



St Paul's
**United
Reformed
Church**

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Order of Service

Friday 15th April 2022



Good Friday
TENEBRAE SERVICE

Welcome to St Paul's!

Please use 'T' on your hearing aid if you need to use the Hearing Loop.

Led by: **Rev'd Martin Knight**

Welcome to this Good Friday morning Tenebrae service.
We will be entering eight 'shadows' of Good Friday
And as we do, we will extinguish candles – ultimately leaving us
without the light.

The darkness of this day, its despair and pain,
Will dominate and should dominate.
But we are not alone – for God dwells us,
And the Spirit settles into our hearts.

Our peace candle continues to burn, as we bring the world with us
and acknowledge its own shadows.

We take this journey together and meet each other in love.
(silence)

HYMN: 223 THERE IS A GREEN HILL

Prayer for the Journey

'Tenebrae' means darkness or shadows.

As we come to the end of Lent,

we begin a journey into darkness to a place of deep shadows.

Today we accompany Jesus in his last hours.

We witness the cruelties and the suffering he endures.

We listen to the words of condemnation and ridicule.

In all this - he is innocent.

He is the faithful servant of God,

*Fully entering and shaming humanity's ultimate brokenness
and evil,*

bringing the gospel of love, peace and hope.

Parent God, help us in this service, to walk solemnly and attentively with Jesus.

Better to know. Better to understand.

Better to be his friend, his disciple, his witness.

We are still and know that you are here. AMEN

THE SHADOW OF BETRAYAL:

Luke 22: 1-6

Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

Meditation

'On the night before he was betrayed', we always say.

As we gather around this table to share a meal, we remind ourselves of the deceit and betrayal.

Was that meal the last straw?

The moment Judas truly knew that Jesus was not the messiah for him?

Not the King riding into Jerusalem on a Horse,
Proud mighty warrior who could change the world.

So much time devoted to his cause – but with no results.
At least, not the results Judas wanted.

And after sharing at his feast,
After sitting with Jesus friends,
After being made welcome – even us,
How do we betray?

Even without knowing it, selling him out and leaving his life and
good news here in Church, Safe.
And leaving our lives untouched
And the lives who need the Good news, untouched.

Is our betrayal that we remain unchanged,
Because he's not what we expect or want.
Because it's hard.

So, death to him
His message
His love.

1st Candle Extinguished

THE SHADOW OF THE AGONY OF THE SPIRIT:

Matthew 26: 36-39

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'

Meditation

Is it any surprise he went to pray?

Knowing what was to come.

Is it any surprise that he was deeply grieved?

It is the time that you and I most often reach for prayer,

In our bag of tricks for coping with life.

Like a paracetamol to take away the pain,

we re-enact a psalm,

on our knees wailing for help – or just for someone to hear.

Is it any surprise we pray when faced with war or global disasters that make us feel helpless or our own private agony?

Lost in the desperation of our need,

We pray like him 'let this cup pass from me' – 'let this cup pass from us' - whatever that cup may be.

And then comes the hardest 'yet' in history,

You and I stop at 'take this pain away',

He went on 'yet – not what I want, but what you want'.

2nd Candle Extinguished

THE SHADOW OF ARREST:

Mark 14: 43-46

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.' So, when he came, he went up to him at once and said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.

'That Kiss I miss' by David Keig

*That kiss, that kiss
That childlike kiss
That friend, full of respect kiss
That greeting 'I am here' kiss
That gay abandon, lustful kiss
That kiss, that kiss I miss.*

That "it is him, take him" kiss, I do not miss.

3rd Candle Extinguished

HYMN: 220 O SACRED HEAD, SORE WOUNDED
(vs. 1-2)

THE SHADOW OF DESERTION AND DENIAL:

Mark 14: 50, 66-72

All of them deserted him and fled.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, 'You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.' But he denied it, saying, 'I do not know or understand what you are talking about.' And he went out into the forecourt.

Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, 'This man is one of them.' But again, he denied it.

Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, 'Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.' But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know this man you are talking about.'

At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.' And he broke down and wept.

Meditation: **'I didn't sign up for this'** by Lawrence Moore

*Not whips and nails,
splinters and thorns,
blood and stink and agony.*

*I didn't sign up for this.
Not failure and despair,
discouragement and derision,
ignominy and ridicule – and my death.*

*If it comes to this,
I want to walk away too – flee;
deny having ever known you...'*

And so, Jesus is now alone.

4th Candle Extinguished

THE SHADOW OF TRIAL: Matthew 27: 20-23, 26-31

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'

So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

5th Candle Extinguished

THE SHADOW OF CRUCIFIXION & HUMILIATION:

Matthew 27: 27-31

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him.

They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head.

They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. (pause)

After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him.

Then they led him away to crucify him.

Meditation (from Iona – made me think of Ukraine)

Soldiers

Taking the chance for a bit of fun.

They had a heavy day ahead.

Soon they would have to put on their public face – disciplined, controlled, efficient.

But for now, a bit of a lark with the lads with no risk of recrimination.

Dead men tell no stories,

And Jesus was going to his death.

6th Candle Extinguished

THE SHADOW OF DEATH:

Mark 15: 22, 25-26, 33-34, 37

Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull).

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, 'The King of the Jews.'

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

'Drop, drop, slow tears'

Orlando Gibbons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQaLMoPGJzk>

*Drop, drop, slow tears, and bathe those beauteous feet,
which brought from heaven the news and Prince of Peace.*

*Cease not, wet eyes, his mercies to entreat;
to cry for vengeance sin doth never cease.*

*In your deep floods drown all my faults and fears;
nor let his eye see sin, but through my tears.*

7th 'Christ' Candle Extinguished & Removed

Prayers of Intercession

Lords' Prayer

Holy God, on this dark day we bring before you the darkest places of our world and of our lives, holding in our souls the knowledge that even in those darkest places, the cross is ever present, transform pain into healing.

We bring before you

The places of war and violence...

The places of famine and flood... (east Africa)

The places of hopelessness (refugee camps, loneliness, on streets)

We bring your cross to these dark places.

We pray for those who live in the darkness of pain and suffering...

Those who grieve,

Whose minds are in turmoil

Who suffer broken relationships

We bring your cross to these dark places.

We pray for those who have died,

those for whom your cross has been a stepping stone to new life.

Those who barely live

Those who would rather die

We bring your cross to these dark places.

O light of God, you stand with us in all we face, even the cross.

AMEN

Let us say together the prayer that sustained Jesus and his disciples:

THE SHADOW OF BURIAL:

Mark 15: 46-47

Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.

Place: White linen cloth over all

HYMN: WERE YOU THERE?

(Unaccompanied)

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 laid him in the tomb?

7th 'Christ' Candle is Restored & lit

Blessing

As we leave in silence,
we go in peace
To face the dark
In hope of the light.
AMEN



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