



St James Cathedral

CHICAGO

Forged in Fire: From Age to Age



"Golgotha" by Edvard Munch

Choral Meditations on
The Seven Last Words
April 3, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.



Lent 2026

Dear people of God in The Episcopal Church:

For more than a century, Episcopalians have given generously to the Good Friday Offering, which supports the vital work and ministries of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East. Today, the need of the church in the Holy Land is greater than ever, particularly given the recent escalation of war in the Middle East, and I hope you will join me in making a generous gift today at iam.ec/goodfridayoffering.

I am in frequent touch with Archbishop Hosam Naoum, who leads the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, and I know how urgently he and his people need our support as they alleviate suffering and provide hope to God's people of all faiths. The Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey recently gave the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem \$1 million to support medical and trauma care for children, youth, and families in Gaza and the Palestinian territories, and I am hoping that we can build on that extraordinary gift with this year's Good Friday Offering.

Your gift will support:

- al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, which has continued serving patients during the Israel-Hamas War amid bombardment, devastating shortages of food, water, and medicine, and extended power outages.
- St. George's Church in Baghdad, Iraq, and its medical center.
- An eye clinic at Christ Church in Yemen.
- All Saints' Episcopal Church in Damascus, Syria.
- All Saints' Episcopal Church in Beirut, Lebanon.

The Episcopal Church supports just and sustainable peace in the Holy Land and around the world. While we pray and work for peace, our siblings in the Holy Land will continue to serve God's people with hospitals, schools, orphanages, and humanitarian aid programs. These ministries serve people of all faiths without distinction, bearing witness to the power of hope and healing across divides.

Together, we can support the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East as it turns despair into hope for God's people in the land where our faith was born.

The Most Rev. Sean Rowe
Presiding Bishop
The Episcopal Church

To make your gift today:

- Scan the QR code at right
- Visit iam.ec/goodfridayoffering
- Send a check with "Good Friday Offering" in the memo line to:
The Episcopal Church (DFMS)
PO Box 958983
St. Louis, MO 63195-8983



Welcome to St. James Cathedral

The Seven Last Words from the Cross are drawn from the four canonical gospels. In Matthew and Mark, Jesus cries out to the Father in despair. In Luke, Jesus forgives those who have crucified him, comforts the penitent thief, and gives up his spirit. And in John, Jesus speaks to his mother and Peter, thirsts, and declares that his life is finished. Together, these sayings portray Christ as a man undergoing extreme suffering and a savior who is infinitely forgiving.

Just as the Seven Last Words are woven together from the four gospels, we have woven together a tapestry of poetry and music from the Choristers' repertoire to provide a space for contemplation, mysticism, and beauty. Art has a sublime power to connect us to the divine. If you wish, please take this leaflet home with you and continue to reflect upon these words and this music as you prepare for Easter. We hope it will help you to encounter Christ in his final hours anew.

A special word of thanks to Alice Tjoelker, who selected the poetry for this evening's offering.

Stephen Buzard, *Director of Music*

PARKING

Reduced-rate parking is available at R.O.W. Parking Garage (50 E. Ohio) for \$17 on weekdays and Saturdays for up to 18 hours, and \$2 on Sundays for up to six hours from the time of entering the garage. Discounts are also available for all-day parking at Ohio Ontario Self Park (33 W. Ontario) for \$11. To receive a reduced-rate parking voucher, please go to the welcome table in the narthex or the reception desk in the Welcome Center.

LIVE-STREAM NOTICE

A reminder this public service will be live-streamed and your image or the image of any children or vulnerable adults in your care may appear in the video. By your entry and presence in this service, you agree on behalf of yourself and any children or vulnerable adults attending with you to be photographed, filmed, and/or otherwise recorded, and also agree to our use of such images in any and all media.



THIS WEEK'S ENEWS

The people gather in silence.

The people stand as the clergy and choristers enter.

