



March 31, 2021

Tenebræ
Wednesday in Holy Week

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St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

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TENEBRÆ SINGERS

Celia Bridges, *Soprano* • Deborah Friauff, *Alto*
Jonathan Gardner, *Tenor* • Alan Gibson, *Bass*

THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF TENEBRÆ

Tenebræ is a Latin word signifying “darkness,” “shadows,” and “obscurity.” It is a word that pointedly calls our attention to the scriptural accounts of our Lord’s crucifixion: The name of this service is taken from the opening words of the fifth responsory: “*Tenebræ factæ sunt*” — “darkness came over the whole land.” (Mark 15:33; also, Matthew 27:45; Luke 23:44). The word *tenebræ* is, therefore, appropriate to both the time and the ceremonies of the office it identifies. According to a well-ordered liturgical design, *Tenebræ*’s structure works together with its content to evoke the somber mood which will not be dispelled until Holy Week concludes in the Great Vigil of Easter.

Structurally, *Tenebræ* is characterized by the progressive extinguishing of all lights in the church except one candle. At the liturgy’s end, after a moment of silence a loud noise is heard symbolizing the harrowing of hell, the ministers and people depart silently through the shadows cast by this solitary flame.

Complementing and intensifying this liturgical descent into gloom, *Tenebræ*’s content informs and gives substance to the feelings of apprehension stirred by the ebbing light. Taking its form from the early morning offices of Matins and Lauds from monastic practice, the appointed psalms, lessons and prayers of *Tenebræ* form a prolonged contemplation of the events of Jesus’ last days, beginning with the Last Supper and ending with his burial. Betrayal, abandonment, judgment, death: these were the terrors through which Jesus moved during his last days. And, in the end, these dreadful realities are only slightly relieved by the still-obscure hint of resurrection symbolized by the one remaining candle.

WHY INCLUDE TENEBRÆ IN HOLY WEEK?

St. Paul reminds us that we are “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ — if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him” (Romans 8:17). During Holy Week the suffering our Lord endured as he moved toward the cross is happening again liturgically. We need opportunities to share in our Lord’s affliction. After the exhilaration of the Palm Sunday procession, we need to experience Jesus’ week-long descent through humiliation and pain into the lonely shadows of death. Waiting for a thing to happen — whether it be good or bad — is often agonizing. Anticipation is suffering indeed. Nevertheless, we must do precisely that. We must wait. We cannot skip heedlessly from Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday or Good Friday and still grasp the full significance of Easter. Spiritually, we need Holy Week to be intentionally “holy.” We need it to be set apart. We need the week to be exhausting. Only so may we truly know the Easter truth we sing: “The strife is o’er, the battle done, the victory of life is won.”

- Fred C. Elwood

THE OFFICE OF TENEBRÆ

MATINS: THE FIRST NOCTURN

Psalm 69:1-23

Salvum me fac

(TONE III.4)

Save me, O God, *

for the waters have risen up to my neck.

I am sinking in deep mire, *

and there is no firm ground for my feet.

I have come into deep waters, *

and the torrent washes over me.

I have grown weary with my crying;

my throat is inflamed; *

my eyes have failed from looking for my God.

Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head;

my lying foes who would destroy me are mighty. *

Must I then give back what I never stole?

O God, you know my foolishness, *

and my faults are not hidden from you.

Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, LORD GOD of hosts; *

let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me, O God of Israel.

Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, *

and shame has covered my face.

I have become a stranger to my own kindred, *

an alien to my mother's children.

Zeal for your house has eaten me up; *

the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

I humbled myself with fasting, *

but that was turned to my reproach.

I put on sack-cloth also, *

and became a byword among them.

Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, *

and the drunkards make songs about me.

But as for me, this is my prayer to you, *

at the time you have set, O LORD:

“In your great mercy, O God, *

answer me with your unfailing help.

Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; *

let me be rescued from those who hate me

and out of the deep waters.

Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up; *
do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.

Answer me, O LORD, for your love is kind; *
in your great compassion, turn to me.’

“Hide not your face from your servant; *
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.

Draw near to me and redeem me; *
because of my enemies deliver me.

You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; *
my adversaries are all in your sight.”

Reproach has broken my heart, and it cannot be healed; *
I looked for sympathy, but there was none,
for comforters, but I could find no one.

They gave me gall to eat, *
and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

Psalm 70

Deus, in adiutorium

(TONE VIII.1)

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; *
O LORD, make haste to help me.

Let those who seek my life be ashamed
and altogether dismayed; *
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune
draw back and be disgraced.

Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me turn back, *
because they are ashamed.

Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; *
let those who love your salvation say for ever,
“Great is the LORD!”

But as for me, I am poor and needy; *
come to me speedily, O God.

