

Nelson

Gathering Song: VU 133 Go, Now, to Gethsemane

Call to Worship

One: Our journey through Lent and to the cross is not a lonesome pilgrimage.

All: In all times and places, God’s faithfulness accompanies us.

One: But today we admit that Good Friday is one of the loneliest and most difficult parts of our faith journey. It’s a day of pain and sorrow, of fear and regrets, shadows and death—in truth, it is one of the hardest stories for us to hear and tell.

All: But we *will* tell it. We will hear it, and feel it, and share it all—the pain and sorrow, the fear and regret, the shadows and death. We will heart it and feel it and share it and tell it because it is God’s story and our story. For, even in the midst of pain and suffering, we dare to hope and dare to meet God.

One: So, let us open our hearts to meet the One who loves us, to the point of death, and beyond.

Opening Prayer

All: Gracious God of grief and of suffering, this Friday hardly seems “good”.

Be with us in these hours

as we gather in the shadow of the cross of Christ and hear again the story of death and the sounds of burial.

One: This is not where we would choose to be, O God, brought face to face with this symbol of death and instrument of torture.

All: Forgive us, where we have sought to avoid such times: where we have ignored the cross or denied our own pain, or turned our backs on the sufferings of others.

Strengthen us to be here today, that we may know that you are here with us.

One: You know the ways of the world, O God:

you have been there; you are here;
you have loved and cried
and lived and died

to be with us, to comfort us,
to forgive us and to free us.

All: For this we give thanks.

This we call “good.”

Amen.

Hymn: Good Enough

What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?
Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays, mistakes we made?
Sometimes we get what we get,
life disappoints us and yet,
God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

Tenebrae Liturgy:

One: Last night in our Maundy Thursday service, we gathered with Jesus in the Upper Room. There is only one other place in the Gospels where the Greek word used to describe the Upper Room was also repeated—the place where there was no room for Jesus to be born. In the Christian tradition, we remember the two places where the dark birthed something new... the dark womb and the dark tomb. Today, we continue the story that began last night in a tradition of “tenebrae” or “darkness,” descending with

Jesus into the depths of our own stories of grief, disappointment, and betrayal, beginning in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Reader: Luke 22: 47-53 read by Heather Farrell

[The first candle is extinguished]

Reader: Luke 22: 54-62 read by Heather Farrell

[The second candle is extinguished]

Ministry of Music: VU 132 Bitter Was the Night

Reader: Luke 22: 63-65 read by Betty Ferguson

[The third candle is extinguished]

Reader: Luke 22:66-23:7 read by Betty Ferguson

[The fourth candle is extinguished]

Prayer of Confession:

One: Let us turn to God and confess our part in this story of denial, betrayal, fear, and death. Let us come to God. Let us come clean. Let us join our hearts together in our prayer of confession:

All: Merciful God, we are no better than the disciples who have come before us—we deny you when we turn our backs on those of us who suffer, saying “it’s not our problem”. We betray you when we let our fear and greed control us, clinging to outcomes that are only in our own best interests.

Keep us near the cross this day, God. Open our eyes to the discomfort of other’s fear and pain, and open our hearts to live your ways courageously, and graciously. This we pray in the name of your crucified Son. Amen.

Reader: Luke 23: 8-12 read by Jean Collier

[The fifth candle is extinguished]

Reader: Luke 23: 13-25 read by Jean Collier

[The sixth candle is extinguished]

Ministry of Music: VU 143 My Song is Love Unknown

Reader: Luke 23: 26-31 read by Pat Galbraith

[The seventh candle is extinguished]

Reader: Luke 23: 32-38 read by Pat Galbraith

Hymn: VU 144 Were You There

[The eighth candle is extinguished]

Reader: Luke 23: 39-43 read by Gardia Voerman

[The ninth candle is extinguished]

Hymn: VU 148 Jesus, Remember Me

Reader: Luke 23: 44-46 read by Gardia Voerman

[The tenth candle is extinguished]

Reader: Luke 23: 47-49 read by Pat Nursey

[The eleventh candle is extinguished.]

[The Christ candle is moved to “The Garden” scene during the next reading]

Reader: Luke 23: 50-56 read by Pat Nursey

[The Christ candle is extinguished]

Wrapped in Cloths of Care

Leader: [from the Garden, addressing the congregation] And so we find ourselves in another garden, a place of burial. In this time of silent prayer, I invite you to hold the cloth that you were given at the beginning of the service, and bring to mind the name of a person or place in this world or a time in your life that you mourn this day. As you bring to mind these people or places or moments in time, hold them lovingly in prayer. And then, when you are ready, I would invite you to come forward, and wrap your band of cloth around our Christ candle as Christ's body would have been wrapped for burial. In this way, let us acknowledge our grief, and also trust that God is buried with us in our deepest pain, wrapping us, holding us until we can move through the pain into renewed life again. After the music and blessing, you are invited to leave in silence.

Hymn: VU 135 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

A Blessing for When You Mourn What Could Have Been

Blessed are you, friend, sitting among the shards of what could have been. It is broken now, that dream you loved, and it has spilled out all over the ground. Blessed are you, dear one, letting your eyes look around and remember all the hope your dream once contained. All the love. All the beauty. Blessed are you, telling your tears they can flow. Telling your anger it can speak. Blessed are you when mourning is the holy work of the moment, for it speaks of what is real. Blessed are you, letting this loss speak all its terrible truth to your soul.

Blessed are we who mourn, saying let us remain in grief's cold winter for as long as it takes, that mourning might be to our hearts the gentlest springtime. Let the thaw come slowly, so we can bear the pain of it and find comfort at each release. Amen.

The service is over. Stay as long as you wish and leave in silence when you are ready.

**OUR MISSION
TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE
BY LIVING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS:
showing mercy,
promoting justice,
offering forgiveness,
acceptance, and hope.**

Our Vision...

We, the congregation of Knox United Church, publicly proclaim our commitment to become an open and welcoming community of faith. We declare that we welcome everyone regardless of age, race, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Everyone is welcome here.

Through the process of honouring diversity and challenging injustice with those who bear the weight of discrimination, we commit ourselves to openness, growth, education, love, and acceptance.

Christ's Disciples in Ministry: Everyone
Minister of Worship, Outreach and Faith Formation: Rev. Penny Nelson
Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Kym Burke

Minister of Music & Dramatic Arts: John Lindsay-Botten
Church School Superintendent: Lynne Stewart
Youth Group: James O'Connell
Pastoral Care: Olive McIlldoon & Judy Hayes

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