



Worship@Home



Acknowledging

As we gather this Holy Week, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of these lands and waters, and pay respect to elders past, present and emerging. In the telling of the story of this awful and holy time, we also commit to the telling of hard stories in the history of this land as we walk together for justice.



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

Maundy Thursday Tenebrae

Preparation:

You will need 7 candles (can be tea lights) plus Christ Candle, gong (can be improvised, like a saucepan lid and wooden spoon), candle snuffer, matches, and a torch or low light for readers. Divide the Bible readings among those present. The singing can be unaccompanied. You might like to set the scene with some suitable music. A particularly good choice is 'On that final night' by Robin Mann.

¹Robin Mann

This is a very ancient service, sometimes called the service of shadows. It takes us through the night, with all its horror and cost. With the betrayal of Jesus by one disciple, and desertion by the rest, through the costliness of the inner agony he must endure as he faced up to his coming death. Then the false accusations in the mockery of a trial, his condemnation, flogging, and that awful death. This year's readings are from Mark's gospel, and they bear the emphases and concerns that he wants to share through his writing. It is sombre and simple, for this is the sad and low point of the Christian year. A time for us to get in touch with the reality of the horror of Jesus' death, and to remember that he died for us.

Prayer

Let us pray as we recall this time.

O Jesus Christ, this is indeed a sad night. We do not look forward to reading about how you were betrayed, treated so unjustly, scourged and mocked, before your cruel death.

But as we do, may we learn from your trust in God through the horrors of the night.

May we be willing to stay awake and pray with you.

May we be faithful and not run away when the going gets tough.

May we be willing to trust in the love and guidance of God.

O God, we particularly dread those words, "O God, if it may be, let this cup pass from me, but if you will, I will drink it." We do not want to be put to the trial. It is our greatest fear. Help us face our fears as we journey through the night with you.

Forgive us. Help us watch with you.

We are weak, but you can make us strong. Send your Holy Spirit, and hear our prayer, which we pray in your name. Amen.





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The Service of Shadows

Instructions

Each of the readers will read a section of the Easter narrative. After each section the reader says “the shadow of ...” and extinguishes a candle.

Then the reader says “Lord have mercy”
Then everyone responds, “Christ have mercy.”
The reader says again “Lord have mercy”
All sing the next verse of ‘Were you there?’.

Then the next reading is read, and the pattern repeats itself, until the account of Jesus’ death is reached and the last of the seven candles extinguished and the last verse of ‘Were you there?’ is sung (**TiS 345**).

Then the Christ candle is extinguished and the words, “It is finished” are spoken.
Then there will be 33 gongs, one for every year of Jesus’ earthly life.

Please then leave quietly in the dark.
The readers are seated, the candles are lit, the lights extinguished.



The Seven Readings & Were you there TiS 345

**Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?**

1. *Mark 14:1-21 is read.*

Reader: The shadow of betrayal
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

**Were you there when Judas betrayed his Lord?
Were you there when Judas betrayed his Lord?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when Judas betrayed his Lord?**

2. *Mark 14:22-42 is read.*

Reader: The shadow of inner agony
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

**Were you there when he knelt
and prayed to God?
Were you there when he knelt
and prayed to God?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when he knelt
and prayed to God?**

3. *Mark 14:43-52 is read*

Reader: The shadow of desertion
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Reading continues





Reading continues

**Were you there when his disciples ran away?
Were you there when his disciples ran away?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when his disciples ran away?**

4. Mark 14:53-72 is read

Reader: The shadow of denial
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

**Were you there when Peter denied three times?
Were you there when Peter denied three times?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when Peter denied three times?**

5. Mark 15:1-15 is read

Reader: The shadow of condemnation
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

**Were you there when they crowned his head
with thorns?
Were you there when they crowned his head
with thorns?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they crowned his head
with thorns?**