OPENING DEVOTIONS

Officiant In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

HYMN

Hymnal 172

1 Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you
2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you
*3 Were you there when they pierced him in the side? Were you
4 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you

there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Oh! _____
there when they nailed him to the tree? Oh! _____
there when they pierced him in the side? Oh! _____
there when they laid him in the tomb? Oh! _____

Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,
 Some-times it caus - es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,

trem-ble. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
 trem-ble. Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 trem-ble. Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 trem-ble. Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Words: African-American spiritual

Music: *Were you There*, Afro-American spiritual; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944)

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Officiant The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE FIRST WORD *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”*

We nailed the hands long ago,
Wove the thorns, took up the scourge and shouted
For excitement's sake, we stood at the dusty edge
Of the pebbled path and watched the extreme of pain.

But one or two prayed, one or two
Were silent, shocked, stood back
And remembered remnants of words, a new vision,
The cross is up with its crying victim, the clouds
Cover the sun, we learn a new way to lose
What we did not know we had
Until this bleak and sacrificial day,
Until we turned from our bad
Past and knelt and cried out our dismay,
The dice still clicking, the voices dying away.

Friday

Elizabeth Jennings (1926–2001)

ANTHEM

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy.

Christe eleison.

Christ, have mercy.

Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy.

THE SECOND WORD *“Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise”*

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road.
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road;
All in the April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God.
The lambs were weary and crying
With a weak, human cry.
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
Dewy pastures are sweet;
Rest for the little bodies,
Rest for the little feet.
But for the Lamb of God,
Up on the hill-top green,
Only a Cross of shame
Two stark crosses between.
All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
And thought on the Lamb of God.

Sheep and Lambs

Katharine Tynan (1859–1931)

ANTHEM

Maurice Duruflé (1902–1986)

*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsulemus et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum,
et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Amen.*

Where charity and love are, God is there.
The love of Christ has united us.
Let us rejoice and be glad in him.
Let us fear and love the living God
and adore him from a sincere heart.
Where charity and love are, God is there.
Amen.

THE THIRD WORD “*Woman, behold your son... behold your mother*”

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother.”

O wondrous mother! since the dawn of time
Was ever love, was ever grief, like thine?
O highly favored in thy joy's deep flow,
And favored, even in this, thy bitterest woe!

Poor was that home in simple Nazareth
Where, fairly growing, like some silent flower,
Last of a kingly race, unknown and lowly,
O desert lily, passed thy childhood's hour.

The world knew not the tender, serious maiden,
Who through deep loving years so silent grew,
Full of high thought and holy aspiration,
Which the o'ershadowing God alone might view.

And then it came, that message from the highest,
Such as to woman ne'er before descended,
The almighty wings thy prayerful soul o'erspread,
And with thy life the Life of worlds was blended.

What visions then of future glory filled thee,
the chosen mother of that King unknown,
Mother fulfiller of all prophecy

Which, through dim ages, wondering seers had shown!

Well, did thy dark eye kindle, thy deep soul
Rise into billows, and thy heart rejoice;
Then woke the poet's fire, the prophet's song,
Tuned with strange burning words thy timid voice.

Then, in dark contrast, came the lowly manger,
The outcast shed, the tramp of brutal feet;

Again behold earth's learned and her lowly,
Sages and shepherds, prostrate at thy feet.

Then to the temple bearing—hark again
What strange conflicting tones of prophecy
Breathe o'er the child foreshadowing words of joy,
High triumph blent with bitter agony!

O highly favored thou in many an hour
Spent in lone musings with thy wondrous Son,
When thou didst gaze into that glorious eye,
And hold that mighty hand within thine own.

Blest through those thirty years, when in thy dwelling
He lived a God disguised with unknown power;
And thou his sole adorer, his best love,
Trusting, revering, waited for his hour.

Blest in that hour, when called by opening heaven
With cloud and voice and the baptizing flame,
Up from the Jordan walked th' acknowledged stranger,
And awe-struck crowds grew silent as He came.

Blessed, when full of grace, with glory crowned,
He from both hands almighty favors poured,
And, though He had not where to lay his head,
Brought to his feet alike the slave and lord.

