

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Friday, April 18, 2025



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1782
Friday, April 18, 2025

243 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

2025
7:00pm

Order of Worship for Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director and Pianist- Rae Ann Borger
Lectors: Mike Rubinkam and Pastor Ken McDowell

INTRODUCTION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

The Congregation may stand.

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: On this holy day of remembrance, we mourn the death of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: We remember Christ’s love.

Pastor: On this holy day of sorrow, we grieve the ways we cause God pain.

People: We remember Christ’s suffering.

Pastor: On this holy day of grief, we acknowledge what must die within to follow Christ.

People: We remember Christ’s teachings.

Pastor: On this holy day of reflection, we listen for God’s voice.

People: We will open our ears to hear, even in the silence of this day. Amen.

HYMN OF ADORATION NO. 272.....“Go to Dark Gethsemane”

COLLECT

Pastor: God be with you.

People: And with you also.

Pastor: Let us pray.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Pastor: As we light the candles for our service, please join in the reading of the Phos Hilaron, which is the earliest known Christian hymn recorded outside of the Bible that is still in use today.

All: O gracious Light, Pure brightness of the eternal Creator in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed! Now as we come to the setting of the sun, And our eyes behold your vesper light, We sing your praises, Holy God, One in Trinity. You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices, O Christ of God, O giver of life, And to be glorified through all the worlds.

(Unknown author, 3rd or early 4th Century AD)

CONFESSION OF SIN

Pastor: Approach God with a true heart. Come before Christ with faith in God’s mercy. Surely Christ, who is faithful and merciful, will hear our prayers.

People: Let us approach the throne of grace that we may receive mercy.

Pastor: Let us pray.

All: Merciful God, we do not always listen when you speak your law in our thoughts. We do not always live the love you have written on our hearts. We fear that your mercy has limits and doubt the assurance of your forgiveness. Forgive our timid minds, our hardened hearts, and our unfounded fears. Fill us with your mercy, that we might love you and others with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength. Amen.

PRAYER FOR MERCY

Pastor: Holy God, Holy and mighty, Holy Immortal One,

People: Have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: God has made a covenant through Christ Jesus—a covenant of love and mercy,

People: A covenant of forgiveness and reconciliation, a covenant of and death and rebirth.

Pastor: Accept God's mercy. Let Christ's love refresh your spirit. Hold fast to the hope we have in Christ Jesus. Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

READINGS AND EXTINGUISHING OF LIGHTS.....Lectors: Mike Rubinkam and Pastor Ken McDowell

FIRST READING: "Shadow of Betrayal" Matthew 26:20-25

Candle one is extinguished.

SECOND READING: "Shadow of Desertion" Matthew 26:31-35

Candle two is extinguished.

THIRD READING: "Agony of the Soul" Luke 22:39-44

Candle three is extinguished.

FOURTH READING: "Unshared Vigil" Mark 14:32-41

Candle four is extinguished.

FIFTH READING: "Father, the hour is come" John 17:1-6

Candle five is extinguished.

SIXTH READING: "That they may all be one" John 17:15-22

Candle six is extinguished.

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM....."Were You at the Cross Medley" by Kris Crunk

SEVENTH READING: "Arrest in the Garden" John 18:1-5

Candle seven is extinguished.

EIGHTH READING: "Shadow of the Cross" Mark 15:16-20

Candle eight is extinguished.

FINAL READING: "The Word was God"- John 1:1-4,14,10,12; 3:19, paraphrased

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

The Congregation may stand.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 284....."O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"

Pastor and Lector walk to the rear of the sanctuary, and then pastor says....

MEDITATION ABOUT THE CROSS

Pastor: Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the whole world.

People: Come, let us worship the Christ, the child of God.

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People: Come, let us worship the Christ, the child of God.

(The Christ Candle is relit, as a sign of hope for the Resurrection.)

(Silence for meditation and prayers.)

BENEDICTION

Pastor: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

People: By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

(The people may depart quietly as they finish their private meditation and prayers.)

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-The bulletins are in memory of our loved ones by Mr. and Mrs. Brian Clauser and family.

Introduction to the Order for Good Friday and Tenebraefrom the UCC Book of Worship

The Order for Good Friday is intended to rehearse the passion story of our Savior Jesus Christ.

While the mood is solemn, it is also one of hope, looking forward to the great Easter celebration.

In some traditions, a rough-hewn cross is placed in the chancel during the service.

The service offered here is taken from the ancient Christian tradition of the fourth and fifth centuries.

The structure of the prayers of intercession seeks to capture the need of the penitent to hear the story of the passion and also to pray for the whole of society.

In the ancient services, much of the time the congregation was invited to stand to help participants understand the suffering of Jesus on the cross.

Tenebrae is the Latin term for shadows. It is a service of lessons accompanied by the gradual extinguishing of lights. It is historically associated with the evenings of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week. The readings on these evenings commemorated the events of the following day. On Wednesday, they commemorated the Last Supper, the betrayal, and the arrest; on Thursday, Christ's passion, trial, and death; and on Friday, Christ's burial and the destitution of the disciples. In the service presented here, these events are combined in one ceremony.

It is recommended that twelve candles, representing the twelve disciples, and a larger candle, representing Christ, be placed where they may be seen by all. No other candles should be lighted for this service.

The service concludes in darkness, when we extinguish the final candle, symbolizing the death of Jesus.

But before we depart in silence to ponder the impact of Christ's death, we will relight the Christ Candle as a symbol of hope and await the coming Resurrection.