

THY KINGDOM COME

**A Good Friday Service Based on the
Lord's Prayer in the Gospel of Luke**



POST TENEBRAS LUX SERIES
Good Friday Services of Scripture, Story, and Song
(Song Suggestions Provided)

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Although many publishers do not capitalize terms, and particularly pronouns which refer to the Trinity, in this study CDM publications has capitalized those elements for clarity of reference.

ISBN: 978-1-944964-76-4

Cover Art: Zack Wallover

Layout Design: Helen Jimmie Weigt

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Thy Kingdom Come

Thy Kingdom Come

(Reading Time: 25-30 minutes)

Thy Kingdom Come provides the readings and structure for a Tenebrae service of Scripture, story, and song that is based on the Lord's Prayer in the Gospel of Luke. The balance of all three elements, with the gradual dimming of lights and extinguishing of candles, creates a meaningful opportunity for thought and reflection. Musical selections are suggested.

One of the strengths of this service is that it is accessible and adaptable to a host of settings. It is designed to fit your context.

Originally presented in a mid-sized church, the readers were members of the congregation or choir who were comfortable reading aloud and expressively. Through the years, the readers became more comfortable portraying the biblical characters, and that was reflected in their representations. In addition, selecting music that fit the strengths of the church musicians was key.

The Tenebrae quickly became one of the most beloved services of the year.

THE SERVICE

READERS (FOUR WOMEN, EIGHT MEN):

While originally presented as a Good Friday service in a mid-sized church, we encourage groups of various types (including churches of all sizes, youth groups, college fellowships, senior centers) to produce and experience *Thy Kingdom Come*. Therefore, the ages listed for the readers should be considered as suggestions or guidance.

NARRATOR/LUKE – a man, aged 35 or older and a strong reader

FIRST READER – a woman aged 50 or older, portraying Mary, the mother of Jesus

SECOND and THIRD READERS – two men aged 50 or older, portraying shepherds

FOURTH READER – a woman aged 30 or older, portraying Mary Magdalene

FIFTH READER – a woman aged 30 or older, portraying Mary, sister of Martha

SEVENTH READER – a man, aged 25 or older, portraying Matthew, the tax collector

EIGHTH READER – a man, shorter and older than “Matthew,” portraying Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector

NINTH READER – a man aged 25 or older, portraying James

TENTH READER – a man aged 25 or older, portraying John

ELEVENTH READER – a man aged 35 or older, portraying Simon Peter

SETTING/SERVICE DIRECTIONS:

To begin, the sanctuary is well lit. The service will conclude in complete darkness. (As every setting is designed uniquely, the following description is to be used as a guide. Though this is not a theatrical production, terms such as “upstage” and “downstage” are used to most clearly explain placement and movement.)

A large, spotlighted cross is upstage center.

The music ENSEMBLE is seated immediately downstage of the cross.

Thy Kingdom Come

A podium with light and script binder for READERS is farther downstage, stage right. Across the stage from the READERS' podium is a small podium or music stand with a light, a script binder, and a stool for the NARRATOR, stage left (can be center left). This will create an antiphonal dialogue between the READERS and the NARRATOR.

Farthest downstage is a table with twelve white taper candles in a row, with an additional larger, white Christ candle in the center of them, and one or two candle snuffers for READERS to use.

Prior to the service, turn on all podium lights, and light the twelve taper candles and the Christ candle.

Elements such as a prelude, a welcome, prayer, responsive reading, musical reflection, etc. can precede the introduction of the Tenebrae service.

The music ENSEMBLE is seated on the stage at the director's discretion (either before the welcome or after), but prior to the reading of the Tenebrae introduction. The READERS are seated throughout the audience and/or choir.

A brief introduction (see Bulletin Notes) is read aloud by the pastor or service leader.

The NARRATOR is seated at his podium prior to the congregational hymn.

The Congregation sings the hymn, "Beneath the Cross of Jesus."

As the hymn ends, the microphones for the NARRATOR and READERS are turned on. The FIRST READER has left his seat and takes his place standing "off-stage," but on the same side as the READERS' podium. He will walk to the podium after NARRATOR'S introduction.

The Service

CANDLE #1 (Last Supper; selections from Luke 22:7,14-20)
(*Option: Have small leather-type notebook for Luke to reference*)

NARRATOR/LUKE (*to congregation*):

All is chaos and uncertainty tonight—confusion, and growing darkness.

For those who knew Him, who saw and heard first what Jesus said and did, for them this is not the way His life should end . . . a life that brought such healing, and hope, and understanding.

And as I heard and recorded their accounts, it made me wonder: How am I, how are we, to make sense of the events of this day, here in the heart of this city, this *Jerusalem*?

I am the voice of Luke, the physician.

And though I am a Gentile, and not a Jew, their words strengthen my belief that this Jesus was for me, for us, too.

(*Optional: hold up notebook*) In this account of what He said and did, perhaps we can find the certainty we seek in our own confusion and growing darkness.

Every day, He walked among the people, sharing their lives. Reaching out to the hurting: healing. . . teaching . . . praying.

Yes! In every way, His life was hemmed with *Prayer*.

On this night, of all nights, Jesus would have us *Pray*. As He did. As He taught us.

“When you pray, say:

‘Father.’”

MARY

My son!
My boy.

Oh, this city—this city brings me nothing but pain.
It takes You away from me, again.

Was it twenty years ago, already? On these very streets?
Oh, at twelve, You looked like a boy, but You were becoming a man.

Thy Kingdom Come

It had been *good* that we were all together to celebrate that Passover, here, in Jerusalem. At the Temple. But as we all made our way home to Galilee, You did not.

Oh, why weren't You with Your cousins? I had never been so afraid.

Three days we searched this city for You. Frantic. Three days You were gone from us.

Only to find You at the Temple, amazing the teachers.

Amazing us with Your reply: "Did you not know I would be at My *Father's* house?"

Oh, my soul is pierced within me!

This city has taken You from me again.

But it will not return You to me again. Not in three days. Not ever.

My boy.

(look up) Your Son.

(FIRST READER turns the page in the binder, walks to the table and extinguishes a taper candle next to the center Christ candle. Turn off or lower lights as candle is extinguished. The NARRATOR begins as READER returns to her seat.)

NARRATOR/LUKE *(to congregation):*

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.

And when the hour came, Jesus reclined at table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

And He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood."

(The ENSEMBLE sings (for example): "The Upper Room." Immediately after the song ends, the SECOND and THIRD READERS leave their seats in the audience and take their places at the READERS' podium.)