

Good Friday, 2020

Welcome

Welcome everyone, housekeeping items:

Please keep your microphone muted unless you wish to speak (try now).

There will be four sets of readings, with a time for prayer after each one- a chance to pray aloud or prayer silently.

We will have music in between the readings, and finish the service with the Lord's Prayer. The service will end right after the Lord's Prayer, without any final words, because the service continues on Easter Sunday.

Gathering

On Good Friday, we hear a story we have heard many times before:

Jesus is betrayed, deserted and abandoned.

He is arrested, questioned and put on trial.

He is ridiculed, mocked and condemned.

And he is crucified, dies, and is buried.

On this Good Friday, we gather in difficult times, in the midst of isolation and distancing, in the presence of fear and anxiety. So today, we gather as a community of faith to retell this ancient story, and to join our hearts in prayer as global citizens.

Matthew 26:36-75 (*select verses*)

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. 38 Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." 39 And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want."

47 Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. 48 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." 49 At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. 50 Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. 55 At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. 56 But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

57 Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. 58 But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." 70 But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." 71 When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." 72 Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." 73 After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." 74 Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. 75 Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Prayer

Judas leads the authorities to Jesus.

The disciples desert Jesus and flee.

Three times, Peter denies his relationship with Jesus.

In these difficult times, in the midst of isolation and distancing, in the presence of fear and anxiety, let us pray:

Loving God, may we be steadfast people of faith even when we are afraid, living our faith and loving our neighbours. We pray for our loved ones, and pray that you would help us continue to find ways to be social connected, to nurture relationships, and to share your love with a hurting world.

A time for prayers offered silently and out loud

God, hear our prayers.

Music: Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross

Matthew 26:57- 27:24 (*select verses*)

59 Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, 60 but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward 61 and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" 62 The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" 63 But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the

living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” 64 Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 What is your verdict?” They answered, “He deserves death.” 67 Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, 68 saying, “Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?”

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. 2 They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You say so.” 12 But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. 13 Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?” 14 But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

15 Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. 16 At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” And they said, “Barabbas.” 22 Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!” 23 Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

24 So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.”

Prayer

The powerful seek to protect their power.

The religious elite interrogate and threaten.

Pilate washes his hands to pretend he is innocent.

In these difficult times, in the midst of isolation and distancing, in the presence of fear and anxiety, let us pray:

God of Justice, we pray for this world you so love, may we come together in common humanity instead of being torn apart. We prayer for all who are leaders, may they receive wisdom to lead well, and may those with power use it wisely and graciously.

A time for prayers offered silently and out loud

God, hear our prayers.

Music: Via Delorosa

Matthew 27:26-44 (*select verses*)

26 So Pilate released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. **28** They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, **29** and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" **30** They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. **31** After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

32 As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. **33** And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), **34** they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. **35** And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; **36** then they sat down there and kept watch over him. **37** Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

38 Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. **39** Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads **40** and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." **41** In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, **42** "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. **43** He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" **44** The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

Prayer

Jesus is beaten, mocked and demeaned, forced to wear a scarlet robe and a crown of thorns.

And then he is crucified.

In these difficult times, in the midst of isolation and distancing, in the presence of fear and anxiety, let us pray:

Merciful and Gracious God, we remember in prayer those who suffer, for any reason. May we do all we can to protect those who are vulnerable. We pray also for those on the front lines, serving and helping others, may your grace and mercy surround them.

A time for prayers offered silently and out loud

God, hear our prayers.

Hymn: Were you there when they crucified my Lord? V, 1, 3, 4, 5

Matthew 27:45-61 (*select verses*)

⁴⁵ From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶ And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." ⁴⁸ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵⁴ Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

⁵⁵ Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. ⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

Prayer

Jesus is put to death on a cross between two criminals.

He is served sour wine when he is thirsty.

He cries out and breathes his last breath.

In these difficult times, in the midst of isolation and distancing, in the presence of fear and anxiety, let us pray:

Compassionate God, we pray for those who have died, and for those who are dying. We pray for those who grieve and mourn, especially under such challenging circumstances. May we reach out with support and compassion and love.

A time for prayers offered silently and out loud

God, hear our prayers.

We pray all these prayers, spoken aloud and in the sacred silence of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Crucified Lord, and we continue to pray with the words he taught us, saying...

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory,

For ever and ever. Amen.