

March 28, at 6 PM
MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE
COMMUNITY MEAL & SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Maundy Thursday service tonight is taken from an early Christian service called Tenebrae. The name Tenebrae is Latin for “shadows” or “darkness.” The service is characterized by the reading of Christ’s Passion and the gradual extinguishing of candles. With the diminishing light, we remember Christ’s pain and suffering and the struggle of God’s people. By the end of the liturgy, the only light left in the sanctuary is the Christ Candle which is then taken away or “hidden” as Christ was taken away to be crucified. We will sit together in silent darkness until a loud sound is heard signifying the earthquake at Jesus’ death and Christ’s resurrection. The Christ candle is then returned, which symbolizes God’s triumph of good over evil, of light over darkness, of life over death. By this single light, we will all depart in silence after the haunting postlude hymn “Were You There.”

Prior to the extinguishing of the candles and the intrusion of shadows, the church altar will be stripped of its coverings and decorations. Since the altar symbolizes Christ, the stripping of the altar symbolizes the coming abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the stripping of Jesus by the soldiers prior to his crucifixion. This, like the darkness, also represents the humiliation of Jesus and the consequences of sin as a preparation for the celebration of new life and hope that is to come at the Easter resurrection. During this portion of the service, anyone who feels called is welcome to come forward to help with the stripping of the altar.

*Please note that later, during the Service of Shadows, which will take place in the sanctuary, there will be portions that include unexpected loud sounds and even flashing lights. *If necessary, please forewarn your children that they can expect these dramatic effects. For those who have PTSD or any other medical conditions that may require a forewarning of these effects, please let Pastor Baker know (confidentially). She will provide you with a “leader’s copy” which indicates the timing of such effects.*

To help you prepare for tomorrow afternoon’s Good Friday service, which will be held in-person at Manchester Assembly of God at 2 PM, a poem is being provided to you. This poem, “It is Friday,” may be used for your morning meditation or as a prayer to be said throughout the day – perhaps being prayed every two to four hours.

FELLOWSHIP HALL

GREETING

Pastor:

On this spring evening, as darkness overcomes the light and night covers the day, we gather to remember and celebrate the final supper Jesus shared with his friends. In this holy place and sacred hour, let us be true to Jesus as we relive the events of that night through the reading of the Word and by serving one another. In silence, let us ask God for the courage to watch and pray with Jesus, to follow him to the cross, and then, to move beyond that cross to the empty tomb.
(Moment of Silent Prayer) Amen.

HYMN

Abide with Me

Blue Hymnal, #636

Abide with me fast falls the eventide. The shadows deepen; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee; Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs our life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away.
Change and decay in all around I see.
O Christ who changes not, abide with me.

I need your presence every passing hour;
I need your grace to foil the tempter's power.
Give me your love, my guide and stay to be.
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe, with you at hand to bless.
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, your victory?
I triumph still if you abide with me.

Hold now your cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee.
In life, in death, O God, abide with me.

COMMUNITY GRACE AND PRAYER

All: Lord Jesus Christ, with thanksgiving, we begin this spring evening, when darkness overcomes the light and night covers the day. We are so, very grateful to be a part of this faith-full community and we look forward to this community meal. We ask a special blessing upon those who prepared the food and those who planned the worship service. May the meal strengthen our bodies and our worship fortify our spirits, so that in what remains of this sacred and solemn week – we might see again the depth and mystery of your redeeming love; find the courage to follow where you go; to stop where you stumble; to listen when you cry; to hurt as you suffer; and to bow our heads in sorrow when you die; so that when raised to life again we may share your endless joy. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. (A community meal is shared)

WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

PRELUDE *Love Consecrates the Humblest Act* (Chopin)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor: Friends in Christ, on this holiest of nights, Jesus prepares for his body to be broken on our behalf. Knowing this, let us confess silently, of the many ways that we have betrayed him in word and deed, by not loving God, by not loving one another, and by not loving ourselves because we have failed to live up to our best selves.
(Time of Silent Confession)

HYMN *Just as I Am* **Blue Hymnal, #339**

Just as I am, without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me.
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come. I come!

Just as I and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot.
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come. I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about, with many a conflict, many a doubt.
Fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come. I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind – sight riches, healing of the mind.
Yea, all I need in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come. I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive; wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve.
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come. I come!

