

Worship at Home for Good Friday, April 2, 2021

Centering music      “Jesus Remember Me”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6tVReXsioM>

Opening Prayer

Gracious God of grief and of suffering,  
this Friday seems ‘good’ for all the wrong reasons.  
Be with us in this time of worship and contemplation  
as we imagine ourselves in the shadow of the cross of Christ  
and read again the story of trial, betrayal and death.  
This is not where we would choose to be, O God,  
brought face to face with this symbol of death  
and instrument of torture.

Forgive us, where we have sought to avoid such times:  
where we have ignored the cross or denied our own pain,  
or turned our backs on the sufferings of others.

Strengthen us to be present with you today,  
and know that you are here with us as we read.

You know the ways of the world, O God:

you have been there; you are here;

you have loved and cried

and lived and died

to be with us, to comfort us,

to forgive us and to free us.

For this we give thanks.

This we call ‘good.’

Amen.

Gospel reading                      John 18:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. <sup>2</sup>Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup>So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. <sup>4</sup>Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, ‘For whom are you looking?’ <sup>5</sup>They answered, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus replied, ‘I am he.’ Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup>When Jesus said to them, ‘I am he’, they stepped back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup>Again he

asked them, 'For whom are you looking?' And they said, 'Jesus of Nazareth.' <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered, 'I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.' <sup>9</sup>This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, 'I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.' <sup>10</sup>Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. <sup>11</sup>Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

*Were you there in the garden after dark?*

*Were you there in the garden after dark?*

*Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.*

*Were you there in the garden after dark?*

### Space for Personal Reflection

In the other three Gospel accounts of Jesus' arrest, we are told that Jesus prayed in the garden before the arrival of the soldiers, and that the slave whose ear was cut off was healed. Can we, in moments of severe stress when everything seems to be going badly for us, remember to care for others? Can we remember to pray? Can we stand by those we care about and support them no matter what they are facing?

### Music for Reflection "Stay With Me"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OHPoVhwgnM>

### The gospel continues John 18:12-27

<sup>12</sup> So the soldiers, their officer, and the temple police arrested Jesus and bound him. <sup>13</sup>First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup>Caiaphas was the one who had advised the religious authorities that it was better to have one person die for the people.

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, <sup>16</sup>but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. <sup>17</sup>The woman said to Peter, 'You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?' He said, 'I am not.' <sup>18</sup>Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing round it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

<sup>19</sup> Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. <sup>20</sup>Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the people come together. I have said nothing in secret. <sup>21</sup>Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.' <sup>22</sup>When he had said this,

one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, 'Is that how you answer the high priest?' <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered, 'If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?' <sup>24</sup>Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, 'You are not also one of his disciples, are you?' He denied it and said, 'I am not.' <sup>26</sup>One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, 'Did I not see you in the garden with him?' <sup>27</sup>Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

### Space for Personal Reflection

Fear is a powerful force. It can cause us to deny truths, it can cause us to hide ourselves, and it can cause us to lash out. What brings you fear today? What stops you from living your life openly as a follower of Jesus?

### Music for Reflection "Bitter was the night"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCoDoh8RWhI>

### The gospel continues John18:28-40, 19:1-6

<sup>28</sup> Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. <sup>29</sup>So Pilate went out to them and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this man?' <sup>30</sup>They answered, 'If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.' <sup>31</sup>Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.' The temple authorities replied, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.' <sup>32</sup>(This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

<sup>33</sup> Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' <sup>34</sup>Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' <sup>35</sup>Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' <sup>36</sup>Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the temple authorities. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' <sup>37</sup>Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.' <sup>38</sup>Pilate asked him, 'What is truth?'

After he had said this, he went out to the temple authorities again and told them, 'I find no case against him. <sup>39</sup>But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you

want me to release for you the King of the Jews?' <sup>40</sup>They shouted in reply, 'Not this man, but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. <sup>2</sup>And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. <sup>3</sup>They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face. <sup>4</sup>Pilate went out again and said to them, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.' <sup>5</sup>So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' <sup>6</sup>When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'

*Were you there when they shouted 'crucify'?*

*Were you there when they shouted 'crucify'?*

*Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.*

*Were you there when they shouted 'crucify'?*

Prayer for Reflection and Confession - Major the Rev. Dr. Neil Parker

O God,

we confess that we know what it is  
     to stand in a crowd and cheer  
     to support a cause and then  
     forget it in a week.

We know what it is  
     to deny you and that which is right,  
     to fail you and your longing  
     for peace and justice.

We have made promises that we have  
     failed to keep  
 and have sacrificed our principles  
     to our own self-interest.

We are not worthy to be called your disciples.

Yet you, O God, are faithful.

You, O God, are eternally loving and accepting.

Forgive us our lack of faith, courage and vision.

Make us into new people,  
     in and through Jesus our Saviour.

Amen

Music for Reflection: "Senzeni na?" (What have we done?)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJP79Zon3Ek>

The gospel continues                      John 19:7-25

Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.' <sup>7</sup>The Chief Priests answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'

<sup>8</sup> Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. <sup>9</sup>He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup>Pilate therefore said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?' <sup>11</sup>Jesus answered him, 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.' <sup>12</sup>From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Chief Priests cried out, 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.'

