



Good Friday
A SERVICE OF TENEBRAE
A Dramatic Presentation of the Crucifixion
April 7, 2023
7:30pm
Yoseb Jeon, Pastor | Mitch Samu, Pianist
First United Methodist Church of Freehold

The word “Tenebrae” comes from the Latin meaning “darkness”. The Tenebrae is an ancient Christian Good Friday service that makes use of gradually diminishing light through the extinguishing of candles to symbolize the events of that week from the triumphant Palm Sunday entry through Jesus’ burial.

Prelude

Greetings:

Rev. Yoseb Jeon

*Call to Worship:

Leader: We gather tonight in the shadow of the Cross.

People: Evil abounds. Jesus goes forth to suffer and die.

Leader: How we tremble with fear!

People: How we weep.

Leader: Why have we forsaken Him?

People: Why have we betrayed and run from his Passion?

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ have mercy upon us.

*Opening Hymn:

“Lamb of God”

TFWS #2113

Readings: Portions of Psalm 22

Reader One

Verl McKinney

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

Reader Two

Joanne McKinney

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me. My hands and feet have shriveled; I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots. But you, O Lord, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the Dog! Save me from the mouth of the lion! From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.

Opening Prayer: (In Unison)

Lord, we come before you in the approaching darkness of our souls. We have traveled this Lenten journey, overcoming and conquering barriers that have kept us from serving you in the midst of many challenges in our lives. We gathered at the gates of joy on Palm Sunday, and feasted at the Lord's Table yesterday. But today is a different story. We witness the arrest and trial of the Innocent Savior. We watch as he is moved brutally from place to place, to be judged by people who have hardened their hearts against you. The sorrow that we feel lies heavy upon us. Lift us, Lord. Comfort us. Help us get through this time of darkness. AMEN.

THE SEVEN CANDLES AND THE APPROACHING DARKNESS
A Dramatic Presentation of the Crucifixion

1) A Member of the Sanhedrin

Alan Davala

This is not a good time. This Jesus came, proclaiming a new law, said he was the King of the Jews. That's dangerous talk. We have a very tentative peace with the Romans. They let us alone to practice our faith and we obey their laws. It is uncomfortable and we long for the avenging Messiah, but it isn't this wilderness preacher. He makes me nervous. He is chipping away at what little peace we have. If he destroys this peace, he will destroy God's people. We can't risk it, no matter how the crowds love him. We just can't risk it.

[The 1st Candle is Extinguished]

2) Woman Disciple

Gayle Trulli

I can't believe this. He has done nothing wrong. He healed people, he taught them the lessons of life; he gave new hope. What is wrong with that? How is that a threat to our faith? How is that a threat to the Roman authority? I was at the table, bringing the food for the supper last evening. He was so serious, sad. The disciples didn't know what to make of his actions. He washed their feet and told them that they had to be like servants if they wanted to serve the Master. He took the loaf of leftover bread and broke it and gave it to them to eat, telling them it was representing his body which was broken for them. He didn't know it, but we women in the background also took bread as he was speaking. He passed the cup to them and reminded them of the new covenant, a new relationship between each of them and God, and said that it was like his blood which would be poured out for them. They dipped their bread in the cup and ate it. So did we. It was awful. I wanted to run, but I couldn't leave. I followed him to the garden of prayer, but at a respectful distance. Hidden in the dark of the bushes, I witnessed the parade of soldiers, the torches, and his capture. My God, my God, what has happened! How could this be?

[The 2nd Candle is Extinguished]

*Hymn:

"To Mock Your Reign, O Dearest Lord"

UMH #285

3) Soldier

George Sologuren

I do what I'm told. They assigned us to go and bring back this wilderness rabble-rouser, Jesus from Nazareth. So I went. I didn't see anything particularly threatening about him. His buddy, Judas, was the one who told the authorities where we could find him. He got paid - in silver. I don't like that business - paying for a life. He didn't seem surprised, but he did seem disappointed when this Judas kissed him on the cheek. One of his disciples drew a sword and cut off the ear of one of the servants who accompanied us. I've got to tell you, I could hardly believe what I saw. Jesus put his hands on the man's ear and it was healed. Healed! I shook my head - must be the night air, I thought. It really couldn't have happened. No matter. My job was to bring him in. He didn't struggle and we shuttled him back and forth between the religious authorities, Annas and Caiaphas, and Pilate, the procurator, the Roman law in these parts. After that, we were dismissed for a while.

[The 3rd Candle is Extinguished]

4) Woman in the Courtyard

Chloe Jeon

I knew who that tall, muscular man was, all right! I'd seen him with the others who followed this Jesus. I heard the whisperings from the others all around, but I was the only one who was brave enough to speak up. "You're one of his disciples, aren't you?" I said to him. "I don't know what you're talking about. I don't know him", he growled at me. I knew that I was right and I wasn't going to let it be. I challenged him again, and again he told me that he didn't know this Jesus. Okay, one more try. "Are you not one of this man's disciples?" "I am not". And then a strange silence fell over the area. You could hear a rooster crowing. The man turned ghastly white and ran away. He was guilty of something. Probably more guilty than anything these authorities can drum up against the one they captured tonight.