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Hear the Good News: The blood of the Passover lamb protected the Israelites from death. So too, does Jesus' death and resurrection protect us from sin and death's grip. In the name of Christ Jesus, our Passover Lamb, I proclaim that your sins are forgiven.

Congregation: In Christ, your sins are forgiven too!

All: Thanks be to God!

HYMN RESPONSE

Just As I Am

Blue Hymnal, #339

Just as I am, Thy love unknown has broken every barrier down.

Now to be Thine, yea, Thin alone, O Lamb of God, I come. I come! Amen.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Pastor: Jesus spent his life teaching us the meaning of love. Through word and deed Jesus showed us how to love God and to love one another. He fed the hungry. He healed the sick. He invited the women and the children and the tax collectors and the sinners to come to his table. He broke bread with the least and the lost and shared the cup of redemption with them all. He crossed boundaries of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, and class. He challenged religious authority, and he scoffed at haughtiness and self-absorbed grandeur. He called out the hypocrites. He rebuked the scribes and the Pharisees for their hardened hearts. He brought a simple message: Love God, love yourself, and love one another.

All: We gather in the name of Jesus and remember the Way of Life that he showed us. We gather to remember not just his death, but his life.

Pastor: The Way of Jesus goes through the cross, but we are not there yet. It is close. We can see its shadow. We can feel the cold, dark, night. We know that the enemies of God are conspiring. They have had enough of him. He threatens their comfort. He threatens their way of life. He threatens their power. They will come for him. First though, we will gather. We gather with Jesus and his closest friends. We gather with those that called him Rabbi and friend. We gather for the Passover meal, to remember that God saved the people from slavery. God saved once. God saves forevermore.

All: *God saved the Israelites at Passover, and revealed that it is God who reigns, not the Pharaoh. Our God saved once. God saves forevermore.*

Pastor: During the meal, knowing that he had come from God and was going to God, Jesus got up from the table, took off his outer robe and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet. He wiped them with the towel that was tied around him. Peter was offended. He said, "Lord are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus tried to explain and then simply said, "You don't understand what I'm doing, but later you will." Peter was adamant, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part in me." Peter then said, "Lord, then don't wash only my feet, but also my hands and head!" After he had washed their feet – all of their feet and returned to the table, he said, "Do you know what I have done for you? You call me your teacher and Lord. You are right, because I am. So, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also out to wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you. You should do to others, as I have done to you. I give you a new commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you."

All: *God loved us so much that God sent the Only Son to us. Jesus set an example of how to love and serve one another. How to kneel in humility before God and one another.*

HYMN *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian* **Blue Hymnal, #589**

Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart, in my heart.

Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart, in my heart.

In my heart; in my heart.

Lord, I want to be more loving, in my heart.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus, in my heart, in my heart.

Lord, I want to be more like Jesus, in my heart, in my heart.

In my heart; in my heart.

Lord, I want to be more like Jesus, in my heart.

Pastor: Even as they were sharing this sacred meal together, the disciples were not of one heart. Jesus knew that he was asking much from these men, and he knew that they would fail him. Judas had already agreed to betray Jesus to the religious authorities. Was he angry at some slight? Was he disappointed that Jesus would not raise an army against the Romans? Was he upset with the value of the oil that the woman “wasted” when she anointed Jesus? We will never know Judas’ heart, but Jesus knew that he would be betrayed. And what did Jesus do with the man that would betray him? He broke bread with him. *All* of the disciples were deeply saddened, and they asked:

All: I would never betray you, Lord. It’s not me, is it?

Pastor: On the night in which Jesus was betrayed by his friend, he took the bread, gave thanks to God, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

All: “This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Pastor: When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to God, gave it to his disciples and said,

All: “Drink from this all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant which is poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink of it, in remembrance of me.”

Pastor: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pastor: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and the cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by Christ’s blood. By your Holy Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, as we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Pastor: Christ, our Passover is offered for us.

Congregation: We will keep the feast.

All: Amen.

ANTHEM

Remember Me (Pethel)

Chancel Choir

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

Communion will be served in the pews.

When the elements come to you, take the bread and/or cup and

HOLD it until given further instruction.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

All: *We thank you, Eternal God, for giving us this sacred meal, for giving us your presence, your life, your love, and for reminding us of your everlasting grace and mercy. We pray for you to send us your Holy Spirit again, that as we read the ancient story, we may hear you speak among the screams and silences of the cross. Keep us together and fill us with the strength to abide with you even in the torturous chaos of a crucifying world. This we ask in Christ, through Christ, with Christ to whom be all honor and glory and dominion now and forevermore Amen.*

STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

Pastor: The shadows of gloom now hang heavy over Golgotha. The clouds have moved in from all directions. The cross of Calvary is shrouded in darkness. Thus, the symbol of Christ in our midst – the altar – is stripped bare and covered in the shade of night, even as Christ was stripped of his power and glory and his light was masked by the dark of evil and sin.

