

First Congregational United Church of Christ

April 17, 2025

Full
to the Brim } *Take off
your
shoes*

Threshold by Rev. T. Denise Anderson
Inspired by John 13:1-17, 31b-35; Oil on wood panel



The hardest time of a loved one's transition, in my opinion, are the moments right before it happens, when the family gathers to say goodbye and usher them into Life Eternal. It may be difficult or impossible to remember a time when they weren't in your life. How will you go on without them? You don't know what's on the other side of this journey, which makes the moment particularly unsettling.

When I visited the Holy Land, I found myself regularly taking off my shoes and stepping into whatever body of water was there. For me, there is a liminality to standing with my feet submerged, not far from dry ground. Whether a boat ride or baptism, you're going somewhere you've never been when you decide to take that step.

The disciples have no idea where their own journey will take them. Peter is at first reluctant to even dip his toes into the water—into the liminality. But they're assured they'll be with Jesus on the other side.

I used a photo of my own feet as I stood on the banks of the Sea of Galilee as a reference for this painting. Unknown to me at the time, the Golan Heights were about to be bombed later that day.¹ But at that time, the water calmly danced over my ankles, making its own art as it bent and reflected light around them. I've signed the piece in such a way that invites you to turn it any number of orientations. What changes for you when the feet are facing downward, upward, or sideways? I invite you to embrace that disorientation, if only for a moment, and try to find your footing. - Rev. T. Denise Anderson

¹In May, 2018, Iranian forces in Syria fired rockets into the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights. To learn more about the event and the conflict that led to it, read: "Iran Fires Rockets Into Golan Heights From Syria, Israelis Say" by Isabel Kershner. The New York Times. May 9, 2018. [nytimes.com/2018/05/09/world/middleeast/israel-iran-attack.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/09/world/middleeast/israel-iran-attack.html)

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

April 17, 2025 7:00PM

Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service

PRELUDE

Lamb of God

Music by Twila Paris

Setting by Brenda Portman (b. 1980)

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *piano*

WELCOME

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We are gathered to recall the night in which Jesus Christ was betrayed. Are you prepared to come to the table of Jesus Christ, whose life was poured out for you?

All: By the grace of God, we are.

One: Are you able to watch with Jesus at prayer in the garden, indeed to struggle yourselves to be in unity with God's will?

All: By the grace of God, we are.

One: Will you follow Jesus even into the night of betrayal?

All: By the grace of God, we will.

One: Then let us praise God, even in this hour of darkness!

All: God of all grace and steadfast love, greatly is your name to be praised in all the earth!

*HYMN

All Praise to Thee, My God

TALLIS' CANON

St. 1

**All praise to thee, my God, this night,
for all the blessings of the light!
Keep me, Creator of all things,
beneath the shelter of thy wings!**

INVOCATION

PROCESSION OF THE LIGHT

God So Loved the World (John 3:16-17)

Peter Stopford (b. 1977)

LU Music Scholars

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: For every time you asked us to stay with you, and we wandered away, forgive us. For every time we boasted of our loyalty, yet betrayed or denied you, forgive us. For every time we meet your faithfulness, with faithlessness, forgive us. God, your love for us is unfathomably deep, that you would take all our failures, and still love us as friends. May we take the gift of your forgiveness, and share it with the world, that you made and loved so much. Amen.

Silence is kept.

HYMN

All Praise to Thee, My God
St. 2

TALLIS' CANON

**Forgive me, Lord, for thy dear Son,
the ill that I this day have done,
that with the world, myself, and thee,
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Friends, the story we will tell tonight is a story of the deepest love; love that would offer forgiveness even to the traitor at its right hand. The bread is for us; the cup, for us; the cross, for us; we are forgiven, not easily, but the hard way.

All: We are forgiven, not cheaply, but wholly. We are forgiven, and we are freed. Praise be to God. Amen.

HYMN

All Praise to Thee, My God
St. 3, sung in canon with the choir

TALLIS' CANON

**O may my soul on thee repose,
and with sweet sleep mine eyelids close,
sleep that may me more vigorous make
to serve my God when I awake.**

ORDER FOR HOLY COMMUNION

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 22:14-20

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had

given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'

Silence is kept.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

Ave verum Corpus

W. A. Mozart (1756-91)

Sanctuary Choir

*Hail, true body, born of the Virgin Mary,
Who has truly suffered, was sacrificed on the cross for mortals,
Whose side was pierced, whence flowed water and blood:
Be for us a foretaste (of heaven) during our final examining.*

#195 *Eat This Bread* (sung multiple times by all)

BERTHIER

**Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.**

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Merciful God, let this holy meal give us strength to walk in the way of love and justice. Amen.

