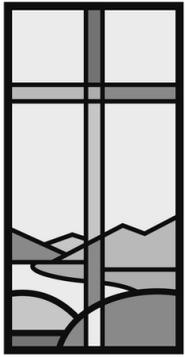


SAINT STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



TENEBRAE

A Service of Shadows



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026
7:00 PM

About this Service

Tenebrae

The name Tenebrae (the Latin word for “darkness” or “shadows”) has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services of the last three days of Holy Week, which in medieval times came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings. As we meditate on Christ’s journey to the cross in scripture and song one by one the candles and other lights in the church will be extinguished until only a single candle, considered a symbol of Jesus Christ remains until at toward the end of the service even this candle is hidden, which signifies the apparent victory of the forces of evil. A sudden loud noise is made at the end of the service, symbolizing the earthquake at Christ's death. The lighted candle is then restored to its place, suggesting Christ's eventual triumph.

Anthem

Prelude
Alexander Georgakis, pianist

Hal H. Hopson

The Entrance Rite

The minister enters in silence.

At the sound of the bell, please stand as you are able.

Opening Prayer

Officiant: O God of all creation, whose awesome will lifts up the cross, a sign of entry to eternal life, change our hearts that we may turn from all past ways of worldly power, from means of destruction and coercion, to embrace the way of the cross, the weakness that is true power, the folly that marks your wisdom and your reign.

All: Amen.

Anthem

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded *Passion Chorale* arr. by Hal H. Hopson

*O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown.*

Please be seated.

A reading from the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet

Part I.

Reader: Sheri Flay

How lonely sits the city that once was full of people!
How like a widow she has become, she that was great among the nations!
She that was a princess among the provinces has become subject to forced labor.

She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers,
she has no one to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her;
they have become her enemies.

Judah has gone into exile with suffering and hard servitude; she lives now among the nations; she finds no resting place; her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress.

The roads to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the festivals; all her gates are desolate;
her priests groan; her young girls grieve, and her lot is bitter.

Her foes have become the masters; her enemies prosper because the Lord has made her suffer for the multitude of her transgressions; her children have gone away, captives before the foe.

Responsory

Officiant: On the mount of Olives Jesus prayed to God:

People: **If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.
The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

Officiant: Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.

People: **The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

The first candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

Part II.

Reader: Tessa Lucero

From daughter Zion has departed all her majesty. Her princes have become like stags that find no pasture; they fled without strength before the pursuer.

Jerusalem remembers all the precious things that were hers in days of old. When her people fell into the hand of the enemy and there was no one to help her, the enemy looked on; they mocked over her downfall.

Jerusalem sinned grievously, so she has become a filthy thing; all who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself groans and turns her face away.

Her uncleanness was in her skirts; she took no thought of her future; her downfall was appalling, with none to comfort her. Look, O Lord, at my affliction, for the enemy has triumphed!

Responsory

Officiant: My soul is very sorrowful, even to the point of death;

People: **remain here, and watch with me.
Now you shall see the crowd who will surround me;
you will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.**

Officiant: Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

People: **You will flee, and I will go to be offered up for you.**

The second candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

Part III.

Reader: Trudie Kirkland

Enemies have stretched out their hands over all her precious things; she has even seen the nations invade her sanctuary, those whom you forbade to enter your congregation.

All her people groan as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food to revive their lives. Look, O Lord, and see how worthless I have become.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted on the day of his fierce anger.

From on high he sent fire; it went deep into my bones; he spread a net for my feet; he turned me back; he has left me stunned, faint all day long.

My transgressions were bound into a yoke; by his hand they were fastened together; they weigh on my neck, sapping my strength; the Lord handed me over to those whom I cannot withstand.

Responsory

Officiant: Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty,

People: **with no looks to attract our eyes.**

**He bore our sins and grieved for us,
he was wounded for our transgressions,
and by his scourging we are healed.**

Officiant: Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:

People: **And by his scourging we are healed.**

The third candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

Anthem

Behold the Lamb of God

Handel

*Behold the Lamb of God,
which taketh away the sin of the world.*

THE SHADOW OF BETRAYAL Matthew 26:20-25

Reader: Steve Plote

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve disciples, 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 betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

Musical Response

Surely Not I

Hal H. Hopson

Surely Not I, Rabbi?

