



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

April 18, 2025
Good Friday: Tenebrae

Pastor James Enderle

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

First Word: [Luke 23:32-34](#)

The First Word focuses on forgiveness. How do we deal with forgiveness? We really struggle with it because of what that person did to us. *How can I forgive that? I can never forgive that?* We carry that hurt and pain because of our pride or because we think we can never forgive that. Yet, God tells us to forgive, not seven times but seventy-seven times (or *seventy times seven*). ([Matthew 18:22](#)) It's that number of completion—more times than we could ever imagine.

Instead of forgiving, we like to hold grudges. We get bitter or try to get back at others. We let that hurt and that pain define us and that person rule in our hearts and minds instead of forgiving. But our God has forgiven us. Every sin, every mistake—we don't deserve it, but God has forgiven us.

So we see our perfect Savior on the cross, innocent, not deserving of this, but He forgives those who crucify Him. He shows us what true forgiveness is and He dies to give us that true forgiveness. We see the First Word spoken of His love for mankind—that forgiveness.

³²Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. ³³When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

M: Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me;

C: **They pierce my hands and my feet.**

M: They divide my garments among them

C: **and cast lots for my clothing.**

M: He bore the sin of many,

C: **and made intercession for the transgressors.**

([Psalm 22:16,18; Isaiah 53:12](#))

Second Word: Luke 23:35-43

Mocked and hated, we see Jesus hung on a cross unfairly but two criminals being punished justly for their crimes. Here we see what faith in Christ really means.

I saw a clip recently of a pastor who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer. He made the mention of what does Jesus' death and resurrection really mean but that everything is going to be okay. You can see in his eyes the tears of knowing that he is facing death but that everything is going to be okay.

If you've faced cancer, if you've faced loss and pain, there is a lot of worry and wonder if everything is going to be okay. We look at the world and we wonder because the world is broken. *How is everything going to be okay?*

What hope is there for a man hanging on a cross, who is being punished for being a criminal? This man next to Jesus could say there was no hope for him. He is dying and he is a criminal. But as he cries out to Jesus to remember him, Jesus gives him the hope and peace that gives him eternal life. Then in the face of all punishment and pain and knowing the sins that he has committed and that he is suffering for the sins he has committed, he is told that everything is going to be okay. That's what I want you to hear and know in your life, no matter what you face. Because of faith in Jesus, everything is going to be okay. Jesus speaks the words to the criminal, "Today you will be with me in paradise." No matter what we face in this world, we have the promise of forgiveness and peace of eternal life knowing that everything truly is going to be okay.

³⁵ The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One."

³⁶ The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷ and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."

³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: This is the King of the Jews.

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

⁴³ Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

M: All who see me mock me;

C: They hurl insults, shaking their heads.

M: "He trusts in the Lord," they say, "let the Lord rescue him.

C: and cast lots for my clothing. *Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.*"

M: Remember me, Lord, when you show favor to your people.

C: Come to my aid when you save them.

(Psalm 22:7,8; Psalm 106:4)

Third Word: John 19:25-27

During Jesus' ministry, He spoke to His disciples and told them that they would need to deny themselves, to take up their cross and follow Him. Now Jesus Himself is on a cross. He has taken up His cross.

As we struggle so much to deny ourselves, to serve others, to put anyone's needs ahead of our own, we see the struggle we have. The world says *your needs, your happiness, what you want is the most important thing. The worst thing that you could do is to put down your desires and your wants for someone else.* But here we see what is most important. We see that Jesus, as He is dying on a cross, gives comfort and shows that He is thinking about others.

Jesus cares for His family and His friends and asks them to care for each other. This is what He asks us to do, to put others first, to put our needs second, to serve God and to serve others.

Here Jesus is sacrificing everything yet has in mind the needs of others. While He is dying on the cross, He has you in mind. He came to earth, became a man, to die for your sins, to care for you most of all, and to give you peace eternal.

²⁵Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," ²⁷and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

M: This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel,

C: **and to be a sign that will be spoken against,**

M: so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed.

C: **And a sword will pierce your own soul too.**

M: Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?

C: **Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven**

is my brother and sister and mother.

(Luke 2:34,35; Matthew 12:48,50)

Fourth Word: Matthew 27:45-46

To be betrayed—do you know what it feels like for someone to break your trust, to feel forsaken by someone else? You may have experienced that. It's not a great feeling. It's one of the worst feelings, to be forsaken by someone.

But what does it feel like to be forsaken by God? Can you imagine that? There are people that speak about life on this earth and they say "There's no real hell because this

world is hell. There are so many difficulties and problems.” But this world is not hell. Even those in great suffering still receive the blessings of God. There is still good in this world. But to be forsaken by God, that really means you suffer hell. To be cut off from God and His love, His grace, and His mercy. So to be forsaken, we know what that might feel like from someone in this life, but to be forsaken by God, my prayer is you never experience that because that would mean eternal damnation.

