

**Church of the Covenant with
Presbyterian Churches in
Bedford (NH), Burlington,
Clinton and Lowell (Eliot)**



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Good Friday

Presbyterian Church (USA) / United Church of Christ

Church of the Covenant
w/ Bedford, Burlington, Clinton & Eliot Presbyterian Churches

April 2, 2021 7:00 pm

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87600882705?pwd=WUlub2l1RzIzR2JoT09UVStDdG1vQT09>

A Note About This Evening's Service:

Our theme on this Good Friday Tenebrae service is centered on the seven last “words” or cries of Jesus from the cross. The scripture readings and short meditations are written by those who deliver them. Each meditation will be followed by a sequence of musical meditations, silence, and candles being extinguished.

If safely able, you are invited to bring a candle to this Zoom service to extinguish in solidarity following the final meditation.

This Tenebrae service moves us from the glimmers of sunset to the gathering gloom and silence of Holy Saturday, as candles are extinguished, and we are invited to “leave” the service by holding some moments of silence.

The end of this bulletin has a broader explanation of the history and significance of this powerful service that ends in darkness and silence.

Prelude	<i>Variations on Wondrous Love</i> <i>(Theme and two variations)</i>	Samuel Barber
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Welcome & Centering

One: Peace be with you!

Many: And also with you!

Call To Worship

One: Who will come to worship when we focus on the crucifixion?

Many: We will come.

One: When the closest disciples have fled in terror, who will gather at the foot of the cross?

Many: We will gather.

One: Who will hear again the story of the death of God's Saving One?

Many: We will hear.

One: Who will witness to the love of God, poured out for the world, on that night, on this night, and always?

Many: We will witness.

O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down;
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, Thine only crown;
O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.

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 Savior! 'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor, 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 to Thee.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Assurance of Grace

One: The Gospel of John proclaims that God entered the world through Jesus Christ, not to condemn the world, but so that the world might be liberated. In Jesus, all people may be forgiven, healed, and reconnected to God. Lay down your burdens, leave your brokenness behind, so that we may journey forward together with the Saving One of God. Hear and believe the Good News of the Gospel:

Many: **In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole. Amen.**

The First Word: Luke 23:32-38

Abba, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, **'Abba, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.'** And they 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 of God,

his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the Ruler of the People, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the Ruler of the People.'

Meditation: Rev. Meagan Manas

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Hymn: PH 85

What Wondrous Love is This

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul.

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And through eternity, I'll sing on!

The Second Word: Luke 23:39-43

Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this one has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, '**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.**'

Meditation: Rev. Jan Gough

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Hymn: PH 599

Jesus Remember Me

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

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Je - sus re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Words: Luke 23:42
Music: Taize Community, 1998

The Third Word: John 19:23–27

Woman, here is your son. Here is your mother.

And when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.’ This was to fulfill what the scripture says, ‘They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.’

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, **‘Woman, here is your son.’** Then he said to the disciple, **‘Here is your mother.’** And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Meditation: Rev. Trina Portillo

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *O Welt ich muß dich lassen*

Johannes Brahms

The Fourth Word: Matthew 27:45-49

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, **'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?'** that is, **'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'** When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'

Meditation: **Rev. Joshua Lazard**

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *When Jesus Wept*

William Billings

The Fifth Word: John 19:28-29

I am thirsty.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), **'I am thirsty.'** A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

Meditation: **Rev. John Sawyer**

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Hymn: PH 102

Were You There?

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 nailed Him to the tree?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

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?

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 Word: John 19:30

It is finished.

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, **‘It is finished.’** Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Meditation: Rev. Kate Carlisle

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *All is Well*

Shape Note Hymn

The Seventh Word: Luke 23:44-49

Abba, into your hands I commend my spirit.

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, **‘Abba, 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 one 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.

Meditation: Rev. Rob Mark

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *Variations on Wondrous Love*
(Variation 3 and conclusion)

Samuel Barber



Prayer

Sounding of the Gong

Charge

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We invite you to remain in silence for a minute or two after you leave this Zoom worship service (or recording) and close your computer down. Consider turning off or down the lights in your room. Extinguish any candles. Spend some moments in silent vigil.

Participating in Worship

Liturgists – Rev. Rob Mark, Rev. Joshua Lazard

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Meditations Written and Offered By – Rev. Meagan Manas, Rev. Jan Gough, Rev. Trina Portillo, Rev. Joshua Lazard, Rev. John Sawyer, Rev. Kate Carlisle, Rev. Rob Mark

Vocalists – Tom Reid, Betsy Groves, Tim Groves, Barbara Darling, Ted Goodfleisch, Austin Burns, Adam Isbitsky, David McKinney, Kathryn Barry, Nancy Stockford, Anita Gram, Christine James, Mocky Day, Sarah Perreault, Theodor Langenbruch, Arnold Rots

Bulletin Cover Art – “Status Quo”, by Hannah Garrity, A Sanctified Art,
Inspired by John 19:1-30 | *Paper lace*

