Good Friday Service

Friday April 10, 2020

First and Central UC St. Thomas

Welcome to the Service and Introductions from Richard A. (2 minutes)

Lighting Christ Candle

Music: 144VU Were You There When The Crucified My Lord? Vs. 1 (1 Minute)

Call to Worship Daryl (2 minutes)

It causes me to tremble while I watch you wait

on the wooden benches of the unemployment line again.

And I tremble these silent days as we wait for test results in our tenuous

togetherness.

I wait for a just verdict for you, with this thin cane that someone called trust

and told me to lean into.

The trembling is inside of me.

I tremble before what may now be the climax of a mounting debt,

and as I look again into the face of a life hanging so undone and unfinished,

I tremble

Really, I tremble...

Tremble... tremble

It causes me to tremble, this cross.

I tremble before its severing power,

its finality and stillness,

its wooden silence

and its stoicism above the cries of anguish and sorrow.

I plead to sojourn from this cross and take back a former life;

to put this all behind us..

It is silent to my plea.

This moment

marks our brow

with the sign of the Crucified.

The cross is borne.

And the Love of God alone,

bears with the sacred ones

Music: 144VU Were You there vs.2 (1 Minute)

Scripture: Matthew 27:15- 23 Lauri (1 Minute)

The Cross

Reflection: (Daryl) (2 Minutes)

Intentional Cruelty and suffering cover the earth

think of all the ways

parents are robed of their children

and children are robed of their guardians and siblings.

Feel all the ways we are alienated from our humanity;

Through the power of political regimes, addiction and violence to name a few..

Shame and bullying, fear mongering and brainwashing, the treadmill

to name some others.

Suffering is intensified

Wherever life is considered expendable,

or when one hoards power at the expense of the other.

Jesus faced the unfettered cruelty of his ruling contemporaries.

He desired the notion of God’s Shalom be lived out

but such equity and forgiveness would cost too much power and wealth.

He was mocked and flogged before great kings and rulers who hoarded their power,

He knelt before them in subjection

and was nailed to the beams of the cross.

The only stance beneath the cross is one of kneeling

from the viewpoint of humility perhaps, do we glimpse something of the

persistence of the Sacred in life-

only those who are humble

and those kneeling-

and those crying for humanity

chance seeing how deeply knit into the sacred we are.

We are not the unloved...

I tremble inside the love of God...

Sung Response “Jesus Remember Me” (148VU) (1 minute)

Scripture: Matthew 27:24-31 (Lauri) (1Minute)

Crown of Thorns

Reflection: (Daryl) (1 minute)

The crown of thorns shatters all meaning.

Great suffering punctures the very concepts we have of life,

Language cannot hold the contours of grief at times like these

We are brought to our human limits

These moments

strip our flesh.

The raw places expose what is the core of our being,

Will being “known” so completely

sever definitively all belonging?

Is there a love genuine enough to anoint what seems so unlovable?

We need a shepherd to draw courage from

we need sources of trust who will help us...

I tremble among these thorns,

Music: Were You There 144VU vs.4 (1 Minute)

Scripture Matthew 27:32-36, 45-51,54-56 (Lauri) (2 Minutes)

Black Cloth

Reflection (Daryl) (2 minutes)

The swaddling clothes of new life and hope

wrapping Mary’s child were the dressings of celebration

and now this day they

become the robes that wrap him in his end time.

Birth clothes and Grave clothes juxtaposed.

What of the Incarnation, what of God being with us yet?

Amid this death do we dare say God could be born

and wrapped in these swaddling grave clothes?

The swaddling clothes

the grave clothes,

the Temple curtain

these are all blind to the future

as is sharing in a common suffering, a common table, a common era.

We cannot be certain

if we are upon the threshold of birth or death oftentimes.

The tearing of the cloth- the temple veil-

the story teller writes,

is as much the Incarnation as the Virgin Birth;

finally what has been secret, been hiding, been behind a screen

is freed to emerge

and the holy of holies comes to light

It is, eternally, the work of Incarnation to shed the old life...

Dare we say this on such a solemn day?

Dare we proclaim that God is tearing a thin veil...?

Trembling, I wonder what might happen if give myself to such unveiling...

Sung Response: Jesus, Remember Me (1 Minute)

Scripture: Matthew 27:57-60 (Lauri) (1 Minute)

Rock

Reflection: (Daryl) (1 Minute)

A Rich man from Arimathea, a disciple named Joseph,

he placed Jesus body in the tomb he had bought for himself.

“You cannot mend the chromosome,

quell the earthquake or stanch the flood.

You cannot atone for dead tyrant’s murders,

and you alone cannot stop living tyrants.

Yet, the world of ordinary days “affords us that precise association with God

that redeems both us and our speck of the world.

God entrusts and allots to everyone an area to redeem-

this creased and feeble life,

the world in which you live, just as it is

and not otherwise.

In our hands, the hands of us all, the world and life-

our world, our life-

are placed like a Host, ready to be charged with divine influence.

I tremble with anticipation the redemptive work...

Music: Were You there? vs (1 Minute)

Scripture: Matthew 27:61 (Lauri) (30 seconds)

Reflection (Rev. Daryl) (1 ½ Minutes)

Such is the image of brokenness:

Opposite the sealed tomb,

Mary Jesus Mother, and Mary Magdalene...

sit...

I tremble before such an incomplete life...

such incomplete lives....

Prayer of Confession: (In unison)

O God of broken lives

we pray from behind imposing gravestones-

touchstones of our limitations

our confinement in grief;

our despair in the ache of anger;

the haunting of fear;

the trembling of our soul;

flatness of spirit within the breadth of life.

We pray looking onto and

opposite the gravestone.

Gentle our restrictions,

purify us through doubt,

fashion us through surrender and trust.

Ready us,

waken us,

raise us

as your children,

no longer afraid, but participating in the mystery of your love-

A Love as yet incomplete until we have died to your making of us.

In the name of the one sealed in the tomb.

Amen

Closing Music (3 Minutes)

Blowing out the candle (Jody)

Leave Sanctuary in Silence