



“Praying Light into the Shadows”
A Good Friday Service with Prayers, Music, Poems, and Candles
in the big love living liturgies
by Rev. Kathryn Schreiber ©2017

**West Hollywood UCC, Mount Hollywood UCC, First Congregational UCC
Riverside, & Westwood Hills UCC**

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.
– Jesus (NRSV Matthew 11:28)

Prelude

Julie Hinton-Pianist, WHCC

You are invited to darken your personal space and light candles during this time.

Greeting

Rev. Kirsten Linford, WHCC

Invocation

Anita Porter, WHCC

Holy One, only You know fully
the shadows in which we dwell
on this Good Friday evening.
While we are blessed with much,
we also carry trials and troubles of our own,
and deep worries about the well-being of others.
We have come here tonight
to receive from You,

sacred light for this Holy Week's journey.

Source of all Light,
may we experience Your presence tonight,
in the dance of candlelight,
in the beauty of music,
in the wisdom of sacred writings,
in the sincerity of our prayers,
and in the grace of this community.

Come Holy One, shine among us. Amen.

“By My Side” (Godspell)

**Jade Clavesilla, Julie Hinton
Yasu Ichikawa, Marco Rodriguez
WHCC**

Hafez Poem “It Was Beautiful One Night”

It was beautiful, it was so beautiful one night
We all began to expect God would speak

Kelly Klein, FCC Riverside

from the waves reaching towards
the millet fields,

from the mouths of the hanging sky
ornaments crooning in light's infinite codes,

from the glance of children and plants
and hills playing with effulgent life.

It was beautiful, it was so beautiful one night
We all began to expect God would speak

“How Deep the Father's Love for Us”

David and Ruthemma Wells, FCC Riverside

Praying the Beatitudes with Light

**Rev. Michelle Freeman & Kelly Klein
FCC Riverside**

One: May God bless the poor in spirit.
Many: Ours is the kingdom of heaven.

One: God bless all who mourn.
Many: We will be comforted.

One: May God bless the meek.
Many: We will inherit the earth.

One: May God bless those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Many: We will be filled.

One: May God bless the merciful.

Many: We will receive mercy.

One: May God bless the pure in heart.

Many: We will see God.

One: May God bless the peacemakers.

Many: We are called children of God.

One: May God bless those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Many: Ours is the kingdom of heaven.

One: May God bless us when people revile us and persecute us and utter all kinds of evil against us falsely on account of Jesus Christ.

Many: Let us rejoice and be glad, for our reward is great in heaven, for in the same way, the prophets before us were persecuted.

One: May God bless us as we call upon the Light of Christ.

Many: Illuminate our Good Friday shadows, O Holy Light. Amen.

“Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”

**David and Ruthemma Wells
FCC Riverside**

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Ashley Hiestand, Mount Hollywood UCC

O God of all Life, Light, and Love,
on this Good Friday we gather in sacred community
to be comforted by faith
and to tend the promise of new hope.
Yet, we are disturbed by the long shadows around us.
We ask Your blessing upon all gathered here tonight,
in body and soul, be with us this night.
We place our prayers...**“Into Your Light, O Lord.”**

Holy God, You know so well that we are equally capable
of noble acts and terrible sins,
so on this night, remembering Jesus' betrayals and suffering,
we pray for the innocent ones who have experienced pain.
May they be granted deep healing.
We place our prayers...**“Into Your Light, O Lord.”**

As we recall Jesus' deep compassion and his infallible integrity,
during caustic times of betrayal and corruption,
we ask a blessing upon those who have done likewise --
who have risen in character at times of great challenge.
We place our prayers...**"Into Your Light, O Lord."**

We gather as a people who are hurting.
You know the exact burdens we each carry,
as well as which sorrows are our heaviest.
Grateful for Your eternal care and companionship,
We place our prayers...**"Into Your Light, O Lord."**

Tonight we pray for for people around the world
impacted by war, and by the actions of not only other countries,
but also the actions our country has taken.
We especially lift up the real costs of military action,
not only in Ukraine, but in many other places, Syria, Afghanistan.
And we lift up the effects such actions have had
upon the people who serve in our name.
We place our prayers...**"Into Your Light, O Lord."**

Mindful of a new climate of acceptable prejudice,
knowing that many feel increasingly vulnerable,
we pray not only for a change of spirit among us,
but for the courage to do what You would have us do,
that all might not only feel safe, but actually be safe.
We place our prayers...**"Into Your Light, O Lord."**

This night, near the tomb where the Beloved lays,
we are awakened to the reality of human mortality,
and of physical illnesses and challenges which harm our bodies.
We ask for healing and ask wellbeing for all who are sick.
We place our prayers...**"Into Your Light, O Lord."**

And now, we offer to You, Holy One,
our private, silent prayers,
already grateful for Your tender attention.
We place our silent prayers...**"Into Your Light, O Lord."**
Amen.

Praying with Light

**Joe Lawrence-Pianist
Mount Hollywood, UCC**

Hafez Poem "I Have Come Into This World to See This"

Rev. Ashley Hiestand,

Mount Hollywood UCC

I have come into this world to see this:
the sword drop from men's hands even at the height
of their arc of anger
because we have finally realized there is just one flesh to wound
and it is His – the Christ's, our
Beloved's.

I have come into this world to see this: all creatures hold hands as
we pass through this miraculous existence we share on the way
to even a greater being of soul,
a being of just ecstatic light, forever entwined and at play
with Him.

I have come into this world to hear this:
every song the earth has sung since it was conceived in
the Divine's womb and began spinning from
His wish,
every song by wing and fin and hoof,
every song by hill and field and tree and woman and child,
every song of stream and rock,
every song of tool and lyre and flute,
every song of gold and emerald
and fire,
every song the heart should cry with magnificent dignity
to know itself as

God:
for all other knowledge will leave us again in want and aching –
only imbibing the glorious Sun
will complete us.

I have come into this world to experience this:
men so true to love
they would rather die before speaking
an unkind
word,
men so true their lives are His covenant –
the promise of
hope.

I have come into this world to see this:
the sword drop from men's hands
even at the height of
their arc of
rage
because we have finally realized
there is just one flesh
we can wound.

“Thank You Jesus for the Blood”

**Autumn and Joe Lawrence
Mount Hollywood UCC**

The Prayer of Jesus

Rev. Janice Steele, WeHo UCC

Hafez Poem “The Candle Burns Down”

Tom Droney, WeHo UCC

We melt a little each day. The candle
burns down.

And it may wonder at times, it may
Wonder:

What will become of me? What will
Happen to my precious flame?

O, so much brighter, my dear, you will
become, so much brighter.

“Holiness”

**Mark Abulencia, Kristy Healy, and Deb Nishimura
WeHo UCC**

Benediction

Rev. Janice Steele, WeHo UCC

“There’s A Place For Us”

**Mark Abulencia and Kristy Healy
WeHo UCC**

Postlude

Julie Hinton-Pianist, WHCC

The Zoom sanctuary will remain open for private prayer during our extended postlude. Please stay as long as you wish before departing in silence.

Worship Resources:

Hafez poems: A Year with Hafiz: Daily Contemplations, translated by Daniel Landinsky, ©2011, Penguin Books. (Poems also appear in other books by Landinsky)

“The Prayer of Jesus”: Sounds of the Eternal: A Celtic Psalter, John Phillip Newell, ©2012, New Beginnings.

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