Note from Artist: *‘Pitiful, sad, scary. The continuous repetition of history is so poignant with our yearly reading of this text. As I drew and cut the layers of this work, I contemplated the ways in which I play the role of Pontius Pilate or the crowd in my daily life. Where do I perpetuate hate? Where do I forward injustice? Where do I join the voice of the wayward crowd? Pontius Pilate depicts the weakness of the status quo. Structures—what holds them up? What makes them fall? Windows are the lenses through which we see the world. In this image, we look through the window of my favorite architectural style, Arts and Crafts, to the cathedral window style. I portrayed layers of architecture and symbol. The cross is a contentious symbol. I repeat it again and again. The cross is the instrument that murders God incarnate. The crown of thorns shames Jesus. I have placed the Alpha and Omega within the crown of thorns on the cross, reminding us that the crowd put God to death and shamed God. The cross I drew was modeled after Celtic crosses made of nails. Again and again, we meet Pontius Pilate, knowing Jesus to be innocent, refusing to protect him from the hate of the masses, refusing to do the right thing. As I look around me now, I see the same things happening in our daily lives, in the life of our nation, in the life of the world. How can I pivot those places in my life where I resemble the crowd and crucify the righteous, or where I resemble Pontius Pilate and perpetuate the injustice of the status quo?’*

Background for this Service

This service commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus in a symbolic movement from light to darkness. The music, scriptures, and prayers reflect Jesus’ last words from the cross. The service is loosely based on an 8th century service called Tenebrae, meaning “shadows,” which was celebrated on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week.

The candles symbolize Jesus Christ, the light of the entire world. As they are extinguished, they reflect the darkness that fell over the world because of Jesus’ death and the fear and apprehension experienced by his followers. The service will close with a stark charge without the benediction customary in worship services throughout the rest of the church year. Suspending the blessing (until Easter morning) evokes the disciples’ experience of abandonment and despair at the time of Jesus’ death.

As we remember the undeserved suffering of Christ, we bring before God the suffering in our own lives, the suffering of people we love, those who are persecuted for speaking the truth, and those who suffer from poverty, pandemics, violence, or other injustices around the globe. To bear witness to suffering – God’s suffering and the suffering of creation – is an act of hope in the shine of God’s steadfast love which the gloom cannot ultimately extinguish.

Remaining Holy Week Services:

Bedford:

Holy Saturday 4/3 Children's Outdoor Easter Egg Hunt at 3:30 pm
Read Psalms 16, 46, and 98
Easter Sunday 4/4 "Sunrise Service" at 7 AM on Front Lawn
Easter Worship YouTube Livestream at 10 am

Burlington:

Easter Sunday, 04 April, 10:30am, Communion, [Zoom Link](#)

Clinton:

Easter Vigil 4/3 7 pm - drop off Lent Mission Project Collections;
7:30 Easter Vigil Service - Join us in person in the parking lot.
Please bring your own mask and chair and join us for
this celebration of the transition into Easter day at nightfall.
Easter Sunday, 11am, live on Zoom, [Zoom link](#)

Covenant:

Holy Saturday Vigil, April 3, Noon (on your own) – devotional posted
on [FaceBook](#)
Easter Sunday, 10:30, Communion, worship live on Zoom ([link here](#))

Eliot Church:

Easter Sunday, 10am, Live on Zoom, To participate from your
computer, click this link: [Eliot Church worship](#). To participate from
your smartphone, use meeting ID 576-810-708.



Church of the Covenant
Boston Massachusetts

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Worship at Church of the Covenant is the heart and soul of our life together as a community of faith. Since 1932 we have been a federated church, maintaining membership in the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA) and welcoming pilgrims and inquirers from all traditions to our life and work. Through our prayer and praise, in our concerns and celebrations, by word and sacrament, art and silence, we seek empowerment, together and individually, as a covenant people, for the work of Christ.

Jesus taught that the Spirit invites all people, including society's outcasts, to enjoy seats at God's table. This congregation seeks to demonstrate that vision by welcoming individuals and families without regard to race, gender identity, age, physical/mental condition, or sexual orientation. We rejoice in the presence of children among us, and we strive to include them in our ministry. We maintain ties of faith with the Church of the Poor in the community of the Sweet Name of Jesus, in Northwestern Nicaragua.

We believe God's blessings are found in marriage equality for all. Thus, we joyfully welcome the opportunity afforded us by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church USA to join couples of all sexual orientations in fully legal and holy marriage.

In our worship we use language and imagery that reflect the wonderful diversity of the image of God in humanity and all of creation; that transcend the exclusive language of the church's past. And as stewards, we seek to live into the Spirit's blessing as we move in solidarity on this shared and sacred, common home we call earth. We invite you to join us in the journey toward God's justice and peace for all of Boston and beyond!

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Rob Mark, *Lead Pastor*

Rev. Joshua Lazard, *Associate Pastor*

Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*

Bill Brown, *Building Manager*

Rev. Kate Carlisle, *CYCE Coordinator / Parish Administrator*

Nancy Stockford, *Financial Secretary*

Fred Lopes, *Sunday Sexton*

Anita Goncalves, *Child Care Provider*

Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*

CHURCH OFFICERS

Liz Vizza, *President of the Corporation*

Trudi Veldman, *Clerk of the Council*

Anita Gram, *Moderator of Board of Deacons*

Faith Perry, *Treasurer*