

Whitehorse Uniting Church
Friday 29 March 2024
Good Friday A



Liturgy from Uniting in Worship - Prepared by the National Working Group on Worship and approved by the Assembly Standing Committee for use in the Uniting Church in Australia 2005 (Adapted)

Hymn 342 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross – Isaac Watts

Kate Simmonds 2023

<https://youtu.be/s83MsV3kocl?si=x1fQFf6sXqGyluFv>

Welcome

May the worship bless you.

Call to Worship

For us and for our salvation,
 Jesus Christ humbled himself,
 and became obedient to the point of death –
 even death on a cross.

Prayer



Crucifixion, 1627, Zurbaran, Francisco, 1598-1664. Art institute of Chicago, United States
 Zurbarán, Francisco, 1598-1664. Crucifixion, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=47447> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Francisco de Zurbar%C3%A1n - Crucifixion - The Art Institute of Chicago.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Francisco_de_Zurbar%C3%A1n_-_Crucifixion_-_The_Art_Institute_of_Chicago.jpg)

Crucified Saviour, Servant Lord,
 on the cross we see your love,
 here you bear the world's sorrows and sin,
 here you share the fate of the godforsaken.
 Open our ears to hear your word of grace,
 our eyes to see your thorn-crowned brow,
 and our hearts to know you in the least of our sisters and brothers. **Amen.**

Hymn – 123 Be still my soul.

Acapella Eclipse 6 2018

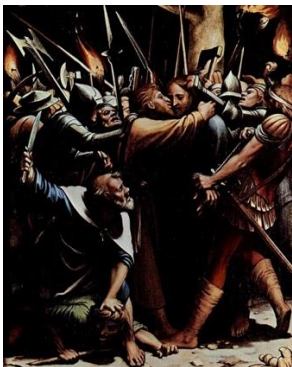
https://youtu.be/kqKVFYD8Obc?si=dViz_7SKpJ4UUyPj

Seven Readings

We are Journeying with Mark's account of the crucifixion, with images for reflection – please prayerfully pause and reflect on each image for around a minute, before doing the reading

Mark 14:46-14:52 NRSV updated.

The betrayal and arrest of Jesus



Holbein, Hans, 1497-1543. Kiss of Judas, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55465> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hans_Holbein_d._J._020.jpg.

⁴⁶ Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷ But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a rebel? ⁴⁹ Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.”

⁵⁰ All of them deserted him and fled. ⁵¹ A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, ⁵² but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. ⁵⁴ Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest, and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

⁵⁵ Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. ⁵⁶ For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷ Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’ ” ⁵⁹ But even on this point their testimony did not agree.

⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?” ⁶¹ But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah,^[a] the Son of the Blessed One?”

⁶² Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’ ”

⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?” All of them condemned him as deserving death. ⁶⁵ Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophecy!” The guards also took him and beat him.

Mark 14:66-14:72 NRSV updated.

Peter Denies Jesus



De Coster, Adam, approximately 1586-1643. Peter's Denial, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56127> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adam_de_Coster_-_The_Denial_of_Saint_Peter.jpg.

⁶⁶ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the female servants of the high priest came by. ⁶⁷ When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.”

⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt.^[b] Then the cock crowed.^[c] ⁶⁹ And the female servant, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." ⁷⁰ But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean, and you talk like one."^[d] ⁷¹ But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." ⁷² At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

Mark 15:1-15:15 NRSV updated.

Jesus before Pilate



Ge, N. N. (Nikolaï Nikolaevich), 1831-1894. "What is truth?" Christ and Pilate, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55296> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:What_is_truth.jpg.

15:1 As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ² Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." ³ Then the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." ⁵ But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

⁶ Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. ⁷ Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder during the insurrection. ⁸ So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. ⁹ Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. ¹² Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do^[e] with the man you call^[f] the King of the Jews?" ¹³ They shouted back, "Crucify him!" ¹⁴ Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" ¹⁵ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Mark 15:16-20 NRSV updated.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus



Flagellation of Jesus, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55438> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:230718_88-olinda-maspe.jpg.

¹⁶ Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole cohort. ¹⁷ And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on him. ¹⁸ And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. ²⁰ After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to

crucify him.

Mark 15:21-32 NRSV updated.

The Crucifixion of Jesus



Titian, approximately 1488-1576. Carrying the cross, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55459> [retrieved March 24, 2024]. Original source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Titian_-_Christ_Carrying_the_Cross_-_WGA22841.jpg.

²¹ They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. ²² Then they brought Jesus^[a] to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). ²³ And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ And with him they crucified two rebels, one on his right and one on his left.^[b] ²⁹ Those who passed by derided^[c] him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³² Let the Messiah,^[d] the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

Mark 15:33-20 NRSV updated.

The Death of Jesus



Delacroix, Eugène, 1798-1863. Christ on the Cross, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=58693> [retrieved March 24, 2024]. Original source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_delacroix,_cristo_sulla_croce,_1853.jpg.

