



**Good Friday**  
**April 18, 2025**  
Tenebrae Worship



**UNITED PARISH IN BROOKLINE**

American Baptist | United Church of Christ | United Methodist

**Good Friday  
Tenebrae Worship  
Sanctuary, 7:00pm**

Liturgy adapted from Avery Arden, from A Sanctified Art LLC, sanctifiedart.org

**The Seven Last Words of Christ in Contemporary Images**

*The original Good Friday was a day of injustice, brokenness, and terror.*

*As Jesus hung dying on the cross, he cried out for love and forgiveness.*

*We offer these images as a way to reflect on the seven last words of Jesus and how these words reverberate in the injustice, brokenness, and terror throughout the world today.*

*We invite you to reflect on them in your own time and pace, during this worship and afterwards, as we head toward Easter morning and the resurrection of love and forgiveness.*

**INTROIT**

*El Malei Rachamim  
Hebrew Chant*

*O God, full of compassion, Thou dwellest on high!  
Beneath the sheltering wings of Thy presence,  
among the holy and pure who shine as the brightness of the firmament,  
grant perfect rest unto the souls of our dear ones who have gone unto eternity.  
Lord of mercy, bring them under the cover of Thy wings,  
and let their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal life.  
Be Thou their portion, and may they rest in peace. Amen.*

**WELCOME**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *unison*

God of the night, God of the day,  
we come here to the cross,  
to watch, to witness, to hold vigil,  
remembering the hard road you traveled,  
the indignities you suffered.

We come with all that we are,  
all that we hope to be,  
remembering all that you did walking this Earth.

We come here, often feeling helpless, overwhelmed by the pain you bore,  
the pain we see in the world around us.

See us for who we are,  
wanting to do the right thing,  
wavering in our courage,  
clinging to our hope.

Forgive us when we fall short,  
when we lose heart,  
when we lag in conviction,  
when we want to do right, and end up doing wrong.

Meet us in our imperfections, gracious God,  
that your execution on the cross was not in vain.

Sound a tender chord in us,  
that we will leave this night heartened, emboldened, and encouraged  
to carry your Love into the world,  
to resist the powers that crush our humanity.

This we pray, with humble hearts...

SILENT CONFESSION

HYMN

*Journey to Gethsemane*  
verses 1-2

New Century Hymnal #219  
TUNE: REDHEAD NO. 76

*Journey to Gethsemane, go and feel the tempter's power;  
Your Redeemer's conflict see, watch the anguish of this hour;  
Do not hide or turn away: learn from Jesus how to pray.*

*Follow then to Pilate's hall, view the Lord of life arraigned;  
Crowned with thorns and mocked by all, faithfully this pain sustained;  
Greater still than shame or loss, Jesus now must face the cross.*

## THE FIRST WORD

“Father, forgive them;  
for they do not know what they are doing.”

Luke 23:34



A group of protestors carrying torches march through the campus of the University of Virginia, some chanting, “Jews will not replace us,” in 2017. ([PBS News](#))

In 2017, a “Unite the Right” rally was held in Charlottesville, Virginia. In 2023, a grand jury in Virginia indicted multiple people on felony charges for carrying flaming torches with the intent to intimidate. 32 year-old Heather Hayer was struck by a car and killed.

## READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[Luke 23:26-34](#)

## REFLECTION

Simon of Cyrene

## HYMN

*What Wondrous Love is This*  
Anonymous Folk Hymn

All Sing

*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 Christ should come in bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.*



THE SECOND WORD      “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”  
Luke 23:43



*Venezuelan men with shackled ankles are marched into maximum-security the Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT) in El Salvador by hooded prison guards. ([Reuters](#))*

In March 2025, President Trump gave orders to deport more than 200 Venezuelans to maximum security prison CECOT in El Salvador, despite a federal court order not to do so. CECOT is widely known for its human rights abuses. While the US executive branch alleges that all deported Venezuelans are gangmembers of “Tren de Agua,” government documents reveal that [as many as 75% of the people deported](#) have no criminal record.