SHADOW OF GETHSEMANE Luke 22:39-46

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.' Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' [[Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.]] When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.'

HYMN #193

Go to Dark Gethsemane
St. 1

REDHEAD No. 76

SHADOW OF ARREST Luke 22:47-53

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, 'Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?' When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, 'Lord, should we strike with the sword?' Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!'

HYMN (see bulletin page 9)

Jesus, I Will Ponder Now
St. 1 - Choir, St. 4 - All

JESU KREUZ

SHADOW OF DENIAL Luke 22:54-62

Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, 'This man also was with him.' But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know him.' A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' Then about an hour later yet another kept insisting, 'Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.' But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about!' At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

HYMN #191

Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley
St. 1

LONESOME VALLEY

SHADOW OF TRIAL Luke 22:63 - 23:12

Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?' They kept heaping many other insults on him.

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. They said, 'If you are the Messiah, tell us.' He replied, 'If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I

question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.' All of them asked, 'Are you, then, the Son of God?' He said to them, 'You say that I am.' Then they said, 'What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!'

Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.' Then Pilate asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' He answered, 'You say so.' Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, 'I find no basis for an accusation against this man.' But they were insistent and said, 'He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.'

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

ANTHEM

Ah, Holy Jesus

HERZLIEBSTER JESU

arr. John Ferguson (1941-2025)

Sanctuary Choir

Matthew Michelic, *viola*

SHADOW OF CONDEMNATION Luke 23:13-25

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, 'You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.'

Then they all shouted out together, 'Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!' (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, 'Crucify, crucify him!' A third time he said to them, 'Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.' But they kept

urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

ANTHEM

Alas, My Savior Died

David H. Williams (1919-2002)

Text by Isaac Watts, 1707

SHADOW OF THE CROSS Luke 23:26-31

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'

*HYMN #187

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

PASSION CHORALE

SHADOW OF CRUCIFIXION Luke 23:32-43

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

HYMN #198

Jesus, Remember Me

REMEMBER ME

Repeated several times by all

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

SHADOW OF DEATH Luke 23:44-49

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.' And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Silence is kept.

HYMN #200

Were You There?

WERE YOU THERE

St. 1 - Solo, St. 2 & 3 - All

BENEDICTION

Please exit the Sanctuary in silence.

If you have brought an offering, please place it in the baskets as you leave. Thank you!

THANK YOU TO TONIGHT'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Katherine Willis Pershey, *Co-Pastor*

Pastor Nicholas J. Hatch, *Co-Pastor*

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *Organist*

Sanctuary Choir

Kris Glenn, *soprano*

Lawrence University Music Scholars

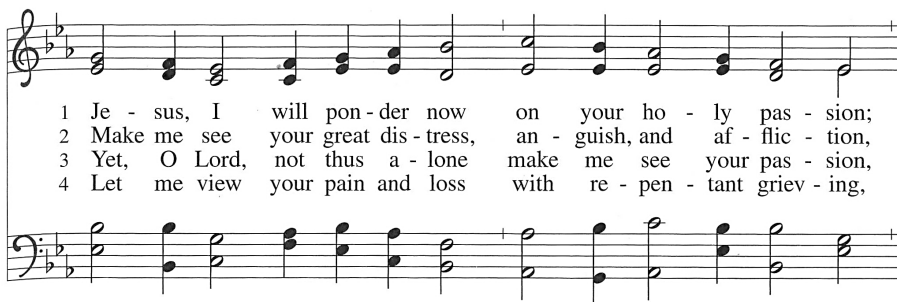
Matthew Michelic, *viola*

John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

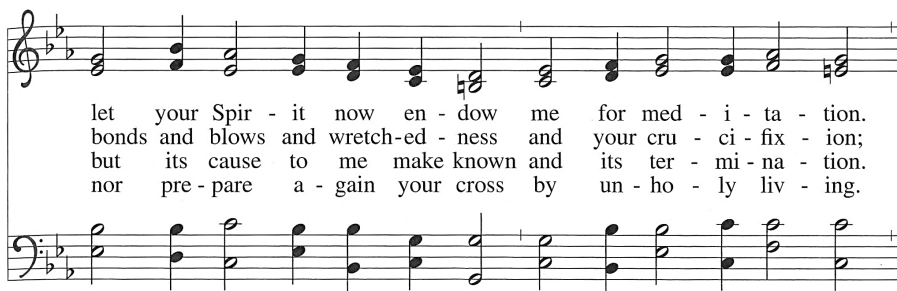
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Jesus, I Will Ponder Now



