



**First Parish Church, Congregational  
On the Village Green  
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts**

*Awaken to the Light and Love of God;  
Be a Joyful Beacon to the World*

**First Parish Church, Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
Maundy Thursday – Tenebrae  
Thursday, April 6, 2023  
7:00 PM**

The Service of Tenebrae

The Service of Tenebrae (Shadows) is an adaptation of an early fourth century liturgy. This evening, the rule of silence is observed -no conversation or greetings other than the silent recognition of friends. The Tenebrae service consists of scripture read without comment. The readings commemorate the Passion of Jesus Christ - the Last Supper, the betrayal, the arrest; his trial, crucifixion, and death. The gradual dimming of the lights is symbolic of the shadow of the cross. At the conclusion of the service, remain to meditate as long as you wish, then leave in silence.

**The Sacrament of the Last Supper**

**Prelude** Go to Dark Gethsemane – Newman W. Powell (1919-2004)

**Welcome**

**Invitation to Worship Solo**

Sure on this Shining Night – Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Sure on this shining night of starmade shadows round, kindness must watch for me this side the ground. The late year lies down the north. All is healed, all is health. High summer holds the earth. Hearts all whole. Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder wandering far alone of shadows on the stars.

**Responsive Reading** Rev. Judith B. Brain

From “A Litany of Darkness” by Janet Morley

Leader: In the darkness of waiting, of not knowing what is to come, we come with trusting hearts.

**People: For the darkness and the light are all the same to you.**

Leader: In the darkness of staying silent, the terror of having nothing to say, In the greater terror of needing nothing to say, we turn to you, O God.

**People: For the darkness and the light are all the same to you.**

Leader: In the darkness of loving in which it is safe to surrender,  
to let go of our self-protection, we cling to you, our dearest friend.

**People: For the darkness and the light are all the same to you.**

Leader: In the darkness of hoping, in a world which longs for hope,  
We follow the one who has wrestled with the night.

**People: For the darkness and the light are all the same to you.**

Hymn Beneath the Cross of Jesus NCH #190

### **Call to Confession**

Come to the depths - the depths of your memory, the depths of your fear, the depths of your emptiness. Come to the place of repentance in chosen words and silence.

### **Prayer of Confession Unison**

Merciful Christ, whom we long to follow and obey, we have come here out of love; your love for us, and ours for you. As we gather this evening to commemorate your darkest hour, we remember the betrayal and abandonment of your friends. Their sorrowful question is on our lips. "Is it I?" And we know the answer, for we too have denied and turned our backs on you.

We have sinned. We have made excuses for our failures. We have neglected to live up to the new commandment that you gave us – to love one another as you have loved us. Forgive us, we pray, and help us to be more faithful. Amen

### **A Moment of Silence**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

God's love is boundless and reaches into the unknown and distant places - even the far reaches of our hearts. Be assured that God's mercy is extended to you; God's redemption is very near. Thanks be to Christ who has become our salvation. Amen

**Anthem** When I Survey the Wond'rous Cross – Lowell Mason (1792-1872), arr. Gilbert Martin

When I survey the wond'rous cross on which the Prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt for all my pride. 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.

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?  
Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; Love, so amazing, did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

### **Invitation to the Table**

Our service of communion is open to all who wish to know the presence of Christ in this sacrament. There are no requirements of age, membership, or creed.\*

### **Prayer and Words of Institution**

#### **Sharing the Bread and Cup**

**Solo Traumerei – Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

#### **Prayer of Thanksgiving Unison**

Loving God, made known in Jesus' life of joy and suffering, we are grateful that you have fed us at this table. As we have joined Jesus at supper, so would we join him in the dedication of our lives - our lips to be a hopeful voice to the despairing, our hands to heal the broken, our feet to walk with those who are shunned. Take us. Empower us. Use us. On this holy evening, and every day, we pray the prayer which centers our lives . . .

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

### **The Service of Tenebrae**

**Hymn Just as I Am NCH #207**

#### **The Shadow of Betrayal, Matthew 26:20-25 Nancy Peterson**

When it was evening, he 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 the one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!

It would have been better for that one not to have been born." Judas, who betrayed him said, "Surely not I Rabbi?" Jesus replied, "You have said so."

### **The Shadow of Betrayal, Matthew 26: 31-35 Bethany Woods**

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 him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

### **The Shadow of Loneliness, Matthew 26: 36-46 Sue Parker**

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 sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, 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 be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will it." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping and he said to Peter, "So could you not watch with me one hour?"

### **The Shadow of Treachery, Mark 14: 43-50 Paul Gudonis**

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. ... 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 them deserted him and fled.

### **The Shadow of Accusation, Matthew 27:1-2 Lauren Gudonis**

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

### **The Shadow of Accusation, Matthew 27:11-14 Liz Loomis**

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave them no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

### **The Shadow of Weakness, Mark 14:66-70a Ann Heslop**

Now 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." ... 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.

### **The Shadow of Weakness, Mark 14:70b-72 Mark Heslop**

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.

### **The Shadow of Violence, Mark 15:16-20 Jan Marshall**

Then the soldiers led Jesus into the courtyard of the palace ... and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

### **The Shadow of Golgotha, Matthew 27:32-33 & Mark 15:25-26 John Round**

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.

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."

### **The Shadow of the Cross, Luke 23:32-37 Lynda Griffiths**

Two others also who were criminals were led away to be put to death with Jesus ... one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

And the soldiers cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him saying, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Messiah - God's Chosen One!"

### **The Shadow of Death, Mark 15: 33-34 & 37-39 Joe Alsop**

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, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Then Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed his last.

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that he thus breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

**Solo** Were You There? - spiritual, arr. K. J. Murdock

Paul Knox, soloist

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble. Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble. Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

### **Silence**

**Benediction** I'll Walk with God – Nicholas Brodsky (1851-1929)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

I'll walk with God from this day on, His helping hand, I'll lean upon.

This is my prayer, my humble plea; may the Lord be ever with me.

There is no death though eyes grow dim, there is no fear when I'm near to Him.

I'll lean on Him forever and He'll forsake me never. He will not fail me as long as my faith is strong; whatever road I may walk alone. I'll walk with God, I'll take His hand, I'll talk with God, He'll understand. I'll pray to Him, each day to Him and He'll hear the words that I say. His hand will guide my throne and rod and I'll never walk alone, while I walk with God!

**Departing** Remain to meditate as long as you wish, then leave in silence.

Deacons Nancy Peterson and Janet Groth.

This evening we welcome Rev. Judy Brain, as our Worship Leader.

Rev. Brain is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School where she was awarded the Billings Prize for Preaching.

Judy served as senior minister at Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Lexington for 17 years. A resident of Essex since her retirement, she has continued in ministry as a bridge pastor for churches on the North Shore as well as the Boston suburbs.

In her ministry, a primary focus has been interfaith understanding and social justice. She has worked with many community organizations that promote respect, civility, and peace.

She is an enthusiastic gardener and enjoys swimming, kayaking, jigsaw puzzles, and is a convert to Wordle.

\*We will be celebrating Communion during worship. If you are watching online you are invited to prepare and have ready a piece of whatever kind of bread you wish, as well as any kind of juice you have available (or if you wish, coffee or tea). Then at the appropriate time you will be invited to consume those.