

Tenebrae Service

Call to Worship (*Responsive Reading – PP Slides*)

R1: Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

C: *Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*

R2: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole.

C: *And by his stripes we are healed.*

Song: Man of Sorrows

*Man of sorrows! What a name
For the Son of God, who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Alleluia! What a Saviour!*

*Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned he stood;
Sealed my pardon with his blood:
Alleluia! What a Saviour!*

*Guilty, vile, and helpless we;
Spotless Lamb of God was he:
Full atonement-can it be?
Alleluia! What a Saviour!*

R1: *Let us pray.*

C: *Holy God, we come to worship
in the gathering shadows of Jesus' suffering and death.
We come with his friends,
the men and women who have followed him
in every place and generation,
to live once again this story of service and betrayal,
of weakness and of courage.
We come to witness your love in action.
Be with us, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

1. THE SHADOW OF DENIAL

R2: They went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus told them,

R1: “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’”

R2: Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”

R1: Jesus said to him, “I tell you the truth, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

R2: Peter said, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

*Song: **Ah, Holy Jesus** (First verse – Marilyn solo)*

*Ah, holy Jesus, how have you offended,
That mortal judgment has on you descended?
By foes derided, by your own rejected,
O most afflicted!
Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon you?
It is my treason, Lord, that has undone you.
'Twas I, Lord, Jesus, I it was denied you;
I crucified you.*

*Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered;
The slave has sinned, and the Son has suffered;
For man's atonement, while he nothing heedeth,
God intercedeth.*

*Therefore, dear Jesus, since I cannot pay you,
I do adore you, and will ever pray you,
Think on your pity and your love unswerving,
Not my deserving.*

R2: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; (*PP Slide*)

C: You gave your life that we might live.

R1 extinguishes the first candle.

R2: **Judas, Peter**
by Luci Shaw

because we are all
betrayers, taking
silver and eating

body and blood and asking
(guilty) is it I and hearing
him say yes
it would be simple for us all to rush out
and hang ourselves
but if we find grace
to cry and wait
after the voice of morning
has crowed in our ears
clearly enough
to break our hearts
he will be there
to ask us each again
do you love me?

R1: Please join me in this unison prayer.

C: *Jesus, our friend, (PP Slide)
your death was contrived by the clergy,
twisting events to suit their needs.
So write your gospel on our hearts
that we yearn for justice by your laws.
And when we betray you to suit our needs,
may we hear the cock crowing,
turn towards your love
and try again to live your gospel every day. Amen.*

2. THE SHADOW OF BETRAYAL

R2: 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.

R1: Jesus said, "Friend, do what you are here to do."

R2: Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.

R1: But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them: "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled."

R2: Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Song: Were You There?

*Were you there when the Lord's friends turned and fled?
Were you there when the Lord's friends turned and fled?
Oh...sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when the Lord's friends turned and fled?*

R1: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; (PP Slide)

C: *You gave your life that we might live.*

R2 extinguishes the second candle.

R1: **Oh, Judas, What Have You Done?**

by Tim Colborne

Oh, Judas, what have you done?
What madness entered your mind?
What evil overtook your heart?
Were you just one piece on a chessboard,
a pawn, sacrificed in a strategic move?
Was yours a requisite sacrifice,
to enable the final sacrifice?

Oh that it was true, that I am not like you
That your story is not my story
And that your wrong, not my wrong
Oh that it was true,
that your treachery was for noble cause
But all that is betrayed is the heart of the betrayer
Your betrayal, not the first; and mine, not the last.

R2: Please join me in this unison prayer.

C: *Forgive, gracious Lord, my repeated betrayal, my incessant denial of you. Create, new in me, the heart of a faithful friend. Instill in my spirit the courage to lay down reputation, personal gain and even life in order to carry the cross I have taken up in following you. Amen.*

3. THE SHADOW OF HYPOCRISY

R2: Now at the festival the governor Pilate was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them:

R1: "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?"

R2: For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him: "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." 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,

R1: "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?"

C: *Barabbas.*

R1: "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?"

C: *Crucify him!*

R1: Why, what evil has he done?

C: *Crucify him!*

R2: So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying:

R1: "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves."

C: *Let his blood be on us and on our children!*

R2: Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Song: *The Power of the Cross*

*Oh to see the dawn of the darkest day;
Christ on the road to Calvary.
Tried by sinful men, torn and beaten then
Nailed to a cross of wood.*

Chorus

*This the power of the cross.
Christ became sin for us.
Took the blame, bore the wrath,
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

*Oh to see the pain written on Your face,
Bearing the awesome weight of sin.
Every bitter thought, every evil deed
Crowning Your bloodstained brow.(Chorus)*

R2: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; (*PP Slide*)

C: *You gave your life that we might live.*

R1 *extinguishes the third candle.*

R2: Let us pray.

