



Wednesday in Holy Week

Prayers for the Evening and Tenebrae

April 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

York, PA

You will have the opportunity to light three candles and extinguish two during the service as a visible reminder that Christ overcomes the darkness through his Resurrection.

THE GATHERING

We gather "in darkness". The officiant begins the service by saying

Officiant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

People His mercy endures forever.

The officiant continues by reading the following passage of scripture.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night," darkness is not dark to you, O Lord; the night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to you are both alike. *Psalm 139:10-11*

Officiant Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful God, kindle within us the fire of love, that by its cleansing flame we may be purged of all our sins and made worthy to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

You are now invited to light the three candles. After the lighting of the candles, the following is said in unison

O GRACIOUS LIGHT *Phos hilaron*

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,

we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

The officiant continues by saying

God is my helper;
People it is the Lord who sustains my life.

Psalm 54 *is now said in unison*

- 1 Save me, O God, by your Name; *
in your might, defend my cause.
- 2 Hear my prayer, O God; *
give ear to the words of my mouth.
- 3 For the arrogant have risen up against me,
and the ruthless have sought my life, *
those who have no regard for God.
- 4 Behold, God is my helper; *
it is the Lord who sustains my life.
- 5 Render evil to those who spy on me; *
in your faithfulness, destroy them.
- 6 I will offer you a freewill sacrifice *
and praise your Name, O LORD, for it
is good.
- 7 For you have rescued me from every
trouble, *
and my eye has seen the ruin of my
foes.

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews. [4:15--5:10; 9:11-15a]

We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people.

And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also, Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, this day have I begotten you;" as he says also in another place, "You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and, being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that are to come, then, through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Therefore, he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

One candle is extinguished

Responsory

Officiant When the Lord was buried, they sealed the tomb,
People rolling a great stone to the door of the tomb; and they stationed
 soldiers to guard him.

Officiant The chief priests gathered before Pilate, and petitioned him:
People And they stationed soldiers to guard him.

Psalm 150 *is now said in unison*

- 1 Praise God in his holy temple; * praise him in the firmament of his power.
- 2 Praise him for his mighty acts; * praise him for his excellent greatness.
- 3 Praise him with the blast of the ram's-horn; * praise him with lyre and harp.
- 4 Praise him with timbrel and dance; * praise him with strings and pipe.
- 5 Praise him with resounding cymbals; * praise him with loud-clanging cymbals.
- 6 Let everything that has breath * praise the Lord.

Officiant O Death, I will be your death;
People O Grave, I will be your destruction.

Officiant My flesh also shall rest in hope:
People You will not let your holy One see corruption.

One more candle is extinguished

Christus factus est *is now said in unison*

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.

A brief silence is observed.

Officiant Let us pray.

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

One candle is left burning to remind us of the presence of Christ in the darkness of this world. We “exit” by the light of this candle. The service will conclude without additional comment of words from the officiant.

The name Tenebrae (the Latin word for “darkness” or “shadows”) has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of Holy Week, which in medieval times came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings. We are celebrating an adapted form this year to fit our needs.