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup>Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the people, 'Here is your King!' <sup>15</sup>They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!' Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.' <sup>16</sup>Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; <sup>17</sup>and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. <sup>18</sup>There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup>Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' <sup>20</sup>Many of the people read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. <sup>21</sup>Then the chief priests said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews", but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews."' <sup>22</sup>Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.'

<sup>23</sup>When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. <sup>24</sup>So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says,  
'They divided my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.'

<sup>25</sup>And that is what the soldiers did.

Music for Reflection: "Were You There?"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJUX733ovGI>

### Space for Personal Reflection

Sometimes others make the decisions, and we seem to have little influence. We have not bothered to speak out, or write to our local politicians, or challenge our faith leaders. Perhaps we felt our words wouldn't make a difference. When people are treated unjustly – as Jesus was, when the world-changers are silenced – as Jesus was, when people are treated like the status quo is more important than their lives – as Jesus was, we must speak up, and we must speak out. How do you challenge systems that are unjust today? Where do you see power misused to serve the needs of a few?

### The gospel continues            John 19:26-30

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup>When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' <sup>27</sup>Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. <sup>28</sup>After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' <sup>29</sup>A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup>When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

### Music for Reflection    "They Crucified My Lord"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KM8SULN\\_G\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KM8SULN_G_w)

### Space for Personal Reflection

Take a moment to sit in silence, imagining what it would be like to watch Jesus die, to feel his spirit gone from the world. In some other gospels, we are told that the earth shook, that the sun dimmed – creation itself reacted to his death. You may wish to say this prayer, by Murray Pruden the Indigenous Minister for Pacific Mountain Region of the United Church, out loud:

Great Mystery,

Hear my prayer, from my heart and mind in silence, as I reflect on the crucifixion of Jesus. Allow the Holy Spirit to enter my temple as I remember the journey Jesus Christ has taken. Let this be a moment for you, Great Mystery, to guide me to what I need to receive in my life so that I understand a little more of my path and your creation.

It is finished.

Amen.

Reading for Reflection      “They went out and followed him” *Iona Community*

They went out and followed him,  
 those who had sat with him at table.  
 he led them to a garden  
 where he prayed while they slept,  
                   prayed while they slept,  
                   prayed while they slept.

He was kissed,  
 and because he was kissed he was arrested,  
 and when he was arrested his friends fled,  
 some to go into hiding,  
 one to stand by a bonfire  
 and say I never knew him  
                   I never knew him  
                   I never knew him ... until a cock crowed.

He was brought before the religious authorities  
 and accused of the sin of blasphemy  
 and of threatening insurrection.  
 Having no power to deal with him,  
 they handed him over to the state governor,  
 who listened to the accusations  
 and then asked the accused:  
                   what have you to say?  
                   what have you to say?  
                   what have you to say?  
 ... to which the response was silence.

He had said it all.

He was not found to be guilty of any criminal charges,  
 but because he was an embarrassment  
 it was decided  
 that his own people should determine his fate.  
 This they did by shouting,  
                   crucify him!  
                   crucify him!

crucify him!

He was cursed and spat upon,  
whipped and humiliated.  
And on his shoulders a gift was placed,  
which he accepted with grace.  
Under the weight of this gift,  
he stumbled and fell  
    stumbled and fell  
    stumbled and fell ...  
all the way to Calvary.

On top of a garbage dump,  
he was nailed to a cross of wood  
and left to die,  
while soldiers gambled,  
critics joked,  
religious authorities smiled with satisfaction  
and his mother watched and waited  
    watched and waited  
    watched and waited ...  
until in the end she saw a sign of the beginning.

The gospel continues          John 19:31-42

<sup>31</sup>Since it was the day of Preparation, the temple authorities did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. <sup>32</sup>Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup>But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup>Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. <sup>35</sup>(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) <sup>36</sup>These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' <sup>37</sup>And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'  
<sup>38</sup> After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the temple authorities, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. <sup>39</sup>Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a

hundred pounds. <sup>40</sup>They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup>Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup>And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

*Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.*

*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

Closing Prayer

*Rev. Christine Jerrett, Shiloh Inwood United Church*

Now we know:

all is grace

all is gift.

You give us all good things:

life and love;

daily bread and water that quenches our thirst;

friends and faith.

Most of all, in your Son, Jesus,

you meet us with a love that will never let us go;

you utter words of mercy and forgiveness

that override the hurts,

and heal our brokenness;

you offer new beginnings

where we had expected only dead ends.

We give you thanks and praise

for the mystery of your suffering love

that gives us life.

We give you thanks and praise

that you know our weakness

and hear our prayers.

We give you thanks and praise  
that all our dying and living  
is held in your good keeping.

Now we know:

all is grace

all is gift.

We give you thanks and praise.

*The story has not ended, although for those who followed Jesus the world had changed beyond recognizing – their Jesus was gone, and they hid themselves away in their grief and fear.*

Closing music            “Create In Me”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noUeQQ64Q1I>