



**The Congregational Church of
Westminster West
(A United Church of Christ)**



**Maundy Thursday
March 28, 2024**

Gathering Music “Lenten Meditation” *Ron Loree*
based on “Near the Cross,” by W. H. Doan; Eric Robinson, piano

*Opening Sentences:

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.**

L: If I say, “Let the darkness cover me, and the light around me
turn to night,” darkness is not dark to you, O God.

**P: The night is as bright as the day; darkness and light
to you are both alike.”**

Confession of Sin:

L: Brothers and sisters, we are called to be children of the day
and not children of the night.

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

L: Let us pray.

All: Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a fire of judgment. 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:

L: This is the message we have heard from Christ and proclaim to each other: God is light.

P: 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.

Congregational Response “Just As I Am”

*Just as I am, without on plea
but that your blood was shed for me,
and that you called inviting me,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, you will receive,
will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because your promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

Service of Holy Communion

All worshipers will gather in silence around the table to receive the elements. Our table is open to all who wish to partake of the Lord's supper.

Communion Music

Eric Robinson, piano

Service of Tenebrae

Shadow of Betrayal (Matthew 26: 20-25) *Sue Venman*

When it was evening, Jesus took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." Judas, who was to betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus replied, "You have said so." *(The first candle is extinguished.)*

Congregational Response "When Jesus Wept"

*When Jesus wept, the falling tear
in mercy flowed beyond all bounds.
When Jesus groaned, a trembling fear*

seized all the guilty world around.

Shadow of Desertion (Matthew 26:30-35) *Lee Crocker*

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, “You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” Peter said to him, “Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.” Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.” Peter said to Jesus, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And so said all the disciples.

(The second candle is extinguished.)

Congregational Hymn “Ah, Holy Jesus” *(remain seated)*

*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, Jesus that has slain you.
‘Twas I, dear Jesus, I it was denied you; I crucified you.
For me, kind Jesus, was thy incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion, for my salvation.*

Shadow of an Unshared Vigil (Matthew 26: 36-46)

Karen Blanchard

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. 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.” Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Again he went away for the second time and prayed, “My father if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.” Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.” (*The third candle is extinguished.*)

Congregational Hymn “Go to Dark Gethsemane”

(remain seated)

*Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter’s power;
Your Redeemer’s conflict see, watch with him one bitter hour;*

*Turn not from his griefs away, learn from Jesus Christ to pray.
Follow to the judgment hall; view the Lord of life arraigned;
O, the wormwood and the gall! O the pangs his soul
sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame or loss; learn from Christ to bear
the cross.*

Shadow of Accusation (Mark 14: 43-65) *Tom Griffith*

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. 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." All of the disciples deserted him and fled. A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

They took Jesus to the the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was

sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?” But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, and the Son of the Blessed One?” Jesus said, “I am; and ‘you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,’ and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’” Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?” All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophecy!” The guards also took him over and beat him. *(The fourth candle is extinguished.)*

Musical Meditation “Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”
arr. James Michael Stevens *Eric Robinson, piano*

Shadow of Crucifixion (Matthew 27: 27-38)

Charlotte Gifford

Then the soldiers of Pontius Pilate, 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. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry Jesus' cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

(The fifth candle is extinguished.)

Choir Anthem "Christus factus est"

Giovanni Matteo Asola

Shadow of Death (Luke 23: 44-49)

Adrienne Major

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

(The sixth candle is extinguished.)

Congregational Hymn "Were You There?" *(remain seated)*

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

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

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)

...

Were you there when they pierced him in the side? (Were you there?)

Shadow of the Tomb (John 19:38-42) *Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno*

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Temple authorities, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed Jesus' body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

(The last candle is extinguished briefly, symbolizing Christ's three days in the tomb. It is then relit in anticipation of the light of Easter.)

Congregational Hymn "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
*O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, your only crown.
How pale you are with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn!
How does your visage languish which once was bright as morn!*

What you, dear Savior, suffered was all for sinners' gain;

*Mine, mine was the transgression, but yours the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my savior, for I deserve your place;
Look on me with your favor, O grant to me your grace.*

*What language shall I borrow to thank you, dearest friend;
For this your dying sorrow, your pity without end?
May I be yours forever; and though my days be few,
O Savior, let me never outlive my love for you!*

Benediction

Postlude “What Wondrous Love is This”

arr. John Carter

The congregation departs in silence, to gather again on Easter morning.



Our congregation's Easter morning services include a 6:00 a.m. worship service at Milenkovitch Road led by Tom Griffith and Leslie Turpin (worshipers should dress warmly and bring a symbol of new life to share) and an 10:00 a.m. worship service in the sanctuary. Breakfast will be served at the church in between the two services.



