

Tenebrae Service - Lament

This Maundy Thursday or Good Friday service uses the format of Tenebrae, and the extinguishing of candles, interposed with prayers of lament and one simple, repeated song. It arose from the need to lament the many sorrows and evils present in the world, and a desire to carry the laments to Jesus's consoling love on the cross. It was inspired in part by chapter 13 "Talking Sin, Repentance, Conversion, Salvation" of [*Tongue-Tied: Learning the Lost Art of Talking about Faith*](#), by Sara Wenger Shenk.

This resource provides an outline that can be fleshed out using prayers and readings fitting for your setting (check our [Worship Collection](#) for possible resources). The reflection may be a brief meditation on lament, on God's presence and solidarity with those who suffer, or on the power of the cross to heal.

After each candle is extinguished, the hymn may be played instrumentally or sung by one or more voices. The scripture may be read by a single reader to provide continuity of voice. Use silence throughout the service as a pause allowing people space to meditate, especially after the last two scripture readings and the extinguishing of the final Tenebrae candle and the Christ candle.

Preparation: Arrange for seven candles for the Tenebrae plus a Christ candle. A suggested sanctuary set up would be to arrange chairs in a cross-shaped pattern, with four rows radiating from the central communion table. Arrange readers & musicians, as well as communion elements. Ensure Tenebrae candles and Christ candle are lit before service begins.

Order of Service

Gathering

Land Acknowledgment

Prelude

Call to Worship

Prayer

Hymn – *Voices Together* 9 Come Away from Rush and Hurry

Hearing & Responding

Scripture – Psalm 31:14-15

Reflection

Communion

Confession/ Preparation
Prayer

Sharing of Bread & Cup
Lord's Prayer
Passing the Peace

Tenebrae

Candle 7

Scripture – Luke 23:1-7
Prayer or Reading
Extinguish candle
Hymn – *Voices Together* 321 Ya hamalah Allah

Candle 6

Scripture – Luke 23:8-12
Prayer or Reading
Extinguish candle
Hymn – *Voices Together* 321 Ya hamalah Allah

Candle 5

Scripture – Luke 23:13-17
Prayer or Reading
Extinguish candle
Hymn – *Voices Together* 321 Ya hamalah Allah

Candle 4

Scripture – Luke 23:18-25
Prayer or Reading
Extinguish candle
Hymn – *Voices Together* 321 Ya hamalah Allah

Candle 3

Scripture – Luke 23:26-38

Prayer or Reading

Extinguish candle

Hymn – *Voices Together* 321 Ya hamalah Allah

Candle 2

Scripture – Luke 23:39-43

Prayer or Reading

Extinguish candle

Hymn – *Voices Together* 321 Ya hamalah Allah

Candle 1

Scripture – Luke 23:44-49

Extinguish candle

Silent reflection

Christ Candle

Scripture – Luke 23:50-56a

Extinguish candle

Silence

Sending

Closing Hymn – *Voices Together* 322 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Benediction

Exit in silence.

Melissa Miller, Pioneer Park Christian Fellowship (Canada), 2022.

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