



*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of The United Church of Christ*



**Order of Worship for
April 17, 2023 6:30pm
Maundy Thursday**

**Welcome to Worship at Center Church!
We are delighted that you are with us today.**

ORDER OF SERVICE – MAUNDY THURSDAY
A Service of Communion and Tenebrae

A SIMPLE MEAL

WELCOME

GATHERING MUSIC: *The Servant Song*

*Won't you let me be your servant,
Let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.*

*We are pilgrims on a journey,
We are travelers on the road;
We are here to help each other
Go the mile and bear the load.*

1. Luke 18:31-34 - *Jesus Foretells the Passion*

CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

One: We have come to worship the Trinity.

**All: One God, three persons,
Beyond our understanding
Yet constantly revealing themselves to us.**
We have come to worship an infinite being
Who took on finite flesh: fully human and fully divine –
A being who is love itself,
Yet loathes injustice;
Who is almighty,
**Yet let go of power
to be in solidarity with outcasts and criminals.**
We gather to worship the living God
who died.

2. Poem *Power Like a Seed*
by Rev. Sarah Speed

In a world that wants power like a machine gun,
power like a bomber plane,
power like a gated fence to keep the hungry out,
I want power like a seed –
power that will crack me open and grow
 something good;
power like an open door,
an invitation that says, “Come on in;”
power that feels like a strong spine with a soft heart.
I want the power to listen, to lean in, to ask follow-
up questions.
But more than anything, I want the power to bring
us together, to lift you up.

There are different kinds of power.
One will build a wall.
One will plant a garden.
We should know by now, only one will bear fruit.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Dr. Eric J. Hearst

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

**Co-creating and co-suffering God,
We know we are taught to count on your steadfast presence
But we confess we doubt and demand answers instead.
We know we should share in one another’s pain,
But we confess that we too often turn away from it,
 as if we do not have the same pain.
We know you ask us to take up the cross and follow Jesus,
But we confess too often we refuse the call,
 reluctant to leave our worldly comfort and loathe to be transformed.
We know you call us to a life of service, loving you and loving our neighbor,
But we confess too often we love ourselves first, you second, and our neighbors last.
Fix our hearts, God; fix our minds. Fix us on you. In Jesus’s name, we pray. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON Rev. Dr. Eric J. Hearst

All: Through Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen savior, we pray, Amen.

HYMN: *The Servant Song*

*I will weep when you are weeping;
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
'Til we've seen this journey through.*

*When we sing to God in Heaven
We shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.*

3. John 11: 47-53 "*The Conspiracy and a Scapegoat*"

HYMN: *Ah, Holy Jesus* v. 1

*Ah, Holy Jesus, how has thou offended,
That we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted!*

4. Matthew 26: 14-16 "*The Darkness of Betrayal*"

HYMN: *Ah, Holy Jesus* v. 2

*Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, has undone thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee;
I crucified thee.*

5. Matthew 14: 22-25 "*The New Covenant*"

HYMN: *Go to Dark Gethsemane*, v. 1

*Go to dark Gethsemane,
All who feel the tempter's pow'r;
Your Redeemer's conflict see;
Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away;
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.*

COMMUNION SERVICE

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Rev. Dr. Eric J. Hearst

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

We will pass the elements around the table; please allow your neighbor to serve you and serve your neighbor in turn. You may bless one another by saying, "The Body of Christ, broken for you," and "The Cup of the New Covenant, poured out for you."

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**As Jesus nourishes us with his very body,
We become the Body of Christ.
May this feast fuel us for the work
Of joining others in their in-betweens.
Together, as one body, we pray, Our Father...**

6. Poem *Thursday*
by Hannah Faith Notes

Hands harvested the grapes, and feet crushed
them in the winepress. Hands held
the vessel under the dark stream
till the vessel ran over, sealed up the wine
and carried it down to the cellar.

Hands shaped the water basin on the wheel,
Set it to dry. Hands worked the loom that wove
the towel now folded under the basin.
Fingers held the needle that, hemming
the towel's edge, drew a drop of blood.

Hands kneaded the unleavened dough,
worked in more flour, stoked the oven coals.
Hands shaped the loaves and baked them,
then set the bread to cool.

Hands picked and washed the bitter herbs.
Hands laid the table, lit the lamps.

And when supper ends and hands raise up
the cup, the men will remember (though
nobody will say), the hands that drew the knife
across the lamb's throat and held its limbs
while the last twitch of muscle ebbed away.

HYMN: *What Wondrous Love Is This* v. 1, 2

*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 caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!*

*When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.*

7. Mark 14:32-36 - *A Lonesome Vigil*

HYMN: *Stay with Me* (Taize)

*Stay with me, remain here with me;
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

8. Poem *Gethsemane*
 by Mary Oliver

The grass never sleeps.
Or the roses.
Nor does the lily have a secret eye that shuts until morning.
Jesus said, wait with me. But the disciples slept.
The cricket has such splendid fringe on its feet,
and it sings, have you noticed, with its whole body,
and heaven knows it ever sleeps.
Jesus said, wait with me. And maybe the stars did, maybe the wind
wound itself into the silver tree, and didn't move,
maybe the lake far away, where once he walked as on a
blue pavement, lay still and waited, wild awake.
Oh, the dear bodies, slumped and eye-shut, that could not
keep that vigil, how they must have wept,
so utterly human, knowing this too
must be a part of the story.

HYMN: *Are Ye Able* v. 1

***"Are ye able," said the Master, "To be crucified with me?"
"Yea," the sturdy dreamers answered, "To the death we follow Thee."
Lord, we are able! Our spirits are Thine.
Remold them, make us, like Thee, divine.
Thy guiding radiance above us shall be a beacon to God,
To love, and loyalty.***

9. Lamentations 1: 12, 16, 22 *Suffering and Shame*

HYMN: *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* v. 1

***O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded with thorns, your only crown.
How pale you are with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn!
How does your visage languish which once was bright as morn!***

10. Mark 14: 43-50 *Jesus is Arrested and Abandoned*

HYMN: *Were You There?*

***Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?***

11. John 19:30 *The Death of Jesus*

SILENCE

12. John 1: 4-5 *Life and Light*

SILENCE

13. Poem *Christ Has No Body*
by Theresa of Avila

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

DEPART IN SILENCE

Thank you to everyone who prepared the meal and participated in tonight's service.

*Please join us tomorrow, Good Friday, for an ecumenical
procession through Downtown Hartford, starting at Christ Church Cathedral at noon.*

*We hope you will join us in celebrating the resurrection
at our festive worship service on Easter morning, Sunday, at 10:30 am.*