6. Mark 15:16-23 is read

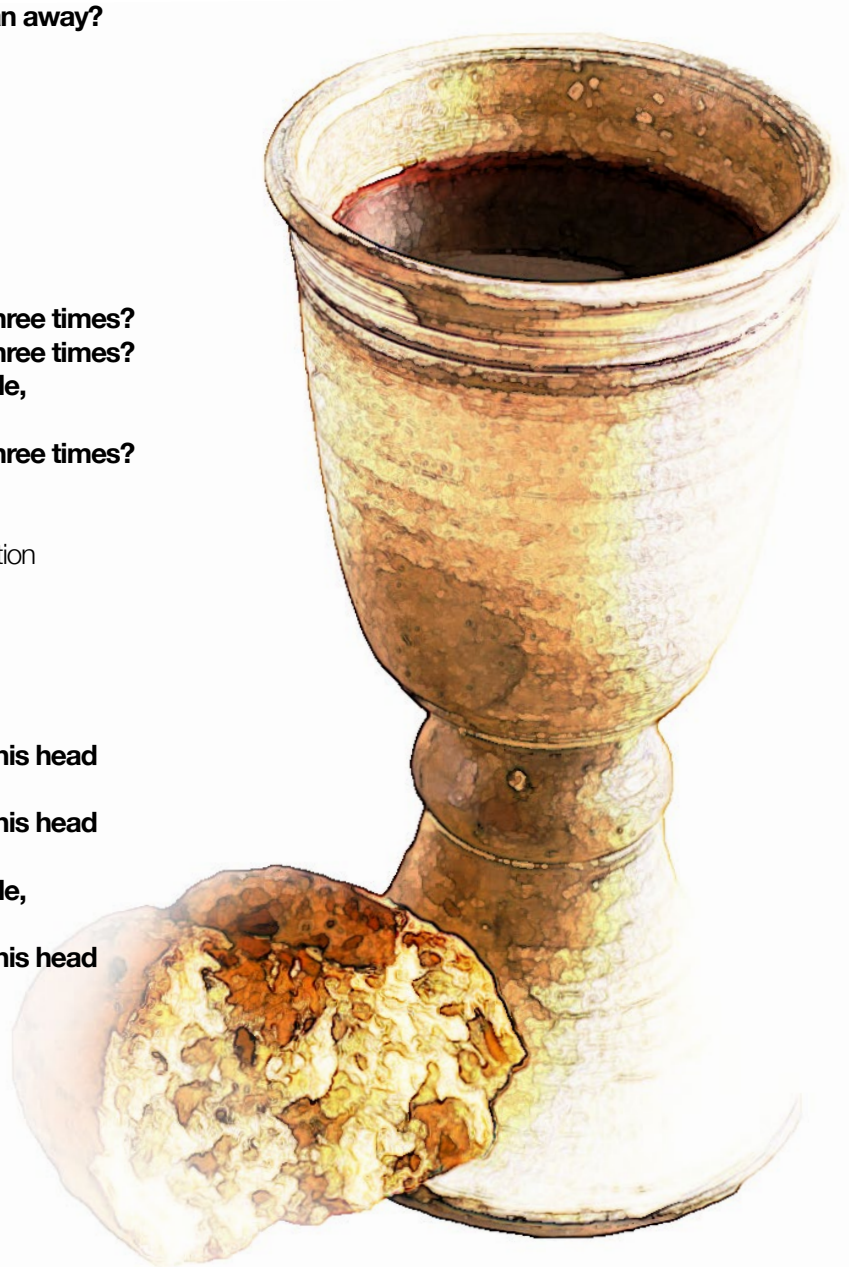
Reader: The shadow of mockery
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Reading continues





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Reading continues

**Were you there when they nailed him
to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him
to the tree?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they nailed him
to the tree?**

7. Mark 15:24-47 is read

Reader: The shadow of death
extinguish a candle.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

**Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?**

The Christ Candle is extinguished.

Leader: It is finished

33 Gongs - people leave in silence

*'Were you there' is in the public domain, additional verses by
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¹CD3, All Together For Good, track 10. Words © 2003 Robin Mann



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