



Communion and Tenebrae

*The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
30 N Clinton St
Iowa City, IA*

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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IOWA CITY, IA 52245
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WORSHIP FOR APRIL 6, 2023
MAUNDY THURSDAY

We will celebrate the sacrament of communion in our worship tonight. If you are joining the worship service from home, you are invited to assemble what you will eat and what you will drink before the service begins. It can be bread and grape juice or wine or something as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.

“When we celebrate the Meal, Christ brings us together with people whom we would never congregate with if we were to create our own community of love among like-minded people. The only thing that brings us together is our common participation in Christ’s gift, our common need for him, our common need for sticking together in the night of deliverance and liberation.”

Krister Stendahl

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Friends in Christ: it is Maundy Thursday, the day of the new commandment—that we, as followers of Christ, should love one another.

On this night we remember who we are:

Not just individual Christians, isolated believers.

We are together the body of Christ.

We are the friends of Jesus, a community of Christ’s disciples
and when one suffers we all suffer.

On this night we remember the events that make us who we are:

The meal Jesus shared with his disciples and gave to all who follow him.

His commandment that we love one another as he loved us.

The betrayal and desertion of Jesus by those closest to him.

His faithfulness to death, even death on a cross.

On this night we receive the things that nourish who we are:

The bread broken and wine poured out for us and for all people.

The renewal of our covenant with one another that together we might be a faithful body
of Christians.

The good news that even in the darkest hour
Christ is risen and goes before us.

*HYMN 424 “O Jesus Christ, May Grateful Hymns Be Rising”

**O Jesus Christ, may grateful hymns be rising,
in every city for your love and care;
inspire our worship, grant the glad surprising
that your blest Spirit rouses everywhere.**

**Grant us new courage, sacrificial, humble,
strong in your strength to venture and to dare;
to lift the fallen, guide the feet that stumble,
seek out the lonely and God's mercy share.**

**Show us your Spirit, brooding o'er each city,
as you once wept above Jerusalem,
seeking to gather all in love and pity,
and healing those who touch your garment's hem.**

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Ever gracious God, we gather this evening hour as friends gathered with Jesus in an upper room long ago.

We come bearing the marks of a bitter and broken world.

We come from anonymous places, with dry and thirsty spirits.

Remind us in the breaking of the bread of our need and of your sufficiency.

Refresh us and make us whole with the cup of forgiveness.

Draw us nearer to each other in mutual service and closer to you in the covenant of faithfulness and thanksgiving.

As the night advances, deepen in us a sense of your steadfast love for us in Jesus Christ, our friend and redeemer. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

SCRIPTURE LESSONS I Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13: 34-38

MEDITATION BEFORE COMMUNION

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN 503 “Come Risen Lord”

**Come, risen Lord, and deign to be our guest;
no, let us be your guests and with you dine;
at your own table now be manifest
in your own sacrament of bread and wine.**

**We meet as in the upper room they met;
now at the table, blessing, yet you stand:
'This is my body': this you give us yet;
faith still receives the cup as from your hand.**

**One body we, one body who partake,
one church united in communion blessed;
one name we bear, one bread of life we break,
with all your saints on earth and saints at rest.**

**One with each other, Lord, and one in you,
who are one Savior and one living head;
open our eyes to see with vision true;
be known to us in breaking of the bread.**

PRAYER BEFORE COMMUNION

**We thank you, O Christ,
that you call us together at this meal and unite us as one body.**

**We thank you for this bread and cup set before us,
food and drink to nourish us in body and in spirit, signs of your life-giving love.
May they speak to us
of the everyday made holy,
of life made new,
of hope for your realm among us.**

We remember that on the night of his arrest...

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

...the Lord Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to God,
broke it and said, "This is my body, which is given for you.
Whenever you eat it, do this remembering me."
In the same way after supper he took the cup
and said, "This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood.
Whenever you drink it, do this remembering me."

SHARING THE SUPPER TOGETHER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (Psalm 103: 1-2)

Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits. Amen.

“When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Matthew 26:30)

*HYMN 544 “Day Is Done” (vs. 1 & 2)

**Day is done, but love unfailing
Dwells ever here;
Shadows fall, but hope prevailing,
Calms ev'ry fear.
God our Maker, none forsaking,
Take our hearts, of love's own making,
Watch our sleeping, guard our waking,
Be always near.**

**Dark descends, but light unending
Shines through our night;
You are with us, ever lending
New strength to sight:
One in love, your truth confessing,
One in hope of heaven's blessing,
May we see, in love's possessing,
Love's endless light!**

TENEBRAE: THE SERVICE OF SHADOWS

THE SHADOW OF DESERTION Matthew 26:31-35 James Robinson

THE AGONY OF THE SOUL Luke 22:39-44 Ginny Clemons
SOLO “Jesus Walked That Lonesome Valley”
Chris Nakielski

“THE HOUR IS COME” John 17:1-6 Tom Mittman

“THAT ALL MAY BE ONE” John 17:15-22 Rebecca Weatherford

HYMN 86 “When We Are Tempted to Deny Your Son”

**“When we are tempted to deny your Son; because we fear the anger of the world,
And we are few who hear the insults hurled, your will, O God, be done.**

**When we are tempted to betray your Son, because he leads us in a harder way,
And makes demands we do not want to pay, your will, O God, be done.**

**When we forget the cross that held your Son, and would avoid the burden of this life;
The cry for justice and an end to strife...your will, O God, be done.**

**When doubt obscures the victory of your Son, and faith is weak and all resolve has fled,
Help us to know him risen from the dead: your will, O God, be done.”**

ARREST IN THE GARDEN John 18:1-5 John Fieselmann

HYMN “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.**

DENIAL OF PETER Matthew 26:69-75 Bruce Reynolds

SHADOW OF THE CROSS Mark 15:16-20 Barb Sisley

THE TOLLING OF THE BELL

THE SEALING OF THE TOMB

DARKNESS

SOLO “Were You There”

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD John 1:1-5 Bill Lovin

There is no benediction. Our worship continues on Good Friday at noon. You may stay in the sanctuary for as long as you like. The congregation is asked to leave quietly.

Opening Prayer from Allen Happe. Reprinted by permission of the publisher from *Touch Holiness*, ed. Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, Copyright © 1990 The Pilgrim Press.

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Maundy is derived from the Latin *mandatum*, which means “to command.” The word refers to the “New Commandment” to love one another that Jesus gave to the disciples at the supper on this Thursday, the night before his death. As we worship in these days, we do not pretend that we do not know what will happen to the crucified Jesus. All through these days the victory of Christ is contemplated and the resurrection is proclaimed.

Tenebrae is the Latin term for “shadows.” It is a service of lessons accompanied by the gradual extinguishing of lights. It is historically associated with the evenings of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week, with the readings on those evenings commemorating the events of the following day. On Wednesday the readings commemorated the Last Supper and the betrayal and arrest of Jesus; on Thursday, Christ’s passion, trial, and death; and on Friday, Christ’s burial and the destitution of the disciples. Tonight those events are combined in one service.

Friday, April 7

Good Friday Worship Service Noon

Sunday, April 9

Easter Breakfast Rockwood Hall, beginning at 8:30
Festival Easter Service with Brass and Choir 10:15 a.m.