God sent Jesus to the cross to be forsaken by Him, to become sin. He who was perfect became sin, to be forsaken, so that you would never be forsaken. Even if you feel the difficulties and you say “God, why would you bring this about? Why is there such suffering? Why is there such difficulty?” you are not forsaken by God. God still loves you. He sent Jesus to the cross and forsook Him so that you would never experience it. He became sin so that you could have the righteousness of God, and instead of being forsaken, to be welcomed in His arms. You have the peace and righteousness of God.

⁴⁵From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land.

⁴⁶About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

M: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

C: Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?

M: My God, I cry out by day but you do not answer,

C: by night, but I find no rest.

M: “In that day,” declares the Sovereign Lord, “I will make the sun go down at noon

C: and darken the earth in broad daylight.” (*[Psalm 22:1,2](#); [Amos 8:9](#)*)

Fifth Word: [John 19:28-29](#)

Maybe you’ve thought to yourself, *No one knows what I’m going through*. In the difficulty, the pain, you might feel very alone. Maybe it’s just because of what someone else did to you. Maybe it’s because of a sin that you’ve committed and you are facing those consequences. You can feel very alone.

But the amazing thing is that our God sent Jesus, who was perfect and part of the Trinity, to become a man, to live like one of us. It says He was tempted in every way that we are, so He knows what it’s like to face those temptations. He experienced so many of the things that we experience. We said betrayal already. He experienced the loss of loved ones. We see how much people hated Him, even though He was innocent. While you might say “No one understands me,” here, as we hear the words of Jesus, He speaks these very human words of “I am thirsty.” We know that He knows what it’s like to be you and me. But He became man for you, so that you’re not alone, so that your identity can be found in Jesus, that you are loved and forgiven by Him.

So whenever you feel alone, you know that you are not. You are a child of God. You are a brother or a sister of Christ, who is not afraid to call you brother or sister, because He became man to set you free, to experience the pain that you experience, but to live perfectly in your place. We know our sins nailed Him to the cross, but there He suffered for you and for me. He knows what it's like. He did that to redeem you and me. He's not afraid to call you brother and sister. Your identity is sure—redeemed and forgiven by Jesus.

²⁸Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." ²⁹A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

M: My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;

C: **you lay me in the dust of death.**

M: I am worn out calling for help;

C: **my throat is parched.**

M: They put gall in my food

C: **and gave me vinegar for my thirst.**

([*Psalm 22:15; Psalm 69:3,21*](#))

Sixth Word: [John 19:30](#)

The jailer in Philippi said these words, "What must I do to be saved?" The answer was, "Believe." It's so important for us to see that we know what our sins have done, that we need to confess and know that we deserve being forsaken by God. We know that our sins put Jesus on the cross. What saves us is faith because of what Jesus says here. In English, three words, "It is finished." In Greek, one word, "Tetelestai." It's a word that means "Paid in full."

Yes, we know what sin has done and we don't deserve God's love, but our debt is paid and there is nothing we can do to make up for it. It's done. We cling to Christ. This is the message of the Gospel. We hear the Law and know that we are greater sinners than we could ever imagine but the Gospel says you are more loved than you could ever imagine. It's the uniqueness of Christianity that gives you the verdict first; that says "You are forgiven. Now go and show that love." You are forgiven because Jesus said, "It is finished; paid in full. Your debt is done." That's what we cling to, knowing that Christ has done it all and paid our debt to bring us peace with God now and forever.

³⁰When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

M: On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

C: **to cleanse them from sin and impurity.**

M: Because of the blood of my covenant with you,
C: **I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.**

M: I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.

C: **I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.** (*[Zechariah 13:1; 9:11; 3:9; Jeremiah 31:34](#)*)

Seventh Word: [Luke 23:44-46](#)

When Jesus came to live among us, He told His disciples that He was the way, the Truth, and the Life. (*[John 14:6](#)*) What was He the way to? What is He the Truth of? He is the way to heaven. He is the way to get you to the Father. Our relationship with God is not great by nature. By nature we are stubborn. By nature we want what is best for ourselves. We are prideful and you can see it in the littlest child, who does not want to share. And more and more as we grow up, the more and more we rebel and make it all about ourselves and don't want to listen to His ways. So we are so distant from the Father.

But Jesus' whole mission was to bring you peace with God. So when you live this life, you have no fear. You can know that you are at peace with God now. Even when your sins condemn you, even when you are afraid, you cling to Christ and know you are at peace. But most of all, for when those closing hours come, when those loved ones have passed; we know that God is welcoming them. He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to be our Savior.

So as Jesus speaks the words, "Into your hands I commit my Spirit, Father," we know that He welcomes Him and noticed that He gives up His life, willingly. Jesus did this because He loves you. This is the message of Good Friday. While we know what our sins have done, we rejoice in what God has done through Christ—a Good Friday, where Jesus gives Himself up for you, to defeat death, so that's not the end. He will rise and you, too, as well.

⁴⁴It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

M: Into your hands I commit my spirit;
C: **deliver me, Lord, my faithful God.**

M: He has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one;

C: **he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.**

M: He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors.

C: **He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.
and will remember their sins no more.** (*[Psalm 31:5; Psalm 22:24; Isaiah 53:12](#)*)