

SEVEN REPROACHES TO THE CHURCH

Good Friday

April 3, 2026 at 7 p.m.

Gathering

Enter quietly and take a seat in the two rows of pews at rear of the Sanctuary. Keep a holy silence as you contemplate the mystery of Jesus' atoning death. The Holy Silence is broken by a voice of the prophet Isaiah.

The Song of the Suffering Servant - Isaiah 53:3-12

Christ's Obedience - Philippians 2:5-11

Anthem

"Lead Me to Calvary"

Chancel Choir

based on a melody by William J. Kirkpatrick, arranged by Howard Helvey

We prepare for the final stage of Lenten journey to Easter hope by repeating the following chant from the community of Taizé (UMH 488), taken originally from the last word of a forgiven and saved criminal at the last moment of his life at Calvary, saying, "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom."

R: ♪ Jesus, Remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, Remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

In a symbolic reenactment of Jesus' walk from Jerusalem to Calvary, we will walk from our seats toward several places of our church. At each station in the campus we will listen as the Reproaches are read, remaining quietly in place, contemplating the words of the Reproaches. After the song response, we will then be led to the next station.

The Reproaches: Christ's Lament against His Faithless Church

(inspired by Matthew 23)

Reproach 1, Before a Cross in the Fellowship Hall

*Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted on the day of his fierce anger. **R***

Reproach 2, Before a Cross in Façade of the Church (alt. Choir Room)

*O my people, O my church, what have I done to you, or in what have I offended you? Testify against me. I led you forth from the land of Egypt and delivered you by the waters of baptism, but you have prepared a cross for your savior. **R***

Reproach 3, Before a Cross on the First Bird Church (alt. Preschool Entrance)

*I led you through the desert forty years, and fed you with manna: I brought you through tribulation and penitence, and gave you my body, the bread of heaven, but you have prepared a cross for your savior. **R***

Reproach 4, Before a Wooden Cross at the Outdoor Chapel (alt. Library – Prayer Room)

*I gave you a royal scepter, and bestow the keys to the Kingdom, but you have given me a crown of thorns. I raise you on high with great power, but you have hanged me on the cross. **R***

Reproach 5, Before a Cross in the Youth Activity Room (alt. Pastor's Study)

*My peace I gave, which the world cannot give, and washed your feet as a sign of my love, but you draw the sword to strike in my name and seek high places in my kingdom. I offered you my body and blood, but you scatter and deny and abandon me. **R***

Reproach 6, Before a Cross in the Library (alt. Narthex)

I sent the Spirit of truth to guide you, and you closed your hearts to the Counselor. I pray that all may be one in the Father and me, but you continue to quarrel and divide. I call you to go and bring forth fruit, but you cast lots for my clothing. R

Absolution by Fire at the Entrance of Preschool (Alt. Main Entrance Area)

You were given a dry palm branch when you entered. It was fresh just several days ago when we wave to welcome Jesus Christ our King on Palm Sunday. Now it dried like our barren soul.

Consider now what you would ask God to take away from you, what bad habit, what fear, or what sin. Consider your complicity in the problems of others and of the world, whether through action or inaction, whether active or passive acquiescence to the power of the world. Put your concern on the branches. When you are ready, take the branch(es), move to a fire place placed here, and return in silence to wherever you want to be nearby.

The branches will be burned, while you watch the flame that consumes the dry branches in a distance, just as women at the Calvary watched the last breath of their Master on the cross. Watch the flame burning the branches and wait until the branches turn into ashes. Think how much Jesus loves us as the unquenchable love consuming all of our iniquities.

The pilgrims return to their own home. R

The pilgrims receive a cut-nail on their way to the Final Reproach in the sanctuary.

The Final Reproach, Before a Cross Shroud in the Sanctuary

I came to you as the least of your brothers and sisters; I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.

A Sermon in Poetry

“The Crucifixion”

Rev. DaeHwa Park

by James Weldon Johnson

You were given a nail when you entered. Think of it as the embodiment of what you want God to forgive. When you are ready, take the nail, move to the wooden cross laid in the chancel area and put the nail of your sin or fear into the wood of Jesus’ cross and take a cross made of palm leaves for the reminder of what God has done for you in Jesus Christ. Return in silence to your seat.

Via Dolorosa (“The Way of Suffering”)

by Billy Sprague and Niles Borop

*Kayla Laws, solo
Kathryn Herman piano*

The Cross is carried to and placed in the Chancel area as “Via Dolorosa” is sung by a single voice. Sit in quiet meditation. At the conclusion of the song you are invited to remain in your pew in quiet meditation or you may come to the foot of the cross to kneel in adoration and prayer.

Go in peace. May God bless you all.

Silent Departure

*You’re invited to **Easter Vigil tomorrow** - Holy Saturday, April 4, 2026 at 7 p.m.*

Special thanks to Kayla Laws, soloist; and Chancel Choir under the direction of Kathryn Herman; Cynthia Balentine, Usher; Rayna Robb, Cathy Pevey, Ron Davison, Dick Church, Cynthia Bowman-Gholston, readers.

Covenant United Methodist Church

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