

Holy Saturday

A Service of Silence, Readings, and Prayer

April 4, 2026

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Let us pray:

O God, creator of heaven and earth:

The crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath.

(Silence)

So may we await with him the coming of the third day,
and rise with him to newness of life.

Amen.

(Silence)

First Reading

Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-20

I am one who has seen affliction
under the rod of God's wrath;

God has driven and brought me
into darkness without any light;

Against me alone God turns God's hand,
again and again, all day long.

God has made my flesh and my skin waste away,
and has broken my bones;

God has besieged and enveloped me
with bitterness and tribulation;

God has made me sit in darkness
like the dead of long ago.

God has walled me about so that I cannot escape,
and has put heavy chains on me.

Though I call and cry for help,
God shuts out my prayer;

God has blocked my ways with hewn stones
and made my paths crooked.

The thought of my affliction and my homelessness
is wormwood and gall!

My soul continually thinks of it
and is bowed down within me.

(Silence)

The Psalm

Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

(Read in unison, pausing in silence for a full breath between verses.)

**¹In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be | put to shame;
deliver me | in your righteousness.**

**²Incline your | ear to me;
make haste to de- | liver me.**

**³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag | and my stronghold;
for the sake of your name,
lead | me and guide me.**

**⁴Take me out of the net that they have secretly | set for me,
for you are my tow- | er of strength.**

**¹⁵My times are | in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who | persecute me.**

**¹⁶Let your face shine up- | on your servant;
save me in your | steadfast love.”**

Second Reading

I Peter 4:1-8

¹Since, therefore, Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God.

You have already spent enough time in doing what the gentiles like to do, living in debauchery, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme.

But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

(Silence)

The Gospel

Matthew 27:52-66

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁶² The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise, his disciples may go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶ So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

(Silence)

THE PRAYERS

Let us pray for the church and the world.

C: Hear our silent prayers, O God.

For the leaders and mission of your church in every place... *(Silence)*

With all that lives and moves upon the earth, and all that sustains our lives... *(Silence)*

For every leader and all who work for justice, freedom and peace... *(Silence)*

With all who labor and the fruits of their work... *(Silence)*

For all who are sick, captive, or lonely, and all who remember and care for them...
(Silence)

With all who are born this day, and all who will die... *(Silence)*

We pray as Jesus taught us...

The Lord's Prayer

(Silence)

SENDING FORTH

Leader: Go in peace.

All depart in silence.

The Great Vigil of Easter is offered at St. Thomas Episcopal Church at 6:30 pm.