

***A Service of Worship for  
Good Friday Tenebrae:  
The Vigil of Darkness  
29 March 2024***

The cross can heal and hurt;  
it can be empowering and liberating  
but also enslaving and oppressive.

I offer my reflections because I believe  
that the cross placed alongside the  
lynching tree can help us to see Jesus in  
America in a new light, and thereby  
empower people who claim to follow  
him to take a stand against white  
supremacy and every kind of injustice.

James H. Cone from *The Cross and the  
Lynching Tree*

The icon “Mama” was painted after the  
death of George Floyd. Many people  
asked whether the man in the icon was  
“George Floyd or Jesus?” The answer to  
that question is “yes.” The Christ figure  
in the icon doesn’t have nail holes in his  
hand because he was lynched. We bear  
witness to Christ present in all of the  
crucified people of history. Looking into  
the eyes of mothers who are continually  
losing sons and daughters who are  
unjustly murdered by the state and angry  
mobs. Our hope for this image is that it  
will continue to guide our thought, and  
prayer, but most importantly, our action.

Kelly Latimore



Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!

**And also with you!**

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

“Intermezzo,” Op. 118 No. 2

Call to Worship

\*Hymn

Crusaders’ Hymn

“Come, Holy Beauty”

**Come, Holy Beauty, stir our full humanity,  
That we may know we embody you.  
All our diversity mirrors your truth and grace,  
All races show your lovely hue.**

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill us with your wisdom,  
Open our eyes that we may see,  
Splendor and holiness in every blade of grass,  
The smallest creatures' majesty.**

**Come, Holy Beauty, waken our divinity,  
That we may be your image fair,  
Clothed in your dignity, wisdom and liberty,  
Creative power with you to share.**

Call to Confession

Unison Confession

**We come gingerly to prayer on this Good Friday  
holding the pieces of our broken world.  
So much is ruined and spoiled,  
so much hatred and anger,  
so many acts of violence.  
There is no talk today of who is greatest  
no talk of triumph and victory.  
Instead we stand quietly here at the foot of the cross,  
joining the few friends who stand in silent witness.  
In this solemn hour,  
as we remember the death of Jesus,  
crack open all that is hard within us,  
every place that is self-satisfied and self-serving,  
every attitude that is superior and smug.**

Confession in Silence

A SERVICE OF DIMINISHING LIGHT:

The Passion Story

*“One of you will betray me...”*

Reading

Matthew 26:20-25

Hymn

Land of Rest

# "In Suffering Love"



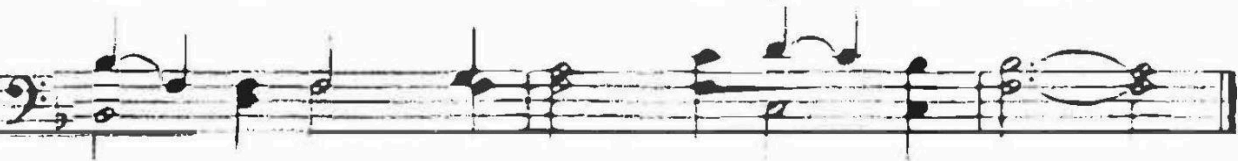
1. In suf - fer - ing love the thread of life is  
3. In love's deep womb our fears are held; there  
5. In suf - fer - ing love, our God comes now, hope's



wov - en through our care, for God is with us;  
God's rich tears are sown and bring to birth, in  
vi - sion born in gloom; with tears and laugh - ter



not a - lone our pain and toil we bear.  
hope new - born, the strength to jour - ney on.  
shared and blessed the des - ert yet will bloom.



*The First Candle is Extinguished*

*“You will deny me three times...”*

Reading

Matthew 26:31-35

Hymn #97 (verses 1 & 2)

Redhead

**Go to dark Gethsemane, all who feel the tempter’s power;  
Your Redeemer’s conflict see, watch with Him one bitter hour;  
Turn not from His griefs away, Learn from Jesus Christ to pray.**

**Follow to the judgment hall, view the lord of life arraigned;  
O the wormwood and the gall, O the pangs His soul sustained!  
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss; learn from Christ to bear the cross.**

*The Second Candle is Extinguished*

*“Could you not stay awake?”*

Reading

Matthew 26:36-46

Music

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

*“Ave Verum Corpus”*

*Ave verum corpus, natum de Maria Virgine,  
vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine  
cuius latus perforatum fluxit aqua et sanguine:  
esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.*

Hail, true Body, born of the Virgin Mary,  
having truly suffered, sacrificed on the cross,  
from whose pierced side water and blood flowed:  
Be for us a sweet foretaste (of the heavenly banquet)  
in the trial of death!