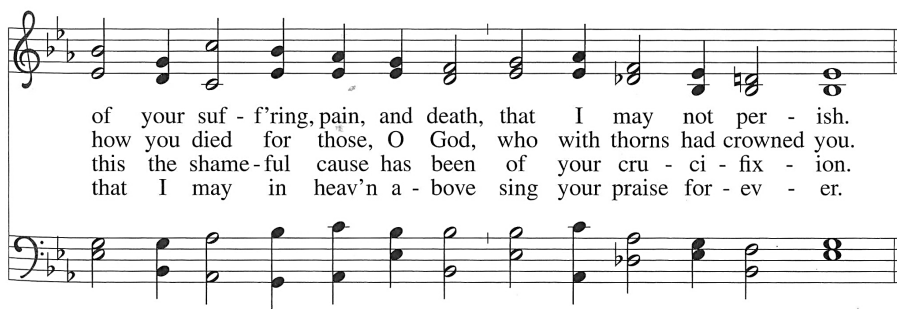
1 Je - sus, I will pon - der now on your ho - ly pas - sion;
 2 Make me see your great dis - tress, an - guish, and af - flic - tion,
 3 Yet, O Lord, not thus a - lone make me see your pas - sion,
 4 Let me view your pain and loss with re - pen - tant griev - ing,



let your Spir - it now en - dow me for med - i - ta - tion.
 bonds and blows and wretch - ed - ness and your cru - ci - fix - ion;
 but its cause to me make known and its ter - mi - na - tion.
 nor pre - pare a - gain your cross by un - ho - ly liv - ing.



Grant that I in love and faith may the im - age cher - ish
 make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails, did wound you,
 For I al - so and my sin wrought your deep af - flic - tion;
 May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Sav - ior,



of your suf - f'ring, pain, and death, that I may not per - ish.
 how you died for those, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.
 this the shame - ful cause has been of your cru - ci - fix - ion.
 that I may in heav'n a - bove sing your praise for - ev - er.

Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.

Our door is open to you at whatever point you are in your journey of faith.

Baptisms are held on the third Sunday of each month. To schedule a baptism, contact the church office six weeks before your desired baptism date.

Childcare is available for ALL infants and toddlers every Sunday. Kindergarten and first graders may enjoy a communion mini-lesson on the 1st Sunday of the month and may go to childcare the 2nd-5th Sundays of each month. Please see an usher for directions to the Childcare Room.

Communion: The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. Communion elements are gluten and alcohol free. All are welcome to join us!

Flowers: Today's flowers were arranged by Cindi Ritcey Fox.

Hearing Loop: Need help hearing our service? Ask an usher. They can help get you in the loop!



Online Streaming and Podcasting are available on Facebook: FCUCCAppleton or Youtube: First Congregational UCC Appleton.

Open Door Announcements can be shared by emailing opendoor@uccappleton.org or calling the office.

References to God in our worship may at times be gender specific. You are invited to substitute terms that reflect your understanding of the inclusiveness of God.

Sunday School: Our PreK - 5th graders begin in worship. After the children's message, they walk together to the CYF wing for our Children's Ministry Program. Kindergarten - fifth graders may enjoy a communion mini-lesson on the 1st Sunday of the month. Children begin in worship, leave with the director, and return to partake in communion with their families. Youth gather on Wednesday evenings.

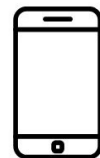
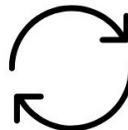
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Giving envelopes and checks can be dropped in the offering plate or mailed to the church



Visit our website at uccappleton.org and click "Give Now" for a one time gift or to sign up for automatic giving



Text FCUCC GIVE to 73256

*Messages and data rates may apply.
Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256
for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.



Holy Week Schedule

In observance of Good Friday,
the First Congregational UCC
church office will be open
from 9:00AM-1:00PM.

GOOD FRIDAY ECUMENICAL SERVICE ~ April 18 at 12:00PM

This service will be held at Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship,
2600 Philip Ln, Appleton, WI 54915.

A combined Ecumenical Choir will be offered.

EASTER SUNDAY ~ April 20 at 8:45AM and 10:30AM

These services will feature the Sanctuary Choir, LU Music Scholars,
LU Brass Quintet, organ and timpani, and a LU Scholar soloist.

Both Easter services will also be livestreamed.

Childcare will be available during the 8:45AM service.

Children should bring a basket or bag to take home goodies they'll
collect during our Massive Egg Hunt between services, at 9:45AM.

We are "The Church of the Open Door," a welcoming and inclusive Christian community.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.



—The Church of the Open Door—

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

724 E. South River Street | Appleton, WI 54915

920.733.7393 | uccappleton.org | info@uccappleton.org

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00AM–3:00PM

For pastoral emergencies: 920.810.2600