

TENEBRAE SERVICE

Good Friday, April 18, 2025
St. Peter's Lutheran, Cochrane

The Latin word *tenebrae* means “darkness” or “shadows” and refers to a Good Friday worship service with a history reaching back to the early centuries of the church, a service which focuses upon the events which happened to our Lord, Jesus of Nazareth, when he was betrayed, arrested, tried, crucified, and buried.

Because the gospels say that there was darkness that day from about noon until three in the afternoon, this service involves the gradual extinguishing of candles until we are left in complete darkness. At the conclusion of the service, we will all leave the service in silence to go to our cars---ready to return to celebrate Christ's resurrection on Easter morning.

Our readings tonight are from Luke's gospel.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN – O THE DEEP, DEEP LOVE OF JESUS

O the deep deep, love of Jesus. Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free.
Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me.
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy love.
Leading onward, leading homeward, to my glorious rest above.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus; spread His praise from shore to shore!
How He loveth, ever loveth, changeth never, nevermore.
How He watches o'er His loved ones, died to call them all His own.
How for them He intercedeth, watches over them from the throne.

O the deep, deep, love of Jesus, love of every love the best.
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing; 'Tis a haven sweet of rest.
O the deep, deep love of Jesus; 'Tis a heaven of heavens to me.
And it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee.

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JESUS PRAYS: “REMOVE THIS CUP” (LUKE 22: 39-46)

We pick up the story tonight at the point just following the Passover meal, when Jesus goes to the garden of Gethsemane with his disciples.

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰When he reached the place, he said to them, ‘Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.’* ⁴¹Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, ⁴²‘Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.’ ⁴⁵When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, ⁴⁶and he said to them, ‘Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.’*

[Candle #1 is extinguished. Three bells toll. Darkening of church begins]

MEDITATION #1

CHOIR – O WONDROUS LOVE (by Steve and Vikki Cook, arr. Bruce Greer)

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THE BETRAYAL (LUKE 22: 47-53)

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; ⁴⁸but Jesus said to him, 'Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?' ⁴⁹When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, 'Lord, should we strike with the sword?' ⁵⁰Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him. ⁵²Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? ⁵³When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!'

[Candle #2 is extinguished. Three bells toll.]

MEDITATION #2

HYMN – LAMB OF GOD (Twila Paris)

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

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.

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

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 the Lamb of God.

CHORUS

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PETER DENIES JESUS (LUKE 22: 54-62)

Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, 'This man also was with him.' ⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know him.' ⁵⁸A little later

someone else, on seeing him, said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' ⁵⁹Then about an hour later yet another kept insisting, 'Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.' ⁶⁰But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about!' At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.' ⁶²And he went out and wept bitterly.

[Candle #3 is extinguished. Three bells toll.]

MEDITATION #3

HYMN – ALAS AND DID MY SAVIOUR BLEED / WONDER OF THE CROSS

Alas! and did my Savior bleed? And did my Sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head for sinners such as I?

CHORUS

The cross, O the wonderful cross; what glory, what vict'ry I've found
I'll come to the wonderful cross; and my whole life I lay down

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

CHORUS

But drops of grief can ne'er repay the debt of love I owe.
Here, Lord, I give myself away – 'tis all that I can do.

CHORUS

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MOCKING AND JESUS BEFORE THE JEWISH COUNCIL (LUKE 22: 63-71)

Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; ⁶⁴they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?' ⁶⁵They kept heaping many other insults on him.

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. ⁶⁷They said, 'If you are the Messiah,* tell us.' He replied, 'If I tell you, you will not believe; ⁶⁸and if I question you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.' ⁷⁰All of them asked, 'Are you, then, the Son of God?' He said to them, 'You say that I am.' ⁷¹Then they said, 'What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!'

[Candle #4 is extinguished. Three bells toll.]

MEDITATION #4

SOLO – MY SONG IS LOVE UNKNOWN (PASTOR BART)

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BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD (LUKE 23: 1-12)

Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus* before Pilate. ²They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.'* ³Then Pilate asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' He answered, 'You say so.' ⁴Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, 'I find no basis for an accusation against this man.' ⁵But they were insistent and said, 'He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.'

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. ⁹He questioned him at some length, but Jesus* gave him no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. ¹²That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

[Candle #5 is extinguished. Three bells toll.]

MEDITATION #5

CHOIR – BEHOLD THE MAN / HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

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SENTENCED TO DEATH (LUKE 23: 13-25)

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, ¹⁴and said to them, 'You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. ¹⁵Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. ¹⁶I will therefore have him flogged and release him.'

Then they all shouted out together, 'Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!' ¹⁹(This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) ²⁰Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; ²¹but they kept shouting, 'Crucify, crucify him!' ²²A third time he said to them, 'Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.' ²³But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. ²⁴So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. ²⁵He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

[Candle #6 is extinguished. Three bells toll.]

MEDITATION #6

HYMN – THERE IS A GREEN HILL FAR AWAY (HOUSE OF THE RISING SUN)

There is a green hill far away, outside a city wall,
Where our dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.

We may not know; we cannot tell, what pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us He hung, and suffered there.

There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gate of heav'n, and let us in.

Amazing Grace: How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now I'm found; was blind but now I see.

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THE CRUCIFIXION (LUKE 23: 26-43)

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. ²⁸But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." ³⁰Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." ³¹For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus* there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[³⁴Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']]* And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah* of God, his chosen one!' ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' ³⁸There was also an inscription over him,* 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding* him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah?* Save yourself and us!' ⁴⁰But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' ⁴²Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into* your kingdom.' ⁴³He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

[Candle #7 is extinguished. Three bells toll.]

CHOIR – NO OTHER LAMB, NO OTHER NAME by Jay Althouse

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MEDITATION #7

HYMN – O SACRED HEAD NOW WOUNDED

O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, Thine only crown;
How art Thou pale with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn
How does that visage languish which once was bright as morn

What Thou my Lord hast suffered was all for sinners' gain
Mine, mine was my transgressions but thine the deadly pain
Lo, here I fall my Savior, 'tis I deserve your place
Look on me with your favor, vouchsafe me to your grace

What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest friend
For this your 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

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[All the lights in the church should now be off completely, leaving one candle.]

THE DEATH OF JESUS (LUKE 23: 44-49)

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land* until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵while the sun's light failed;* and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last.

⁴⁷When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.'^{*} ⁴⁸And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. ⁴⁹But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

[Last candle is extinguished. Seven bells toll.]

MEDITATION #8

HYMN – WHEN I SURVEY

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.

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.

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?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine demands my soul, my life, my all!

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THE BURIAL OF JESUS (LUKE 23: 50-56)

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, ⁵¹had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. ⁵⁴It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning.* ⁵⁵The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.

CHOIR – SUCH LOVE AS THIS by Ruth Fazal

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HYMN – WERE YOU THERE?

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?

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PLEASE LEAVE IN SILENCE

Thanks to Pastor Paul and Elaine for providing the meditations and framework for this service.

Thanks to our brothers and sisters from the Baptist Church who joined us to be part of the choir this evening.

Join us Easter Sunday for our 8 AM Sunrise service followed by breakfast and our Holy Communion Easter Service at 10:00 AM