Almighty God, your Son was rejected and condemned to die by your own people. Grant that we may never reject his word of truth and salvation, but follow him all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

4. THE SHADOW OF HUMILIATION

R2: A reading from the book of Isaiah:
I offered my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;
I did not hide my face
from mocking and spitting.
Because the Sovereign LORD helps me,
I will not be disgraced.
Therefore have I set my face like flint,
and I know I will not be put to shame.

R1: The soldiers 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,

R2: "Hail, king of the Jews!"

R1: Again and again they struck him on the head with the reed and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Song: O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

*O sacred Head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded
with thorns, thy 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 the transgression,
but thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Saviour!
'Tis I deserve thy place;
look on me with thy favour,
vouchsafe to me thy grace.*

*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 for thee.*

R1: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; (*PP Slide*)

C: *You gave your life that we might live.*

R2 extinguishes the fourth candle.

R1: Let us pray. Lord God, whose obedient Son gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed. Amen.

5. THE SHADOW OF WEARINESS

R2: As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

R1: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Song: Lead Me to Calvary

*King of my life, I crown Thee now,
Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.*

Refrain

*Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thine agony;*

*Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary.*

*May I be willing, Lord, to bear
Daily my cross for Thee;
Even Thy cup of grief to share,
Thou hast borne all for me. (Refrain)*

R2: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed: *(PP Slide)*

C: *You gave your life that we might live.*

R1 extinguishes the fifth candle.

R2: Let us pray. Loving Father, you have called us into fellowship under the cross of your Son that we might bear your love to all in the world. Help us to be as willing as Simon to bear the burdens of those in need, that all may be called out of the darkness into the light of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

6. THE SHADOW OF LAMENT

R2: A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. But Jesus turned to them and said,

R1: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then they will say to the mountains 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Song: *Holy Darkness* (*verses 1 and 2*)

Leader: Holy darkness, blessed night,
Heaven's answer hidden from our sight.
As we await you, O God of silence,
We embrace your holy night.

CHORUS

People: *Holy darkness, blessed night,
Heaven's answer hidden from our sight.
As we await you, O God of silence,
We embrace your holy night.*

Leader: I have tried you in fires of affliction;
I have taught your soul to grieve.
In the barren soil of your loneliness
There I will plant my seed. (CHORUS)

Leader: I have taught you the price of compassion;
You have stood before the grave.
Though my love can seem like a raging storm,
This is the love that saves. (CHORUS)

R1: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed: (*PP Slide*)

C: *You gave your life that we might live.*

R2 extinguishes the sixth candle

R1: Let us pray. Jesus, God of both justice and mercy, thank you for the hope you embodied and shared with your heartbroken followers, even on the way to the cross. Keep us mindful—and ready communicators—of your promises. Amen.

7. THE SHADOW OF CRUCIFIXION

R2: Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with Jesus to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said,

R1: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Song: When I survey the wondrous cross – verse 1 – a cappella

*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.*

(R1 drives a nail into the cross.)

Song: When I survey the wondrous cross – verse 2 – a cappella

*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.*

(R1 drives a nail into the cross.)

Song: When I survey the wondrous cross – verse 3 – a cappella

*See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

(R1 drives a nail into the cross.)

Song: When I survey the wondrous cross – verse 4 – a cappella

*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.*

R2: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; (*PP Slide*)

C: *You gave your life that we might live.*

R1 extinguishes the seventh candle.

R2: **At the Cross**

Chris Polhill

I see Christ crucified still – today:
where the hungry cry for food,
die for food,
though there's plenty.
Where people are yelled at,
jeered at –
bricks through their windows
because their skin isn't white, isn't right.
Where abuse and rape occur,
where gay men are beaten up,
where lust kills love –
I see him crucified still.

I see Christ crucified still – today:
where wars scar people, lands,
God's hands –
the endless, killing politics of hate.
Where the cry for justice
is unheard, oppressed, beaten down
by cold, world systems.
Where power comes first,
where religion twists faith,
where fear kills trust –
I see him crucified still.

I see Christ crucified still – today:
where creation's fabric shreds,
is bled,
by 'must have now', 'must use'.

Where earth's beauty is destroyed.
Where trees burn,
where water poisons,
where greed kills need –
I see him crucified still.

And I try – a little –
to stem the deadly tide
as I give – a little,
write to those in power – a little,
take my bottles to the recycling depot,
and try to love as he said;
try to love – a little.