You are my helper and my deliverer; *
O LORD, do not tarry.

O God, why have you utterly cast us off? *
why is your wrath so hot against the sheep of your pasture?
Remember your congregation that you purchased long ago, *
the tribe you redeemed to be your inheritance,
and Mount Zion where you dwell.
Turn your steps toward the endless ruins; *
the enemy has laid waste everything in your sanctuary.
Your adversaries roared in your holy place; *
they set up their banners as tokens of victory.
They were like men coming up with axes to a grove of trees; *
they broke down all your carved work with hatchets and hammers.
They set fire to your holy place; *
they defiled the dwelling-place of your Name
and razed it to the ground.
They said to themselves, "Let us destroy them altogether." *
They burned down all the meeting-places of God in the land.
There are no signs for us to see; there is no prophet left; *
there is not one among us who knows how long.
How long, O God, will the adversary scoff? *
will the enemy blaspheme your Name for ever?
Why do you draw back your hand? *
why is your right hand hidden in your bosom?
Yet God is my King from ancient times, *
victorious in the midst of the earth.
You divided the sea by your might *
and shattered the heads of the dragons upon the waters;
You crushed the heads of Leviathan *
and gave him to the people of the desert for food.
You split open spring and torrent; *
you dried up ever-flowing rivers.
Yours is the day, yours also the night; *
you established the moon and the sun.
You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; *
you made both summer and winter.
Remember, O LORD, how the enemy scoffed, *
how a foolish people despised your Name.
Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts; *
never forget the lives of your poor.

Look upon your covenant; *
the dark places of the earth are haunts of violence.
Let not the oppressed turn away ashamed; *
let the poor and needy praise your Name.
Arise, O God, maintain your cause; *
remember how fools revile you all day long.
Forget not the clamor of your adversaries, *
the unending tumult of those who rise up against you.

Versicle/Response

V: Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked.

R: From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

Lesson One: Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet (Jeremiah 1:1-5)

How lonely sits the city that once was full of people!
How like a widow she has become, she that was great among the nations!
She that was a princess among the provinces has become a vassal.

She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks;
among all her lovers she has no one to comfort her;
all her friends have dealt treacherously with her,
they have become her enemies.

Judah has gone into exile with suffering and hard servitude;
she lives now among the nations, and finds no resting-place;
her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress.

The roads to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the festivals;
all her gates are desolate, her priests groan;
her young girls grieve, and her lot is bitter.

Her foes have become the masters, her enemies prosper,
because the Lord has made her suffer for the multitude of her transgressions;
her children have gone away, captives before the foe.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Responsory One

setting by Healey Willan (1880-1968)

On the Mount of Olives he prayed to his Father: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. [Matthew 26]

Lesson Two: Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet (Jeremiah 1:6-9)

From daughter Zion has departed all her majesty.
Her princes have become like stags that find no pasture;
they fled without strength before the pursuer.

Jerusalem remembers, in the days of her affliction and wandering,
all the precious things that were hers in days of old.
When her people fell into the hand of the foe, and there was no one to help her,
the foe looked on mocking over her downfall.

Jerusalem sinned grievously, so she has become a mockery;
all who honoured her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness;
she herself groans, and turns her face away.

Her uncleanness was in her skirts; she took no thought of her future;
her downfall was appalling, with none to comfort her.
“O Lord, look at my affliction, for the enemy has triumphed!”
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Responsory Two

setting by Healey Willan

My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me: now shall ye see the multitude come about me: Ye shall flee and I go to be sacrificed for you: Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Ye shall flee and I go to be sacrificed for you. [Matthew 26]

Lesson Three: Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet (Jeremiah 1:10-14)

Enemies have stretched out their hands over all her precious things;
she has even seen the nations invade her sanctuary,
those whom you forbade to enter your congregation.

All her people groan as they search for bread;
they trade their treasures for food to revive their strength.
Look, O Lord, and see how worthless I have become.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?
Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow,
which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted
on the day of his fierce anger.

From on high he sent fire; it went deep into my bones;
he spread a net for my feet; he turned me back;
he has left me stunned, faint all day long.

My transgressions were bound into a yoke;
by his hand they were fastened together;
they weigh on my neck, sapping my strength;
the Lord handed me over to those whom I cannot withstand.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.