Crowds followed; thousands shouted, "Lo, our King!"
Fast beat thy heart. Now, now the hour draws nigh:
Behold the crown, the throne, the nations bend!

Ah, no! fond mother, no! behold Him die!

Now by that cross thou tak'st thy final station,
And shar'st the last dark trial of thy Son;
Not with weak tears or woman's lamentation,
But with high, silent anguish, like his own.

Hail! highly favored, even in this deep passion;
Hail! in this bitter anguish thou art blest,—
Blest in the holy power with Him to suffer
Those deep death-pangs that lead to higher rest.

All now is darkness; and in that deep stillness
The God-man wrestles with that mighty woe;
Hark to that cry, the rock of ages rending,—
"Tis finished!" Mother, all is glory now!

By sufferings mighty as his mighty soul
Hath the Redeemer risen forever blest;
And through all ages must his heart-beloved
Through the same baptism enter the same rest.

Mary at the Cross
Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896)

ANTHEM

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1736)

*Stabat Mater dolorosa
iuxta crucem lacrimosa,
dum pendebat Filius.*

At the cross her station keeping,
stood the mournful mother weeping,
close to Jesus to the last.

THE FOURTH WORD “My God, my God, *why have you forsaken me?*”

Jesus, my gentle Jesus,
Walking in the dark of the Garden —
The Garden of Gethsemane,
Saying to the three disciples:
Sorrow is in my soul —
Even unto death;
Tarry ye here a little while,
And watch with me.

Jesus, my burdened Jesus,
Praying in the dark of the Garden —
The Garden of Gethsemane.
Saying: Father,
Oh, Father,
This bitter cup,
This bitter cup,
Let it pass from me.

Jesus, my sorrowing Jesus,
The sweat like drops of blood upon his brow,
Talking with his Father,
While the three disciples slept,
Saying: Father,
Oh, Father,
Not as I will,
Not as I will,
But let thy will be done.

Oh, look at black-hearted Judas —
Sneaking through the dark of the Garden —
Leading his crucifying mob.
Oh, God!
Strike him down!
Why don't you strike him down,
Before he plants his traitor's kiss
Upon my Jesus' cheek?

And they take my blameless Jesus,
And they drag him to the Governor,
To the mighty Roman Governor.
Great Pilate seated in his hall,—
Great Pilate on his judgment seat,
Said: In this man I find no fault.
I find no fault in him.
And Pilate washed his hands.

But they cried out, saying:
Crucify him!—
Crucify him!—
Crucify him!—
His blood be on our heads.
And they beat my loving Jesus,
They spit on my precious Jesus;
They dressed him up in a purple robe,
They put a crown of thorns upon his head,

And they pressed it down —
 Oh, they pressed it down —
 And they mocked my sweet King Jesus.
 Up Golgotha's rugged road
 I see my Jesus go.
 I see him sink beneath the load,
 I see my drooping Jesus sink.
 And then they laid hold on Simon,
 Black Simon, yes, black Simon;
 They put the cross on Simon,
 And Simon bore the cross.
 On Calvary, on Calvary,
 They crucified my Jesus.
 They nailed him to the cruel tree,
 And the hammer!
 The hammer!
 The hammer!
 Rang through Jerusalem's streets.
 The hammer!
 The hammer!
 The hammer!
 Rang through Jerusalem's streets.
 Jesus, my lamb-like Jesus,
 Shivering as the nails go through his hands;
 Jesus, my lamb-like Jesus,
 Shivering as the nails go through his feet.
 Jesus, my darling Jesus,
 Groaning as the Roman spear
 plunged in his side;

Jesus, my darling Jesus,
 Groaning as the blood came spurting from
 his wound.
 Oh, look how they done my Jesus.
 Mary,
 Weeping Mary,
 Sees her poor little Jesus on the cross.
 Mary,
 Weeping Mary,
 Sees her sweet, baby Jesus on the cruel cross,
 Hanging between two thieves.
 And Jesus, my lonesome Jesus,
 Called out once more to his Father,
 Saying:
 My God,
 My God,
 Why hast thou forsaken me?
 And he drooped his head and died.
 And the veil of the temple was split in two,
 The midday sun refused to shine,
 The thunder rumbled and the lightning
 wrote
 An unknown language in the sky.
 What a day! Lord, what a day!
 When my blessed Jesus died.
 Oh, I tremble, yes, I tremble,
 It causes me to tremble, tremble,
 When I think how Jesus died;
 Died on the steeps of Calvary,
 How Jesus died for sinners,
 Sinners like you and me.

