

Good Friday 2023
Presence and the Absence of Presence

You are welcome to remain in the sanctuary
for a time of silent meditation and prayer.

Please leave when you are ready,
going into the shadows of the night.



Arlington Community Church
City of Refuge UCC
First Congregational Church of Berkeley UCC
The Good Table UCC
Orinda Community Church
Skyline UCC

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

David Milnes

WELCOME & FIRST READING

Reverend Elizabeth Robinson

We do not die once. We all die many times. Life does that to us with our losses, our betrayals, our own mistakes and emptying out. But we also resurrect on a regular basis as well. We forgive, we are forgiven, we bottom out, we move on, we give birth anew thus that life and death are more synergetic that we usually imagine them to be. “God’s exit is her entrance,” as Meister Eckhart put it. The depths of the valley of death do not overcome the power of life which makes things new again. Injustice seems to triumph so often but justice will have the last word provided we live and work for it. —Matthew Fox

CALL TO WORSHIP

From Psalm 22

One: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

All: O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people.

One: Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

MUSIC

Were You There

Susan Russell, vocalist

READING

The call of discipleship is the invitation to follow Jesus. The condition for discipleship is to engage in a ministry similar to his. We are called to engage in life-affirming, God glorifying, agony-eradicating ministry. We are called to partner with Jesus in service, not pain. Pain is a consequence of discipleship. It is not a lifestyle, a life sentence, or a life goal. Pain only signals the level of opposition to ministry. It is not the measure of discipleship; ministry is. — Raquel Annette St. Clair

The feeling remains that God is on the journey too.

—Teresa of Avila

CONCLUDING DANCE & CHANT

Blessing of the Dancers’ Circle with Holy Spirit Cloth

Stay with me.

Remain here with me.

Watch and pray. Watch and pray.

Dancers Circle led by Genia Simpson
Dancers: Jacqueline Corl-Seidel, Ellen Marshall,
Juliet Montagnon and Lori Santos

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Reverend Barry Cammer
Arlington Community Church

With musical accompaniment by Amar Khalsa, FCCB

INVITATION & BLESSING OF OFFERING Rev. Barry Cammer

A collection for Turkey and Syria earthquake survivors.

READING

In the dark night of the soul, bright flows the river of God.
—Juan de la Cruz

OFFERTORY *In Remembrance of Our Lord* Lee Dengler

Adam Green and Skyline UCC Choir

MEDITATION Reverend Molly Baskette, First Church Berkeley

Luke 23:46

Then Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Having said this, he breathed his last.

John 19:30

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

All: I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast.

One: My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. I can count all my bones.

All: But you, O Divine One, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul. For you do not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; you do not hide your face from us, but hear when we cry to you.

TAIZÉ Musicians for Taizé: Sahib Amar, Amar Khalsa, FCCB,
& the Reverend Dr. Melinda McLain, Good Table UCC

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

READING

Silence is God’s first language. – Juan de la Cruz

HYMN BH 226 *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* Bernard of Clairvaux

O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighted down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, your only crown,
How pale you are with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn!
How does your visage languish which once was bright as morn!

(continued on next page)

(Hymn *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*, continued)

What you, dear Savior, suffered was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression, but yours the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior, for I deserve your place;
Look on me with your favor, O grant to me your grace.

What language shall I borrow to thank you, dearest friend;
For this your dying sorrow, your pity without end?
May I be yours forever and thought my days be few,
O Savior, let me never outlive my love for you!

MEDITATION

Lay Pastor Marilyn Fowler
City of Refuge, UCC

Luke 23:34

Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Luke 23:43

Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

MUSIC

Ah, Holy Jesus

Nik Nackley, David Milnes

READING

The kind of love that led Christ to a cross and kept Paul unembittered amid the angry torrents of persecution is not soft, anemic, and sentimental. Such love confronts evil without flinching and shows in our popular parlance an infinite capacity 'to take it.' Such love overcomes the world even from a rough-hewn cross against the skyline. — Martin Luther King, Jr.

MEDITATION

Reverend Laurie Manning,
Skyline Community Church

John 19:26

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."

Mark 15:34

At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

MUSIC

God, Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary

Led by

Reverend Ann Jefferson,
City of Refuge, UCC

God, prepare me to be a sanctuary
pure and holy, tried and true;
with thanksgiving, I'll be a living
sanctuary for you.

READING

Love casts our fear, but we have to get over the fear in order to get close enough to love. — Dorothy Day