[The 4th Candle is Extinguished]

*Hymn:

"O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"

UMH #286

5) Pontius Pilate

Ed Curven

These people are going to drive me crazy. They are in an uproar because of some wilderness preacher. I examined him, asked him pointed, direct questions. His answers puzzled me, but I really could not find any reason why he should be brought before me. He did not commit a crime against our Roman government. He was just a thorn in the hide for the Jewish religious authorities. They wanted to have him killed and by their law, they couldn't do it. They wanted me to take care of the matter for them. Scapegoat! That's what he was! I asked him if he was the King of the Jews, a charge the religious people were trying to pin against him so that I would do something. You know Caesar is our king. Anyway, he said "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice". Doesn't sound too treasonous to me. I had him flogged, thinking that would placate their blood lust. The soldiers played a little game with him. They stripped him, flogged him, put an old purple cloak on him and someone made a crown out of thorn bushes and jammed it on his head. They shouted "Hail, King of the Jews!" and spit at him. Well, they were just having a little jest with him. I finally had to do something. The crowds were getting out of hand, demanding the extreme punishment, crucifixion. I gave them a choice, Barabbas, a murderer in our custody, or this flogged and bleeding Jesus. To my surprise, they chose Barabbas, and I had to wash my hands of the whole deal. They made their choice. It was over. But, is it? Is it really over? I think not.

[The 5th Candle is Extinguished]

6) Woman at the Crucifixion

Rita Curven

The crowds that had cheered at his entrance to Jerusalem, now jeered him as he dragged his heavy cross to the place of crucifixion. It was Golgotha, the Skull, a place where the vilest criminals were nailed to a cross and died a slow and agonizing death. My God, it was so horrible. How could they do this to him? He had done nothing wrong? How could God let this happen to this kind healer? My heart was breaking. He had healed me of a host of diseases when all others had given up. He looked at me, smiled, and told me of God's love for me.....for me? And I could feel that love, God's love, pouring over me. It was unlike anything I had known before. I left everything and followed Jesus, like so many others. The words of compassion, the healing love, the reminders of how God wants us to live - I could listen to Jesus forever. My soul was healed; my spirit was restored. But now, now it was being dragged with him to Golgotha. He stumbled and fell. A strange man was grabbed from the crowd and forced to carry the heavy cross when Jesus could no longer do it. I couldn't break away. I followed. My God, I followed..... I stood near his mother, and Mary Magdalene, and John. And we watched and wept. But no one made us leave.

[The 6th Candle is Extinguished]

*Hymn:

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

UMH #298

7) Jesus

Ken Budka

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"

"Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

"Woman, here is your son. Here is your mother"

"My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?"

"I am thirsty"

"It is finished!"

"Father, Into your hands I commend my spirit!"

[The Christ Candle is Extinguished]

Video Reflection

*Song: "Sinner, Please Don't Let This Harvest Pass" African American Spiritual
Ken Budka, Soloist; Mitch Samu, Piano

Act of Confession: "Isaiah 53:4-6"

Surely, he has borne our grief and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

He was wounded for our transgressions and he was bruised for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that made us whole.

All we like sheep have gone astray; each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

Prayer of Dedication: (In Unison)

Lord God, you have given us everything. You have not held anything back, not even your only begotten son. With humble heart we thank you. In new hope we offer to you and for the work of salvation, our every gift and our very selves. Be pleased, O God, in the name of Jesus, to accept all that we offer at this time. Look upon the intentions of our hearts. Hear our prayers and in your love answer. Hear us now as we confess to you in silence.

Silent Prayer

The bell is rung 33 times in remembrance of Jesus' life on earth.

The Lord's Prayer: (In Unison)

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. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Video Reflection

DEPART IN SILENCE AND DARKNESS AFTER THE VIDEO REFLECTION.

As you leave the sanctuary in silence, take a few moments to pause by the cross and have a moment of silent prayer.

**Lamb of God
TFWS #2113**

Verse 1

Your only Son, no sin to hide,
But You have sent Him from Your side,
To walk upon this guilty sod,
And to become the Lamb of God.

Verse 2

Your gift of love, they crucified,
They laughed and scorned Him as He died,
The humble King they named a fraud
And sacrificed the Lamb of God.

Chorus

O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God!
O wash me in His precious blood
My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Verse 3

I was so lost, I should have died,
But You have brought me to Your side,
To be led by Your staff and rod,
And to be called a lamb of God.

Chorus

O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God!
O wash me in His precious blood
My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

**To Mock Your Reign, O Dearest Lord
UMH #285**

Verse 1

To mock your reign, O dearest Lord,
They made a crown of thorns;
Set you with taunts along that road
From which no one returns.
They could not know, as we do now,
How glorious is that crown;
That thorns would flower upon your brow,
Your sorrows heal our own.

Verse 2

In mock acclaim, O gracious Lord,
They snatched a purple cloak;
Your passion turned, for all they cared,
Into a soldier's joke.
They could not know, as we do now,
That though we merit blame,
You will your robe of mercy throw
Around our naked shame.

Verse 3

A sceptered reed, O patient Lord,
They thrust into your hand,
And acted out their grim charade
To its appointed end.
They could not know, as we do now,
Though empires rise and fall,
Your Kingdom shall not cease to grow
Till love embraces all.

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
UMH #286

Verse 1

O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown:
How pale thou art with anguish,
With sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish
Which once was bright as morn!

Verse 2

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor,
Vouch-safe to me Thy grace.

Verse 3

What language shall I borrow
To thank Thee, dearest friend,
For this Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever;
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
Outlive my love to Thee.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
UMH #298

Verse 1

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Verse 2

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

Verse 3

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did ever such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Verse 4

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.