

United Church of Christ Norwell
Tenebrae with Holy Communion
April 6, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Our worship this evening is based on an early fourth century service to which has been added the sacrament of communion. The office of Tenebrae (meaning "shadows") is symbolic of the flight of the disciples, the approach of Jesus' enemies, and the Passion of our Lord. In the deepening shadows we recall the darkness of desertion that came to Jesus in Gethsemane and lasted until Easter morning.

Worshippers are requested to enter into silent meditation as soon as they are seated. Please reflect on the solemnity of this occasion, the final time which Jesus and his disciples shared. **At the conclusion of our time together, please leave the sanctuary in silence.**

Prelude *Were You There?* Arr. Kurt Kaiser
 Karen Harvey, piano Timothy Roberts, cello

Call to Worship Rev. Leanne Walt
 Leader: Jesus said: "I am the light of the world."
People: "Anyone who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life."
 Leader: If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night," darkness is not dark to You, O God.
People: The night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to You are both alike.

Invocation Rev. Leanne Walt
 Leader: God be with you.
People: And with you also.
 Leader: Let us pray.
People: Gracious God, you give us the sun to illumine the day, and the moon and stars to shine by night. Kindle in us the flame of your love, that our lives may shed abroad the radiance of your light, and the world may be full of the splendor of your glory; through Jesus Christ, the Son of Righteousness. Amen.

First Reading	Matthew 26:20-25 The Shadow of Betrayal	Robbi Boston
Second Reading	Matthew 26:31-35 The Shadow of Desertion	Owen Lestage
Third Reading	Luke 22:39-44 The Agony of the Soul	Martha Engstrom
Fourth Reading	Mark 14:32-41 The Unshared Vigil	Harry Solis
Fifth Reading	John 17:1-5 Father, the Hour Has Come	Valerie Donaldson
Sixth Reading	John 17:15-22 That They May All Be One	John Galvin
Seventh Reading	John 18:1-5 The Arrest at the Gate	Sam Bretsch
Eighth Reading	Mark 15:16-20 The Shadow of the Cross	Anne Wildman
Final Reading	John 1:1-5, 14, 10, 12, 3:19 The Word Was God	Rev. Leanne Walt
Musical Meditation	<i>O Sacred Head Now Wounded</i> Karen Harvey, piano Timothy Roberts, cello	Arr. Marty Parks
Our Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)		
Depart in Silence		



*HYMN #196 *Go to Dark Gethsemane* REDHEAD

Confession of Sin Rev. Leanne Walt

Leader: Brothers and sisters, we are called to be children of the light and not children of darkness.

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

Leader: Let us pray.

People: Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too long to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: This is the message we have heard from Christ and proclaim to you that God is light and in God there is no darkness at all.

People: If we walk in the light as Christ is in the light, we have communion with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

Anthem *This Do in Remembrance of Me* Judy Hunnicutt
Sanctuary Choir Fred Northrup, solo

The Lord's Supper

Invitation

Leader: Jesus said: "I am the bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger, you who believe in me shall never thirst."

People: In company with all who hunger for spiritual food, we come to this table to know the risen Christ in the sharing of this life-giving bread.

Communion Prayer

Leader: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Leader: Let us pray...

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Words of Institution

Leader: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, Jesus also took the cup after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." By eating this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ's death, celebrate Christ's resurrection, and await Christ's coming again.

People: Amen, Come, Christ Jesus!

Leader: Gracious God, we ask you to bless this bread and cup and all of us with the outpouring of your Holy Spirit. Through this meal, make us the body of Christ, the church, your servant people, that we may be salt, and light, and leaven for the furtherance of your will in all the world.

People: Amen, Come, Holy Spirit.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

You may come forward to receive the elements. If unable to come forward, remain seated and our deacons will serve you in your seat. We serve grape juice, not wine, and a gluten-free option is available in the center aisle.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: Let us pray.

People: Eternal God, you have called your people from east and west and north and south to feast at the table of Jesus Christ. We thank you for Christ's presence and for the spiritual food of Christ's body and blood. By the power of your Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to your will. Go with us to the streets, to our homes, and to our places of labor and leisure, that whether we are gathered or scattered, we may be the servant church of the servant Christ, in whose name we rejoice to pray. Amen.

Anthem

A Communion Reflection Mark Clark; Arr. Brad Nix

Readings and Extinguishing of Lights

Recalling the desertion of Christ by the disciples, after each of the following readings, the reader will extinguish a candle and leave the room. After the eighth reading, four of the remaining candles, representing the remaining disciples, will also be extinguished by four people who will leave the room, leaving only the central candle, the Christ candle, to shine in solitude. After the final reading, the Bible will be closed, the Christ candle extinguished and removed from the Sanctuary to signify Christ's death. After the meditation and the Lord's Prayer, the candle will be re-lit and placed on the Communion Table to stand as a symbolic promise of resurrection.

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Welcome to our Maundy Thursday tenebrae service.

Also referred to as "Holy Thursday," Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper when Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples the night before he was crucified.

The twelve candles in the candelabra represent the twelve disciples.

Before the Passover meal, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

By performing this lowly act of service, the Bible says in John 13:1 that Jesus "showed them the full extent of his love."

Derived from the Latin word *mandatum*, meaning "commandment,"

Maundy refers to the commands Jesus gave his disciples at the Last Supper: to love with humility by serving one another and to remember his sacrifice.



United Church of Christ Norwell

We are a Christ-centered inclusive community called to ministry.
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Maundy Thursday

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