*The Third Candle is Extinguished*

*“...they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him”*

Reading

Matthew 26:47-56

Hymn

Herzliebster Jesu

“Ah Holy Jesus”

**Ah Holy Jesus, when it was the darkest,  
Your lonely journey must have felt the farthest.  
When we feel lonely, and our hearts are hopeless,  
God suffers with us.**

**When in the garden, waiting for betrayal,  
No one stayed with you, only you were wakeful.  
You prayed for mercy, there was only silence.  
Then, your acceptance.**

*The Fourth Candle is Extinguished*

*“I do not know the man!”*

Reading

Matthew 26:69-75

Hymn

Herzliebster Jesu

“Ah Holy Jesus”

**Our sacred stories of your life hold wisdom:  
God’s love made human, blessing all Creation.  
Your death aggrieves us; it is full of sorrow.  
Hope comes tomorrow.**

**God truly knows us, God is our companion:  
Loves us in spite of all our imperfection.  
God works for justice, through our intervention.  
No more oppression!**

*The Fifth Candle is Extinguished*

Reading

Jan Richardson

“With Each of Our Breakings, You Break”

Hymn

Wondrous Love

“What Wondrous Love”

**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 brings my heart such bliss,  
And takes away the pain of my soul, of my soul,  
And takes away the pain of my soul.**

**When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,  
When I was sinking down, sinking down,  
When I was sinking down beneath my sorrow’s ground,  
Friends to me gathered round, O my soul, O my soul,  
Friends to me gathered round, O my soul.**

**To love and to all friends I will sing, I will sing,  
To love and to all friends I will sing.  
To love and to all friends who pain and sorrow mend,  
With thanks unto the end I will sing, I will sing,  
With thanks unto the end I will sing.**

*The Sixth Candle is Extinguished*

“Let him be crucified!”

Reading

Matthew 27:15-26



Hymn

“O Lamb of God Most Holy!”

**O Lamb of God most holy!  
Who on the cross did suffer,  
And patient still and lowly,  
Yourself to scorn did offer;  
Such pain by you was taken,  
So we were not forsaken:  
Have mercy on us, Jesus!**

**O Lamb of God most holy!  
Who on the cross did suffer,  
And patient still and lowly,  
Yourself to scorn did offer;  
Such pain by you was taken,  
So we were not forsaken:  
Your peace be with us, Jesus!**

*The Seventh Candle is Extinguished*

*The Suffering Jesus*

Reading

Matthew 27:27-31

Music

Healey Willan  
(1880-1968)

“Surely He Has Borne Our Griefs”

Surely He has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Reading

Dorothee Sölle

“When He Came”

Hymn

Passion Chorale

“O Sacred Love Incarnate”

**O Sacred Love Incarnate  
Who broke the bonds of death,  
Your teaching and your wisdom  
Were shaped with human breath.  
Your grief and pain and sadness  
Help us to bear our own.  
Ev’n in our deepest darkness  
We will not be alone.**

**Through death’s dark lonesome valley,  
Each path must surely lead.  
Let us reach out to others  
When comes their time of need.  
And so we build communion  
And build community:  
The light of Christ’s example  
Will help to set us free.**

Silent Reflection

*“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*

Reading

Matthew 27:45-50

Solo

“The Crucifixion”

Samuel Barber  
(1910-1981)

At the cry of the first bird  
They began to crucify Thee, O Swan!  
Never shall lament cease because of that.  
It was like the parting of day from night.  
Ah, sore was the suffering borne  
By the body of Mary's Son,  
But sorer still to Him was the grief  
Which for His sake  
Came upon His Mother.

*The Eighth Candle is Extinguished*

**You are invited to remain for silent reflection.**

**When you are ready, please leave quietly, respecting others' need for silence.**

### **Worship Notes**

Worship Leaders for the service are **Eric Avera, Fran Avera, Jacy Grannis, Emily Holien,** and **Karen Kline.**

The Call to Worship is “I Feel Sorry for Jesus” from *You and Yours* by Naomi Shihab Nye.

The Unison Confession is from “Leading in Worship: Worship Resources in a Mennonite Voice for Ears of All Kinds.”

The soloist on “The Crucifixion” is **Eric Avera.** The poem is by Howard Mumford Jones.

**Eric Avera** is the author of the words for “Ah Holy Jesus” and “O Sacred Love Incarnate.”

*Covenant Church affirms the sanctity, dignity, and equality  
of human beings and the value of all life in the universe.*

*We welcome persons of all racial and ethnic heritages, all sexual orientations,  
all gender identities, and all faith perspectives to our Christian community.*

*We stand for each individual's right to worship God and to respond  
to God's call to ministry in her or his own understanding  
of God's all-encompassing love.*

*We value a holistic approach to faith and seek to worship in ways that are  
intellectually credible, emotionally stimulating, spiritually engaging  
and contemporarily relevant.*

*We value music and art and ritual to express what we cannot ever fully say.*

*We value participation so that we might hear many approaches  
to our shared faith.*

**Covenant Church, an ecumenical, liberal, Baptist congregation**

Members of Covenant, Ministers

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

Brian Buck, Facilities Coordinator

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth

David Lee, Director of Music

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

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*Covenant Church recognizes the laws of the State of Texas and the rights of its  
citizens. Consistent with this acknowledgment and with respect for the values of  
our Church, we also acknowledge that our congregants and visitors seek a safe  
and comfortable space for worship and celebration. **In that spirit, we request that  
all firearms be left in a secure place outside of the Church.** We thank God for  
providing us with the opportunity to worship together and to continue to respect  
each other as human beings.*