Responsory Three

setting by Healey Willan

Behold, we have seen him without form or comeliness: his form is gone from him: he hath borne our sins, and his sorrows are for us: he was wounded for our transgressions: and with his stripes we are healed. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. And with his stripes we are healed. [Isaiah 53]

LAUDS

Psalm 63

Deus, Deus meus

(TONE II.1)

O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; *
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.
Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, *
that I might behold your power and your glory.
For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; *
my lips shall give you praise.
So will I bless you as long as I live *
and lift up my hands in your Name.
My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, *
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,
When I remember you upon my bed, *
and meditate on you in the night watches.
For you have been my helper, *
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.
My soul clings to you; *
your right hand holds me fast.
May those who seek my life to destroy it *
go down into the depths of the earth;
Let them fall upon the edge of the sword, *
and let them be food for jackals.
But the king will rejoice in God;
all those who swear by him will be glad; *
for the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.

LORD, hear my prayer,
and in your faithfulness heed my supplications; *
answer me in your righteousness.

Enter not into judgment with your servant, *
for in your sight shall no one living be justified.

For my enemy has sought my life;
he has crushed me to the ground; *
he has made me live in dark places like those who are long dead.

My spirit faints within me; *
my heart within me is desolate.

I remember the time past;
I muse upon all your deeds; *
I consider the works of your hands.

I spread out my hands to you; *
my soul gasps to you like a thirsty land.

O LORD, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me; *
do not hide your face from me
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.

Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning,
for I put my trust in you; *
show me the road that I must walk,
for I lift up my soul to you.

Deliver me from my enemies, O LORD, *
for I flee to you for refuge.

Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God; *
let your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

Revive me, O LORD, for your Name's sake; *
for your righteousness' sake, bring me out of trouble.

Of your goodness, destroy my enemies
and bring all my foes to naught, *
for truly I am your servant.

Canticle: Isaiah 38:10-20 *Song of Hezekiah*

(TONE I.2)

I said: In the noontide of my days I must depart;
I am consigned to the gates of Sheol for the rest of my years.
I said, I shall not see the LORD in the land of the living;
I shall look upon mortals no more among the inhabitants of the world.

My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me
like a shepherd's tent; like a weaver I have rolled up my life;
he cuts me off from the loom; from day to night you bring me to an end;
I cry for help until morning; like a lion he breaks all my bones;
from day to night you bring me to an end.

Like a swallow or a crane I clamour, I moan like a dove.
My eyes are weary with looking upward.
O LORD, I am oppressed; be my security!
But what can I say? For he has spoken to me,
and he himself has done it. All my sleep has fled
because of the bitterness of my soul.

O LORD, by these things people live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit.
O restore me to health and make me live!
Surely it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness;
but you have held back my life from the pit of destruction,
for you have cast all my sins behind your back.
For Sheol cannot thank you, death cannot praise you;
those who go down to the Pit cannot hope for your faithfulness.
The living, the living, they thank you, as I do this day;
fathers make known to children your faithfulness.

The LORD will save me, and we will sing to stringed instruments
all the days of our lives, at the house of the LORD.

Psalm 150

Laudate Dominum

(TONUS PEREGRINUS)

Hallelujah!

Praise God in his holy temple; *
praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts; *
praise him for his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the blast of the ram's-horn; *
praise him with lyre and harp.

Praise him with timbrel and dance; *
praise him with strings and pipe.

Praise him with resounding cymbals; *
praise him with loud-clanging cymbals.

Let everything that has breath *
praise the Lord.
Hallelujah!

Versicle/Response

V. My flesh also shall rest in hope.

R. You will not let your holy One see corruption.

Canticle: The Song of Zechariah *Benedictus Dominus Deus* (TONE II.2)

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel; *

he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,

that he would save us from our enemies, *

from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers *

and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear, *

holy and righteous in his sight

all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *

for you will go before the LORD to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation *

by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Anthem: *Christus Factus Est*

Felice Anerio (c. 1560-1614)

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.

[Philippians 2:8-9]

Psalm 51*Miserere mei, Deus*

(RECTO TONO)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
Wash me through and through from my wickedness *
and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions, *
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you only have I sinned *
and done what is evil in your sight.
And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgment.
Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb.
For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
I shall teach your ways to the wicked, *
and sinners shall return to you.
Deliver me from death, O God, *
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,
O God of my salvation.
Open my lips, O LORD, *
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, *
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; *
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Be favorable and gracious to Zion, *
and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Then you will be pleased with the appointed sacrifices,
with burnt-offerings and oblations; *
then shall they offer young bullocks upon your altar.

Final Collect

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.

Nothing further is said.

After a period of silence a noise is made, and the burning Christ candle is brought from its hiding place and replaced on the stand.

By its light the ministers and people depart in silence.



Virtual Service Schedule

Holy Week & Easter

Wednesday, March 31

Service of Tenebrae

Thursday, April 1

Maundy Thursday Liturgy

Friday, April 2

Good Friday Liturgy

Sunday, April 4

Easter Day Liturgy

**All services will be
available starting
at 9:00 am on YouTube**

Missed a service?

Palm Sunday Liturgy

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