

Tenebrae Service

Hymn #286 *“O Sacred Head Now Wounded”*

Call to Worship

Leader: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People: *His mercy endures forever.*

Leader: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your Holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Leader: And this is the judgment, that the light has come into this world, and we loved darkness rather than light.

People: *God is light, in whom there is no darkness at all.*

Leader: For God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

People: *Every one that does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light. But all who do what is true come to the light.*

Leader: Come, let us worship in spirit and truth.

Hymn #287 *“O Love Divine, What Hast Thou Done”*

The Passion of our Lord

Leader: The Lord be with you **People:** *And also with you.*

Silent Prayer: Most gracious God, look with mercy upon your family gathered here for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed, given into sinful hands, and suffered death upon the cross. Strengthen our faith and forgive our betrayals as we enter the way of His passion; through Him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen**

CHOIR ANTHEM

(Chorus) He could have called ten thousand angels to destroy the world and set Him free.
He could have called ten thousand angels, but He died alone, for you and me.

Readings from . . .

Matthew 26:31-46 Extinguishing of 1st candle.

Matthew 26:47-56 Extinguishing of 2nd candle.

Matthew 26:57-75 Extinguishing of 3rd candle.

Matthew 27:1-5 Extinguishing of 4th candle.

Matthew 27:6-23 Extinguishing of 5th candle.

Matthew 27:24-31 Extinguishing of 6th candle.

Matthew 27:32-44 Extinguishing of 7th candle.

Matthew 27:45-50

Extinguishing of the Christ Candle followed by a loud *noise* is symbolizing the agony of Jesus' death and the earthquake.

Matthew 27:51-54

Christ candle reignited, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil.

Hymn # 288 *“Were You There”*

Song of the Suffering Servant Isaiah 53:4-9

Dismissal Blessing

Go in peace. May Jesus Christ, who for our sake became obedient unto death, even death on the cross, keep you and strengthen you this night and forever more. *Amen.*

Please depart from the service in silence.

Tenebrae Service

Welcome to Lillian UMC! The service of worship tonight is taken from an early Christian service called Tenebrae. The name Tenebrae is the Latin word for "darkness" or "shadows." Tonight we will experience only a small portion of Christ's pain and suffering the day of His crucifixion. One of the most conspicuous features of the service is the gradual extinguishing of candles until only a single candle, considered a symbol of our Lord, remains. As it gets darker and darker we can reflect on the great emotional and physical pain that was very real for Jesus that evening. Toward the end of the service, the Christ candle is removed, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil over good. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of his death (Matthew 27) and his resurrection (Matthew 28:2). At the moment of the earthquake, the temple veil was torn apart, making the Holy of Holies exposed to public view. This is understood to represent God's change toward us with direct access to him, no longer requiring the ceremonial acts of the priests for our forgiveness of sin. The Christ candle is then restored to its place, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil. By this single light we all depart this service in silence.



A Service of Darkness

**Thursday, March 29, 2018
6:00 PM**

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