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[Luke 23:39-43](#)

REFLECTION

A Criminal on the Cross

MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Steal Away*  
*Negro Spiritual*

*Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus!*  
*Steal away, steal away home, I ain't got long to stay here.*

## THE THIRD WORD

“Woman, here is your son.”  
Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”  
John 19:26-27



*At the funeral of Yuriy Sikyrynsky, his 78-year-old mother, Uliana, is supported by a service member in Lviv, Ukraine.*  
([Marcus Yam / Los Angeles Times](#))

February 2025 marked three years since Russia invaded Ukraine. In renewed violence, Russia launched a ballistic missile attack in Sumy, Ukraine on Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025. At least 34 people were killed, and many more were injured.

## READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[John 19:24-27](#)

## POEM

Maria Sacerdota  
by the Reverend Doctor Renee Bozart Allan

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Don't You Weep When I'm Gone*  
Negro Spiritual

When I'm gone, gone.  
When I'm gone, gone, gone.  
Oh mother, don't you weep  
when I am gone.

For I'm goin' to heaven above,  
going to the God of love.  
Oh mother, don't you weep  
when I am gone.

Oh, mother meet me there,  
mother, meet me in the air,  
Oh mother, don't you weep  
when I am gone.



## THE FOURTH WORD

“Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”  
that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”  
Matthew 27:46



People scrambling out of a damaged building in Mandalay, following the Myanmar earthquake on March 28.  
([AFP/Getty Images](#))

As of April 12, the independent media outlet DVB recorded 3,848 dead. The actual death toll could reach double these figures.

## READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[Matthew 27:35-46, 54](#)

## REFLECTION

A Centurion Remembers

## HYMN

*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*  
verses 1-2

New Century Hymnal #224  
TUNE: HAMBURG

*When I survey the wondrous cross,  
On which the Christ of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it then, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ, my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most  
I sacrifice them to Christ's blood.*

## THE FIFTH WORD

"I am thirsty."

John 19:28-29



Volunteers carry water for evacuees from the Eaton Fire at a donation center in Santa Anita Park, Arcadia, California, on Monday. ([Etienne Laurent/AFP/Getty Images](#))

In January 2025, wildfires raged across the state of California, devastating several communities. After burning for 24 days, both fires were fully contained on January 31, with over 37,000 acres burned and more than 16,000 structures destroyed. Rebuilding efforts continue to be ongoing.

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[John 19:28-29](#)

POEM

from [Seven Last Words](#)  
by Mark Strand

SILENCE



## THE SIXTH WORD

"It is finished."

John 19:30



Image shows a cross designed for the death penalty by lethal injection. ([Paul Buck/ AFP](#)) According to CNN in February 2025, the US government and US military have [3 people awaiting execution](#). Twenty-five people were executed in the US in 2024. As of January 1, 2025, [there were 2,092 people](#) on death row.

## READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[John 19:30](#)

## POEM

[A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim](#)

by Walt Whitman

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Elegy*

by Daniel Elder, based on "Taps"

*Day is done  
Gone the sun  
From the lakes  
From the hills  
From the sky*

*All is well  
Safely rest  
God is nigh*

*Fading light  
Dims the sight  
And a star gems the sky  
Gleaming bright  
From afar, drawing nigh  
Falls the night*

*Thanks and praise  
For our days*

*'Neath the sun  
'Neath the stars  
'Neath the sky*

*As we go  
This we know  
God is nigh  
Nigh*

## THE SEVENTH WORD

“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.”

Luke 23:46



*Palestinian journalists pray over the bodies of colleagues Sari Mansour and Hassouna Eslim, who were killed in an Israeli raid at the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza in November. ([Samar Abu Elouf](#))*

Since the Hamas-led attack on October 7, 2023, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed. Hamas abducted 251 people, and still holds 59 people hostage. Israel estimates that 35 of the hostages are likely dead. More than 50,000 Palestinians have been killed. On Monday, April 14th, six brothers were killed by Israeli airstrike while delivering food in Gaza. The youngest child was ten years old.