The Crucifixion
 James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

ANTHEM

The Crucifixion

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

At the cry of the first bird they began to crucify Thee, O Swan! Never shall lament cease because of that. It was like the parting of day from night. Ah, sore was the suffering borne by the body of Mary's Son, but sorer still to Him was the grief which for His sake came upon His Mother.

THE FIFTH WORD "I thirst"

To be crucified is first to lie down
on a shaved tree, and then to have oafs stretch you out
on a crossbar as if for flight, then thick spikes
fix you into place.

Once the cross props up and the pole stob
sinks vertically in an earth hole, perhaps
at an awkward list, what then can you blame for hurt
but your own self's burden?

You're not the figurehead on a ship. You're not
flying anywhere, and no one's coming to hug you.
You hang like that, a sack of flesh with the hard
trinity of nails holding you into place.

Thus hung, your rib cage struggles up
to breathe until you suffocate. If God
permits this, one wonders if some less
than loving watcher

watches us. The man on the cross
under massed thunderheads feels
his soul leak away, then surge. Some wind
sucks him into the light stream
in the rent sky, and he's snatched back, held close.

Descending Theology: The Crucifixion
Mary Carr (b.1955)

ANTHEM

Britten

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

THE SIXTH WORD *“It is finished”*

Maybe He looked indeed
much as Rembrandt envisioned Him
in those small heads that seem in fact
portraits of more than a model.
A dark, still young, very intelligent face,
a soul-mirror gaze of deep understanding, unjudging.
That face, in extremis, would have clenched its teeth
in a grimace not shown in even the great crucifixions.
The burden of humanness (I begin to see) exacted from Him
that He taste also the humiliation of dread,
cold sweat of wanting to let the whole thing go,
like any mortal hero out of His depth,
like anyone who has taken a step too far
and wants herself back.
The painters, even the greatest, don't show how,
in the midnight Garden,
or staggering uphill under the weight of the Cross,
He went through with even the human longing
to simply cease, to not be.
Not torture of body,
not the hideous betrayals humans commit,
nor the faithless weakness of friends (not then, in agony's grip)
was Incarnation's heaviest weight,
but this sickened desire to renege,
to step back from what He, Who was God,
had promised Himself, and had entered
time and flesh to enact.
Sublime acceptance, to be absolute, had to have welled
up from those depths where purpose
drifted for mortal moments.

Salvator mundi: Via Crucis
Denise Levertov (1923-1997)

ANTHEM

*O bone Jesu, O dulcis Jesu,
O Jesu fili Mariae Virginis,
plene misericordia et pietate
O bone Jesu, O dulcis Jesu,
secundum magnam misericordiam tuam,
miserere mei.*

Richard Dering (c. 1580–1630)

O good Jesus, O sweet Jesus,
O Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary,
full of mercy and compassion
O good Jesus, O sweet Jesus,
according to your great mercy,
have mercy on me.

THE SEVENTH WORD

“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”

Where the cross still casts its shadow
there we trace love’s depth and height
pouring forth to bless and hallow
our own lives with that same light
which through every twist and turning
of our church’s early days
helped our founders in discerning
how to serve the God they praised.

Though they long ago have parted
from this rise of windswept shore
still the mission that they started
and the fruit their witness bore
beckon us to keep attending
to the Spirit’s wind and flame
and the work that God’s intending
we will do in Jesus’ name:

Meeting needs that stretch our mission
past the world our founders knew
yet maintaining their tradition,
Gracious God, of serving you,
while our lives keep growing, reaching,
toward the light, the love that’s fed
all our praying, singing, preaching:
Christ, the church’s Lord and head.

