



**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
CANTON CENTER, CT**

**Service of Communion and Tenebrae
April 17, 2025 ~ 7:30 p.m.**

Maundy Thursday is also known as Holy Thursday, Covenant Thursday and Thursday of Mysteries. It commemorates the Last Supper with Jesus and His disciples. All four Gospels describe the Last Supper with specific reference to Jesus instituting a new covenant in regard to his body and blood as a living sacrifice for our sins. The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin Mandatum, meaning “commandment.” In John 15:12-14 we hear Jesus say to His disciples, *this is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.*

This evening's Maundy Thursday service observes two central events:

The Sacrament of Communion and The Service of Tenebrae

The Sacrament of Communion or The Lord's Supper commemorates the night where Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples. We will reenact this final meal with Communion where Jesus tells His disciples; *Do this in remembrance of Me* and establishes the foundation for Christian fellowship and love.

The Service of Tenebrae is a solemn ancient service during Holy Week. Tenebrae, an old Latin word means “darkness” or “shadows”. Following each scripture reading by our Deacons, a candle is extinguished as we continue with the passion story until the Christ Candle is extinguished. The growing darkness symbolizes the disciples' despair and abandonment of Jesus. Moments of complete darkness reflect his death and entombment. A final reading from scripture is read, relighting the Christ Candle symbolizing the hope of Easter morn, as we read from John 1:5, *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.*

~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

PRELUDE

Golgotha

Michael Larkin

CALL TO WORSHIP

On this night, you and I will share a special meal,
a place of remembrance and profound love.

We come to remember the night

Jesus shared His final meal with His disciples.

We come to hear the story of that night, the washing of feet,
a symbol of humble service and boundless grace and to reflect
on the new commandment, to love one another as Christ loved us.

**Let us open our hearts to the mystery of this night,
as we prepare to walk with Jesus towards the Calvary.**

We open our hearts, Lord, and prepare to follow.

HYMN

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

*O sacred head now wounded with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns thine only crown,
How pale Thou art with anguish with sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish which once was bright as morn!*

*What thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain;
Oh mine was the transgression but thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior 'Tis I deserve thy place;
Look on me with thy favor vouch safe to me thy grace.*

*What language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest Friend;
For this, thy dying sorrow thy pity without end?
Oh, make me thine forever and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to thee!*

***GATHERING PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER**

Holy and compassionate God, we gather this evening, mindful of the weight of this sacred night. We remember the meal shared, the feet washed, and the commandment given. As we enter into this time of remembrance, open our hearts to receive the depth of Your love and the call to humble service.

Grant us the grace to understand the sacrifice of Jesus and to follow His example of love. May the bread and the fruit of the vine remind us of His body given and His blood shed for us. In the quiet of this evening, speak to our souls, and draw us closer to You. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 13:1-17

Pew Bible pg. 876

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

{Intinction}



ANTHEM

Remember Me
Senior Choir



Deborah Govenor

THE SERVICE OF TENEBRAE

Matthew 26:17-30

First candle is extinguished

Matthew 26:31-46

Second candle is extinguished

Matthew 26:47-68

Third candle is extinguished

Matthew 26:69-75, 27:1-10

Fourth candle is extinguished

Matthew 27:11-23
Fifth candle is extinguished

Matthew 27:24-44
Sixth candle is extinguished

Matthew 27:45-50
Seventh candle is extinguished
(Christ candle is extinguished)
Matthew 27:51-54 Christ candle is relit

Hymn (First verse: Congregation; Second verse: Choir; Third verse: Jim Todd, solo)

Were You There?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

**REST IN GOD'S PEACE AS YOU RELEASE CONCERNS, DOUBTS,
AND FEARS TO AN ALL- LOVING GOD.**

DEPART IN SILENCE