



AS WE GATHER . . .

This service is patterned after the ancient office of Tenebrae. The word “tenebrae” means darkness, and the service impresses upon us the terrible reality of sin, which caused our Savior to die for us.

The church will become increasingly dark as each Word of Jesus from the cross is read and considered, reminding us of the hour of our Lord’s death. It also reminds us of the darkness of the world without the Light of the World, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Nearing the end of the service the Christ Candle is removed from sight and a time of silence is observed. A loud noise called the “strepitus ” (pronounced STREP-ee-toose) is heard. This loud noise symbolizes the earth shaking and rocks splitting (Matt. 27:51) at Jesus' death, and foreshadows the "violent earthquake" (Matt. 28:2) at the opening of Jesus' tomb on Easter morning. We do not remain in darkness, for Christ is raised and death conquered; thus, the Christ Candle, a symbol of the resurrected Christ, is brought back into the Sanctuary.

***We depart in silence and reflection. However, the story is not complete!
We continue our worship on Easter Sunday.***

Living Faith Church
Good Friday Service of Darkness
April 07, 2023

P= Congregation

L= Reverend Maryanne Kehlenbach

GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY

The congregation gathers in silence for prayer and worship.

WELCOME

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

L: Lord Jesus, you carried our sins in your own body on the tree so that we might have life. May we and all who remember this day find new life in you now and in the world to come, where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

P: **Amen**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Confident of the hope received by the death of Christ, we bring our hearts - broken, stained with sin, filled with failings – to the One who washes them with grace, cleansing them with the waters of life.

P: **Like little children who can wander off in a crowded store, we have lost our way, God of the grim day. We betray you when we do not befriend the poor; we deny you when we are afraid to speak up for the voiceless; we turn our backs on you when we do not do good for others; we crucify you when we harm our family and friends. At the foot of the cross, we stand with all who have forgotten you and forsaken the way which you offer to us. Forgive us, Lamb of God, and fill us with the mercy, the hope, the grace you poured out for us, as you gave your life for the sins of the world.**

- L: Christ has lifted our suffering onto his shoulders, carrying all our hurts and rejections into God's heart. There, God casts them away into the sea of forgetfulness, so we may be restored to hope and live as new people. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ and by Christ's authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- P: Fed with grace, carried in God's arms, we know that we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen**

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

L: We gather at the foot of the cross much as those first disciples gathered on that first Good Friday. We stand in absolute horror at what we see, the one in whom we have hoped, the one we call Christ, dying upon a cross. We know the feelings of despair, the hopelessness and helplessness of watching one we love die before our eyes. With them, we wonder, "Where is God?" "How could God allow this to happen?" Yet, in his very dying we are reminded of how much God loves us. It is precisely because Jesus did not come down from that cross that we are saved, our relationship with God made whole. So we listen with those first disciples to these words, words spoken for us, that we might always remember that God hears our cries, that God understands what it is like for us, that God stands with us in our suffering, and that God will deliver us.

The First Word

Father Forgive Them

Luke 23:33-38 (NIV)

When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves. And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One." The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!" Now there was also an inscription above Him, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Prayer

Almighty God, your crucified Son prayed for the forgiveness of those who did not know what they were doing. Grant that we too may be included in that prayer. Whether we sin out of ignorance or intention, be merciful to us and grant us your acceptance and peace, in the name of Jesus Christ, our suffering Savior. **Amen.**

Congregation Sings: "Were You There" Stanza One

**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?**

The first candle is extinguished.

The Second Word Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise

Luke 23:39-43 (NIV)

One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? "And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, in your agony you showed compassion to a man who recognized his sinfulness and your holiness. You have given him the gift of eternal life. We thank you for that same indescribable gift that we too may dwell with you and all your saints in paradise. In your holy name we pray. **Amen**

Congregation Sings: "Were You There" Stanza Two

**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?**

The second candle is extinguished.

The Third Word Woman, Here Is Your Son . . Here Is Your Mother.

John 19:26-27 (NIV)

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Prayer

O blessed Savior, in your hours of greatest suffering you expressed compassion for your mother and made arrangements for her care. Grant that we who seek to follow your example may show our concern for the needs of others, reaching out to provide for those who suffer in our human family. Hear this prayer for mercy's sake. **Amen**

Congregation Sings: "Were You There" Stanza Three

**Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?**

The third candle is extinguished.

The Fourth Word My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?

Matthew 27:45-46

From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

Prayer

Almighty God, your beloved Son was obedient to your will to the very end. In Jesus' death on the Cross your judgment upon human sin and guilt was taken up in one person for all. Grant us grace to know and believe that we will never be forsaken, that your new covenant begins for us on this very day and that we are reconciled with you till the end of the age. For the sake of Jesus Christ who bore our sins on the cross. **Amen**

Congregation Sings: "Were You There" Stanza Four

**Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?**

The fourth candle is extinguished.

The Fifth Word

I Thirst

John 19:28-29

Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

Prayer

O blessed Savior, whose lips were dry and whose throat was parched, grant us the water of life that we who thirst after righteousness may find it quenched by your love and mercy, leading us to bring this same relief to others. **Amen**

Congregation Sings: "Were You There" Stanza One

**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?**

The fifth candle is extinguished.

The Sixth Word

It Is Finished

John 19:30

When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished."

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, who finished the work that you were sent to do, enable us by your Holy Spirit to be faithful to the call you have given each of us. Grant us strength to bear our crosses and endure our sufferings, along with the crosses and sufferings of others, even unto death. Enable us to live and love so faithfully that others may see you in our witness and that they too respond to the call of the Holy Spirit. In your name, Lord Jesus, we pray. **Amen**

Congregation Sings: "Were You There" Stanza Five

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?

The sixth candle is extinguished.

The Seventh Word Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit

Luke 23:44-46

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

Prayer

Father, into your hands your Son Jesus Christ commended his spirit. Grant that we too, following his example, may in all of life and at the moment of our death entrust our lives into your faithful hands of love. In the name of Jesus who gave his life for us all. **Amen**

THE CHRIST CANDLE IS REMOVED

SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

THE RETURN OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

John 1:1, 4-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The service has ended.

When you are ready, please depart the sanctuary in silence.