Yes, truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.

The one who dipped his hand with me, will betray the Son of God.

The fourth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

THE SHADOW OF INNER AGONY Luke 22:40-44

Reader: Richard Holdredge

When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.



1. Go to dark Geth - se - ma - ne, ye that feel the tempt - er's power;
 2. Fol - low to the judg - ment hall; view the Lord of life ar - rained;
 3. Cal - vary's mourn - ful moun - tain climb; there, a - dor - ing at his feet,

your Re - deem - er's con - flict see, watch with him one bit - ter hour;
 O the worm - wood and the gall! O the pangs his soul sus - tained!
 mark the mir - a - cle of time, God's own sac - ri - fice com - plete;

turn not from his griefs a - way, learn of Je - sus Christ to pray.
 Shun not suf - fering, shame or loss; learn of him to bear the cross.
 "It is fin - ished!" hear him cry; learn of Je - sus Christ to die.

The fifth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

THE SHADOW OF LONELINESS. Matthew 26:40-45

Reader: Susan Northway

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? Now the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Musical Response

Could You Not Watch Over Me One Hour?

Mary Kay Beall

*It was late in the evening when Jesus knelt to pray
 He was troubled and anxious and asked his friends to stay
 What he needed was comfort, but instead, we hear him say
 Could you not watch with me one hour?*

The sixth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

THE SHADOW OF DESERTION. Matthew 26:47-50, 55-56

Reader: Robert Dunlap

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a rebel? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Musical Response

Ah, Holy Jesus

Herzliebster Jesu arr. by Hal H. Hopson

*Ah, holy Jesus, how have you offended that mortal
Judgement on you has descended?
By foes derided, by your own rejected,
O most afflicted!*

The seventh candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

THE SHADOW OF ACCUSATION. Matthew 26:59-67

Reader: John Fortman

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death." Then they spat in his face and struck him, and some slapped him.

Musical Response

He is Death — Guilty!

T. Dubois

*He is death — guilty!
Take him, take him, let us crucify him!
Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

The eighth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

THE SHADOW OF MOCKERY. Mark 15:12-20

Reader: Josh Wentz

Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" They shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole cohort. 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.

Musical Response

Crucify Him!

Hal H. Hopson

Crucify him! Let him be crucified!

The ninth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH. Luke 23:33-46

Reader: Nick Vestuto

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, "Father, 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 King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." 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 man has done nothing

wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.” He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” 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 out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Having said this, he breathed his last.

Musical Response

Watchful’s Song (Nocturne)
Joshua Wentz, soloist

R. Vaughan Williams

*Into thy hands, O lord, into thy hands, O Lord,
I commend my spirit, into thy hands, O Lord.
Except the Lord keep the house the watchman waketh but in vain.
The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep peace:
the whole earth is at rest and is quiet.
Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit,
into thy hands, O Lord.*

The tenth candle is extinguished. A brief silence is kept.

*Please kneel as you are able.
A chime or bell rings slowly 33 times, for the years of Jesus’ life.*

Gregorian Chant

Christus factus est

Gregorian Chant
Carlos Gomez, soloist

“Christ for us became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name which is above every name.”

During the singing of “Christus factus est,” the remaining candle is hidden.

A brief silence is observed. The following Psalm is then said responsively.

Please stand as you are able.

Psalm 51

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your
loving-kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- 2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness *
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I know my transgressions, *
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you only have I sinned *
and done what is evil in your sight.
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgment
- 6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb.

- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Officiant Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Savior Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross. Amen.

Nothing further is said; but a noise is made, and the hidden candle is brought back in view and placed in its former location.

After the minister departs, the members of the congregation are invited to observe silence as they depart.

Service participants:

The Very Rev. Christopher Montella, Officiant
Dr. Joshua Wentz, Director
Alexander Georgakis, pianist