



LORD, HAVE MERCY

A MAUNDY THURSDAY COMMUNION WITH SEVEN READINGS and SEVEN CANDLES

A video of this will be posted on our website linked to Facebook on Thursday or you may use this for your own service at home.

Tonight, and tomorrow at the Good Friday Service, we will use 7 candles to memorialize Jesus' suffering and death. If you use the candles, light all candles at the beginning of the service. After each reading tonight and after each of the Last Words tomorrow, we will extinguish one candle. (If you have seven candles to use at home, you may light them).

FRIST READING Judas's Betrayal Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. ²The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

³ Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; ⁴he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. ⁵They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. ⁶So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

RESPONSE: God have mercy when we betray you through greed and selfishness. (Extinguish first candle)

SECOND READING: Peter's Denial Luke 22: 31-34

³¹ 'Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.' ³³ And he said to him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!' ³⁴ Jesus said, 'I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me.'

RESPONSE: God have mercy when we deny you though fear. (Extinguish second candle)

THIRD READING Jesus in the Garden Luke 22:39-46 ³⁹ He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the

disciples followed him. ⁴⁰When he reached the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.' ⁴¹Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, ⁴²'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' [[⁴³Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. ⁴⁴In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.]] ⁴⁵When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, ⁴⁶and he said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.'

RESPONSE: God have mercy when we do not watch and pray.
(Extinguish third candle)

FOURTH READING The Release of Barabbas Matthew 27:15-23

¹⁵ Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. ¹⁶At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' ¹⁸For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. ¹⁹While he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' ²⁰Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. ²¹The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' ²²Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' ²³Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!'

RESPONSE: We confess we are Barabbas, the guilty one who was set free while you were arrested and crucified. Lord, have mercy when we abandon you, following the crowd rather than your will. (Extinguish fourth candle)

FIFTH READING Pilate Washing His Hands Matthew 27:24-26

²⁴ So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.' ²⁵Then the people as a whole answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' ²⁶So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

RESPONSE Lord forgive us for our indecision, when we fail to take responsibility. Forgive us whenever we "wash our hands" and walk away from you and your grace. (Extinguish fifth candle)

SIXTH READING THE LORD'S SUPPER Luke 22:14-20

14 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' ¹⁷Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' ¹⁹Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' ²⁰And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'

(Commune after these words.) (Extinguish sixth candle)

SEVENTH READING Jesus Mocked, Stripped Matthew 27: 27-31

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' ³⁰They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

RESPONSE: Lord, have mercy on us when we forget your suffering. May we be present with you tonight.

EXTINGUISH SEVENTH CANDLE
DRAPING OF THE CROSS
SOUND OF NAILS BEING DRIVEN
DEPART IN SILENCE



GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday Service 2020 "Last Words of Jesus"

Traditionally on Good Friday, we gather at 3:00 PM for silent meditation followed by Communion on the Last Words of Jesus, *found in Luke 23:34, Luke 23:43, John 19:26-27, Matthew 27:46, John 19:28, John 19:30 and Luke 23:46.*

You may also toll the tailors using bells or other chimes at the beginning. This was an ancient practice to toll a church bell three times to signal someone had died, another three times if it was a woman (totaling 6) and another three times if the person was a man (totaling 9). Then the age of the person was tolled. On Good Friday, we toll 9 times, followed by 33, the years traditionally associated with Jesus' time on the earth.

So today, with the Cross draped, we will meditate on the Last Words of Jesus. We begin with seven lit candles. After each reading and meditation, a single candle will be extinguished.

Though Jesus chooses to be obedient to God, he did not choose the betray and brutality of his death. Those were human choices, not Jesus', nor God's. Yet, not only did Jesus choose to die freely, he chose the manner in which he would approach and receive death. That approach is represented in the Seven Last Words from the Cross:

Candle 1 "I thirst." Meditate for one moment. Meditate for a moment, then extinguish first candle.

Jesus freely chooses to be human and suffer the basic deprivations of life. Though Jesus is the "living water," he will also experience the human agony of dehydration.

Candle 2 "My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?" Meditate for a moment, then extinguish second candle.

Jesus is free to experience the most radical kind of abandonment. There were those in the early church period who argued that it only seemed Jesus suffered and died. At the heart of this statement is the reality that Jesus suffered the limitation of being able to escape death and experienced what it was like to be completely abandoned and forsaken. Had he not experienced this abandonment, he would not have suffered everything common to humans. He does. (Extinguish second candle)

Candle 3 "Mother, behold your son; son, your mother." Meditate for a moment, then extinguish third candle

Jesus freely chooses to draw those who are not blood relatives into one extended family who are committed to being family for each other in their deep needs and during their loss.

Candle 4 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Meditate for a moment, then extinguish fourth candle.

Jesus freely chooses to forgive the horrible offenses against him, but perhaps more than that, he asks God to forgive this collective "them."

Candle 5 "This day thou will be with me in paradise." Meditate for a moment, then extinguish fifth candle.

Jesus chooses not only to forgive but in solidarity with this broken man who reaches out, he chooses to share his father's inheritance with the thief on the cross, who, no doubt, had almost lost all hope. He chooses to forgive him and offer him eternal life.

Candle 6 "It is finished." Meditate for a moment, then extinguish sixth candle.

Jesus freely chooses to die well by completing the purpose and mission for which he was sent.

Candle 7 "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." Meditate for a moment, then extinguish seventh candle

Jesus freely chooses to return his spirit to God.

Prayer: God we remember you today. We remember your agony. We remember your Words. We meditate upon your great sacrifice for us. In Your Holy Name We Pray, Amen.

In silence, you may also share Communion and then end the service in silence.