O God, for all these crucifixions
may there one day be resurrection.

R1: Please join me in this unison prayer.

C: *God forgive us for the inhumanity (PP Slide)
that makes us bomb and blast
and see people as collateral damage.
God forgive us for the inhumanity
that imprisons, disappears or kills
those who do not fit our point of view.
God forgive us for the inhumanity
that makes slaves of other cultures
to put food and flowers on our table.
God forgive us for the inhumanity
that put Jesus on the cross.
And God forgive us
even when
we know what we do. Amen.*

8. THE SHADOW OF SPITE

R2: When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the
written charge against him:

R1&2: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

R2: Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying,

C: *“You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself!
Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!”*

R2: In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him.

R1: “He saved others, but he can’t save himself! He’s the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Song: Were You There

Were you there when they mocked him on the cross?

Were you there when they mocked him on the cross?

Oh...sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they mocked him on the cross?

R1: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; *(PP Slide)*

C: You gave your life that we might live.

R2 extinguishes the eighth candle.

R1: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, you made yourself vulnerable to the forces of evil for our sake. You hung naked, and exposed yourself to the most brutal attacks of the enemy to free us from the powers of darkness. May we, who have benefited from your loving kindness, stand up for the oppressed and fight for the weak as we follow in your footsteps. Amen.

9. THE SHADOW OF REJECTION

R1: One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us.”

R2: But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

R1: Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Song: Jesus, Remember Me

(Solo, first time)

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

R2: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; *(PP Slide)*

C: You gave your life that we might live.

R1 extinguishes the ninth candle.

R2: Please join me in this unison prayer. *(PP Slide)*

C: *Let us pray.
Lord Jesus, remember us
when you come into your kingdom.
Remember us,
not for our impressive C.V.,
nor for the things
which we hope will appear in our obituaries.
Remember us,
not for the virtues we occasionally display
or for any credit
we think we have in our moral account.
Remember us,
as one of the criminal community
who hung at your side.
Remember us as those in need of your mercy and grace.
In your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.*

10. THE SHADOW OF ABANDONMENT

R2: From the sixth hour until the ninth hour (that is, noon to 3 p.m.) darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

R1: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

R2: When some of those standing there heard this, they said,

C: *“He’s calling Elijah.”*

R2: Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said,

C: *“Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”*

R1: Let us pray. Holy God, you always hear our cries and listen to our sorrows. And so we pause to absorb this moment of utter agony when your Son felt your absence: this moment when he was forsaken, so that we might not be; this moment when he was abandoned when we deserved to be. We pause, and silently pray...(silence and then sing “Holy Darkness”)

Song: *“Holy Darkness” (vs. 4, 5)*

CHORUS

People: **Holy darkness, blessed night,
Heaven’s answer hidden from our sight.
As we await you, O God of silence,
We embrace your holy night.**

Leader: In your deepest hour of darkness
I will give you wealth untold.
When the silence stills your spirit,
Will my riches fill your soul. (CHORUS)

Leader: As the watchman waits for morning,
And the bride awaits her groom,
So we wait to hear your footsteps
In the darkness of the tomb. (CHORUS)

R1: Lord Jesus Christ, wounded and crushed; *(PP Slide)*

C: You gave your life that we might live.

R2 extinguishes the tenth candle.

11. THE SHADOW OF DEATH

(Drummer starts to beat quietly on the drums)

R2: It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.
(READER TURNS OUT LIGHT!)**

R1: Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.
(READER TURNS OUT LIGHT!)**

(Actor drops the cross. As it falls, drummer bangs one long final roll on cymbals and on the last crash...)

The Eleventh Candle is extinguished by Reader 2. All the houselights are turned out. The Congregation sits in darkness.

Solo: Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? (a cappella – Marilyn)

After solo...

The Christ Candle is re-lit. The house lights come back on at half strength.

12. THE SHADOW OF THE TOMB

R1: Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut

in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

R2: The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

R1. Please join me in this responsive prayer. (PP Slides)
We give thanks, O God, for the amazing love of Jesus Christ -
the love that was wounded for our transgressions;

C: *The love that was tortured that we might know peace.*

R2. The love that was crucified that we might live forever.

C: *The love that rightly demands our souls, our lives, our all.*

R1. Let us go into the world revealing that love in all its fullness.

C: *Amen.*

Song: 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 Thy 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,
Watcheth o'er them from the throne!*

*O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
Love of every love the best!
'Tis an ocean full of blessing,
Tis a haven giving 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!*

R1: Go, blessed by the great love of God
embraced by the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ,
and sustained by the empowering love of the Holy Spirit.

(The Congregation leaves in silence).