TENEBRAE: A SERVICE OF SHADOWS

MATTHEW 26:31-35 *Shadow of Desertion*

HYMN *Tis Midnight and on Olive's Brow* **Blue Hymnal, #194**

'Tis midnight, and on Olive's brow, the star is dimmed that lately shone.

'Tis midnight; in the garden now the suffering Savior prays alone.

MATTHEW 26:36-46

Shadow of Agony

HYMN

Go to Dark Gethsemane

Blue Hymnal, #144

Go to dark Gethsemane, you who feel the tempter's pow'r;
Your Redeemer's conflict see; watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away; learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

MATTHEW 26:47-56

A Shadowed Kiss

HYMN

Ah! Dearest Jesus

Blue Hymnal, #210

Ah, holy Jesus, how has thou offended,
that mortal judgment hath on Thee descended?
By foes derided, by the world rejected, O most afflicted!

MATTHEW 26:57-68

Shadowed Hallways

HYMN

Ah! Dearest Jesus

Blue Hymnal, #210

Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee; I crucified thee.

MATTHEW 26:69-75

Shadow of Denial

HYMN

Ah! Dearest Jesus

Blue Hymnal, #210

(Verse 4) Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot repay Thee;
I do adore Thee and will ever pray Thee.
Think on Thy pity and Thy love unswerving, not my deserving.

MATTHEW 27:1-14

Shadowed Silver

HYMN

Come, You Disconsolate

Blue Hymnal, #502

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish;
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that heav'n cannot heal.

MATTHEW 27:15-26

Shadow of Crucifixion

HYMN

Come, You Disconsolate

Blue Hymnal, #502

Joy of the desolate, Light of the straying, Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
"Earth has no sorrow that heav'n cannot cure."

MATTHEW 27:27-31

Shadowed Kingship

HYMN

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Blue Hymnal, #202

O Sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down.
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, Thine only crown.
O Sacred Head, what glory – what bliss til now was Thine!
Yea, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine!

MATTHEW 27:32-50

Shadow of Calvary

HYMN

Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed

RED Hymnal, #153

Alas! And did my Savior bleed and did my Savior die.
Did He devote that sacred head for sinners such as I?

Was it for crimes that I have done, he groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown and love beyond degree!

MATTHEW 27:51-54

Shadows Torn Open

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The true light that enlightens everyone came into the world through Christ. Though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. In him was life, and his life was the light of all. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

HYMN

Were You There?

Blue Hymnal, #198

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

All shall depart in reverent and solemn quietness. We continue with the Good Friday service tomorrow at 2 PM at Manchester Assembly of God.

It is Friday

It is Friday
And I stand at the foot of the cross.

Nothing can be said, nothing can be done.
Action is futile – hebel.
I can hold the other's hands and weep, but I cannot be comforted.

It is Friday
And I stand at the foot of the cross.

The air is heavy still with waiting and longing.
Waiting for the inevitable, longing for the impossible.
Can this cup pass from me?
I look around me – all the colors are muted.
Dusty browns and grays – Cold and metallic.
Rolling black clouds cover the brilliant blue of the sky
As my soul is occluded by pain.
All that remains is the red of the blood
Running down the weathered wood of the cross.

It is Friday
And I stand at the foot of the cross.

I reach out and touch the raised grain of the wood.
It is rough against my fingertips.
The pong of unwashed wool and bodies crowds my nose.
I smell fear, pain, death. I taste it at the back of my throat.
I hear the labored breathing from the cross.
Death is near.

It is Friday
And I stand at the foot of the cross.

Remember Him!
Remember Him as the silver cord is severed, as the golden bowl is broken.
Remember Him as the pitcher is shattered at the spring and the wheel broken at
the well.
Remember Him as the dust returns to the ground it came from and
His spirit returns to the God who gave it.

It is Friday
And I stand at the foot of the cross.

Poem by Theresa Coleman – Wednesday, March 23, 2005. Blog: [reverend mommy's random thoughts: It is Friday -- An invocation and poem for Good Friday](#)