alone Thou Goest Forth, O Lord

Bangor



1 A - lone thou go - est forth, O Lord, In sac - ri - fice to die;
2 Our sins, not thine, thou bear - est, Lord, Make us thy sor - row feel,
3 This is earth's dark - est hour, but thou Dost light and life re - store;
4 Give us com - pas - sion for thee, Lord, That, as we share this hour,



Is this thy sor - row naught to us Who pass un - heed - ing by?
Till through our pit - y and our shame Love an - swers love's ap - peal.
Then let all praise be giv - en thee Who liv - est ev - er - more.
Thy cross may bring us to thy joy And res - ur - rec - tion power. A - men.

WE PREPARE

A Call to Prayer from the Letter to the Hebrews

Since then we have a great high priest, Jesus, the Christ of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

A Unison Prayer of Invocation (unison)

We come this day, O God, to the cross, there to see the suffering and pain of your world, there also to see the selfishness and pride in our own lives. Yet even at the cross, even in our lives and in this world, your love knows no limits. Give us the strength to face the despair we see at the cross. Give us the vision to see beyond it to your love that never ends. Amen.

Silence

A Psalm of Lamentation

Psalm 22:1-19 (p. 632 in Hymnal)

Silence

The Assurance of Pardon and Grace

*A Song of Grace 202 *O God, How We Have Wandered* (vs. 1 & 3) Passion Chorale

WE ENGAGE GOD'S WORD

The Journey to the Cross, the Journey to Peace

Introduction (from the writings of Pope Leo XIV and the Gospels of John and Matthew)

Hymn 222 *My Song Is Love Unknown* (vs. 1-3) Samuel Crossman/Rhosymedre

Two Different Ways to the Cross

Luke 23:26-27; 32-34

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.... Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."

Elder and Bishop Steven Charleston:

I do not know the birthplace of war in the human heart. I do not know the origin of cruelty in the human mind. Something within us, each of us, all of us, must harbor the secret. Why do we hurt one another?

Silence

From the Cross

Luke 22:39-43

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God ... we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Pope Leo XIV:

The contrast between shadow and light is not only a biblical image describing the labor pains of a new world being born; it is also an experience that unsettles us and affects us amid the trials we face in our historical circumstances. In order to overcome the shadows, it is necessary to see the light and believe in it....

Silence

Choosing a Different Way

John 19:25-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Elder and Bishop Steven Charleston:

Even as the flames of war highlight the horizon, the tides of justice rise to meet them....

Silence

The Cry of the Victims

Mark 15:33-34

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Elder and Bishop Charleston:

How long must we walk the refugee path? I am asking on behalf of us all, generation after generation: watching the long lines of weary faces, the mothers clutching their children, It is enough. No more.

Silence

Musical Reflection

Andante sostenuto

Franz Schubert

The Plea for Mercy

John 19: 28-29

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

Episcopal Bishop Mariann Budde:

Let me make one final plea, Mr. President.... In the name of our God, I ask you to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now.... May God grant us the strength and courage to honor the dignity of every human being, to speak the truth to one another in love, and walk humbly with each other and our God for the good of all people. The good of all people in this nation and the world.

Silence

Musical Reflection

Were You There?

African American/Moses Hogan

The Witness to Peace

Mark 15:37-39

Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was a son of God!"

Elder and Bishop Charleston:

I am not giving up on peace, even if, right now, it is taking some heavy blows.... Signs of hope will find us wherever we may be. I am not giving up.

Silence

Musical Response

582

O God of Earth and Altar

Chesterton & Huber/Llangloffan

WE OFFER OUR LIVES

Prayers of Intercession and the Prayer of Our Savior *(Please pray any version.)*

WE GO IN PEACE

*Hymn 224

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (vs. 1-2, 4)

Hamburg

*Benediction

(You are invited to leave as the Spirit moves you.)

Sharing leadership are Rev. Talitha Arnold, Pastor; Michelle Schumann, Music Director/Pianist; Javier Ortiz, Soloist; Readers Sam Elkind, Leslie Fagre, and Bruce Turnquist; and Media Coordinator Elijah Marquez. The Sanctuary was prepared by the Sacred Space Team.