Where The Cross Still Casts Its Shadow
Thomas H. Troeger (1945–2022)

ANTHEM

Ex ore innocentium

John Ireland (1879-1962)

It is a thing most wonderful, almost too wonderful to be. That God's own Son should come from Heaven, and die to save a child like me. And yet I know that it is true: He chose a poor and humble lot, and wept, and toiled, and mourned, and died, for love of those who loved him not. I sometimes think about the Cross, and shut my eyes, and try to see the cruel nails and crown of thorns, and Jesus, crucified for me. But even could I see him die, I should but see a little part of that great love, which, like a fire, is always burning in his heart. And yet I want to love thee, Lord; oh light the flame within my heart, and I will love thee more and more, until I see thee as thou art.

The people kneel

PRAYERS

The people stand.

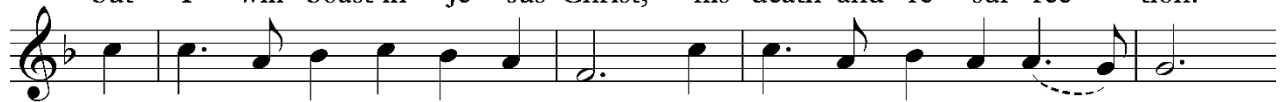
HYMN



1. How deep the Fa-ther's love for us, how vast be-yond all mea - sure,
2. Be - hold, the man up - on a cross, my sin up - on his shoul - ders;
3. I will not boast in an - y - thing, no gifts, no pow'r, no wis - dom;



that he should give his on - ly Son to make a wretch his trea - sure.
a - shamed, I hear my mock - ing voice call out a - mong the scoff - ers.
but I will boast in Je - sus Christ, his death and re - sur - rec - tion.



How great the pain of sear - ing loss; the Fa - ther turns his face a - way,
It was my sin that held him there, un - til it was ac - com - plished;
Why should I gain from his re - ward? I can - not give an an - swer;



as wounds which mar the cho - sen one bring ma - ny souls to glo - ry.
his dy - ing breath has brought me life. I know that it is fin - ished.
but this I know with all my heart, his wounds have paid my ran - som.

Words & Music: Stuart Townend (b. 1963); arr. Stephen Buzard (b. 1989)

The people remain standing as the clergy and choir depart in silence.



MUSIC AT ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL

Sign up for our music newsletter at SaintJamesCathedral.org/music

St. James has long been recognized for excellence and leadership in sacred music. The Cathedral Choir sings Sundays at 11 a.m., at major feast days, and other special services. Choral Evensong, a particularly moving service of song, stillness, and scripture happens on the first Sunday of the month (October through June).



Founded in 2017, the St. James Cathedral Choir School provides a *free, world-class music education* for children in 3rd through 8th grade. In addition to weekly rehearsals, each chorister receives a one-on-one weekly voice lesson, and lead music for one of the Sunday morning services and for Wednesday Evensong each week.



LITURGICAL MINISTERS

OFFICIANT: The Rev. Canon Steven Balke

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS	8 a.m.	Holy Eucharist (<i>Spoken</i>)	Chapel
	9 a.m.	Holy Eucharist (<i>Family</i>)	Cathedral
	11 a.m.	Holy Eucharist (<i>Choral</i>)	Cathedral
		Live-Stream Service (<i>see enews, website, or YouTube</i>)	
FIRST SUNDAYS	4 p.m.	Choral Evensong (<i>Oct–June</i>)	Cathedral
WEEKDAYS	9 a.m.	Morning Prayer (<i>see enews, or website</i>)	Zoom
	12:10 p.m.	Holy Eucharist	Cathedral
	5:45 p.m.	Choral Evensong (<i>Wednesdays, Sept–June</i>)	Cathedral

CLERGY & STAFF

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