## READING FROM THE GOSPELS

[Luke 23:44-46](#)

## SILENCE

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Silent Night, Holy Night*  
by Franz Gruber

*Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.*



## TOLLING OF THE BELL

*33 times for each of year of Jesus' earthly life*

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?*

Negro Spiritual

## DISMISSAL

*All worshipers depart in silence.*

*We invite you to take the poem "Holy Saturday" by Avery Arden with you as you leave.*

### **Negro Spiritual Royalties Project**

We acknowledge that the Negro Spirituals used in tonight's worship are the intellectual property of enslaved people in America. We affirm their artistic and spiritual worth, and pledge that each time we sing them here at United Parish in Brookline, we will sing them with holy reverence and open hearts; we will honor the unnamed and unrecognized enslaved musicians who created them; and we will pay royalties for them with a combination of budgeted funds and the plate offering.

*Excerpt from "O Black and Unknown Bards" by James Weldon Johnson:*

*O black and unknown bards of long ago,  
How came your lips to touch the sacred fire?  
How, in your darkness, did you come to know  
The power and beauty of the minstrel's lyre?  
Who first from midst his bonds lifted his eyes?  
Who first from out the still watch, lone and long,  
Feeling the ancient faith of prophets rise  
Within his dark-kept soul, burst into song?*

*You sang not deeds of heroes or of kings;  
No chant of bloody war, no exulting pean  
Of arms-won triumphs; but your humble strings  
You touched in chord with music empyrean.  
You sang far better than you knew; the songs  
That for your listeners' hungry hearts sufficed  
Still live,—but more than this to you belongs:  
You sang a race from wood and stone to Christ.*

We invite you to join us for the Resurrection on Easter Sunday:

*Saturday, April 19*

Easter Egg Hunt - 9am-11am in Memorial Park

*Sunday, April 20*

Easter Children's Church - 9:30-10:00am in the Sanctuary

Easter Potluck Brunch - 9:30am-11:00am in Willett Hall

Prelude - 10:45am in the Sanctuary and on YouTube

Festival Worship - 11:00am in the Sanctuary and on YouTube

# WELCOME

We at the United Parish in Brookline believe that all people are made in the image of God and embrace and cherish every person and every kind of family. Jesus Christ welcomed everyone; we seek to follow his example in our own life and worship, by extending God's love and grace abundantly and equally to everyone. We affirm and welcome all people to share in worship, fellowship and leadership with us, to join us in a diversity of race, gender, sexual identity, physical and mental ability, ethnicity and economic means.

We have joined with other Open and Affirming (United Church of Christ) and Welcoming and Affirming (American Baptist Churches USA), as well as with the Reconciling Ministries Network (United Methodist Churches) to declare that we are and will remain open to all people.

We invite you to consider becoming a member of the United Parish family. You may become a member by transferring membership or by a statement of faith. If you desire to retain ties with a former church, we invite you to become an associate or affiliate member for the time you are with us.

*We ask that you silence all electronic devices.  
Please see an usher if you would like a hearing assistive device.  
Because our building is open to the public,  
an adult should accompany children if/when they leave the worship service.*

Ministers  
Senior Pastor  
Associate Pastor  
Seminarian  
Minister of Music  
Choir Section Leader  
Choir Section Leader  
Choir Section Leader  
Choir Section Leader  
Handbell Choir Director  
Multimedia Producer  
Parish Administrator  
Accounting Administrator  
Building Manager  
Head Custodian  
Custodian  
Custodian  
Nursery Supervisor  
Nursery Staff  
Nursery Staff  
Nursery Staff  
Nursery Staff  
Pastor Emerita

The People of the United Parish  
Reverend Kent French  
Reverend Amy Norton-Benfield  
Anna Jeide-Detweiler  
Susan DeSelms  
Ruby Abreu  
Michéle Crowder  
Joseph Timmons  
Valentine Umeh  
Tricia Kopko  
Jordan Wuth  
Sarah Fitzpatrick  
Jim Smith  
Rebekah Shore  
Violet Nowlan  
Emery Bibbins  
Jesse Kieffer  
Katy Lum  
Melanie Caicedo  
Anne Florient  
Ione Madsen Hardy  
Emma Nelson  
Patricia Coughlin



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