³³ When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land^[k] until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"^[l] ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." ³⁶ And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." ³⁷ Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

³⁹ Now when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he^[m] breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"^[n]

⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses and Salome, ⁴¹ who followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him, and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

Mark 15:42-47 NRSV updated.

The Burial of Jesus



Ciseri, Antonio, 1821-1891. Transport of Christ to the tomb, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55116> [retrieved March 6, 2024]. Original source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Antonio_Ciseri_-_Il_trasporto_di_Cristo_al_sepolcro.jpg.

⁴² When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

⁴⁴ Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead, and summoning the centurion he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Then Joseph^[a] bought a linen cloth and, taking down the body,^[a] wrapped it in the linen cloth and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the body^[a] was laid.

Hymn 345 Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Mahalia Jackson The Ed Sullivan Show 2022 (An oldie)

<https://youtu.be/3ji7eP7k8cA?si=sGEN8F7LLkasw-sj>

Gracias Choir 2021

<https://youtu.be/7z1SwwFopJk?si=Q12vouXII7jtQBN>

Good Friday Sermon – Rev Tina

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen.

How do we find love and hope, in the midst of violence?

Judas accompanied by soldiers armed with swords and clubs come and arrest Jesus and his disciples flee. A young naked man also flees when public nakedness is shameful in his culture. Perhaps he exposes and symbolizes the disciples' shame in deserting Jesus.

Jesus is brought before the chief priest who sets a trap for him. Once Jesus declares he is the Messiah, the son of the blessed one, the high priest tears his robes and accuses Jesus of blasphemy. Jesus is spat on, blindfolded, struck, and beaten. Meanwhile Peter denies him, three times, just as Jesus predicted. Then Peter breaks down and weeps.

Jesus is brought before Pilot who knows Jesus is innocent and the chief priests are jealous of him. Yet, wanting to please the crowds, Pilot releases Barabbas and has Jesus flogged and orders his crucifixion. Soldiers flog him, put a royal-coloured purple robe on him and a crown of thorns. They mock him, hit him in the head, spit on him, and they make him carry a heavy crossbeam along the narrow streets of Jerusalem.

Along the way they force a man called Simon to carry the crossbeam for Jesus.



Titian's painting has Simon holding the weight of the crossbeam and looking at Jesus with compassion. Perhaps Simon speaks words of comfort to Jesus.

If you look closely, you will see a single tear rolling down Jesus' cheek. Perhaps we are invited to feel grief and compassion for Jesus. Jesus looks directly at us.

Jesus arrives at Golgotha, a hill outside the city walls where criminals and rebels are crucified, and then thrown into a common grave. It is a place of pain, suffering and shame. People are nailed to crosses and the weight of their body hanging on the cross slowly causes them to be suffocated.

Jesus refuses drugged wine, is stripped naked and nailed to a cross, with two rebels each side of him. At 9:00 am the chief priests and scribes come out to the cross to mock and taunt him and they name his crimes as claiming to be the Messiah and threatening to destroy the Temple. They seek to discredit him publicly as a false Messiah. After all, if he was genuine, he would come down from the cross. The two rebels join in and mock and taunt him. Those passing by also join in and mock and taunt him. Perhaps at this moment, it was a lonely place for Jesus. It is a place of horror and Mark wants us to feel the full extent of the trial, torture, shaming, and horror of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Perhaps Jesus is alone by 3:00pm when a mysterious darkness comes. It was a full moon. Perhaps there was an eclipse. The darkness expresses this is a cosmic event.

Let us spend time reflecting on the painting of the crucifixion by Delacroix.



Mary, Jesus' mother has collapsed into the arms of Mary Cleophas, perhaps after Jesus has asked John to care for her. Mary Magdalene stands at the base of the cross, hands clasped in agony and grief as she prays. To the side are Roman soldiers. Perhaps one of them is the centurion, responsible for one hundred men and Jesus' crucifixion. To the other side is Judas. Perhaps he is deeply sorry for his betrayal and what it has led to. Perhaps Jesus forgave him from the cross. We are drawn to the base of the cross too, to pray and reflect.

Mark records Jesus' last words from the cross. *My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?*

Perhaps these words are about Jesus feeling abandoned by God, as it is a psalm about a person feeling abandoned by God.

The words come from Psalm 22:1, the prayer of a righteous man who has suffered greatly and who has been vindicated. Perhaps Jesus' words are a statement of confidence in God's power to act and vindicate him and they witness to Jesus' confidence in God's power. Perhaps his words are not a statement of defeat and do not witness to feelings of abandonment by God. They are words of lament and words that show trust in God. I invite you to read Psalm 22. It speaks of everything Jesus would have suffered and more. The psalm will take you on a journey.

One of the final verses, Psalm 22:24b, says: *"He did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him."*

At the moment of Jesus' death, he gave a loud cry and breathed his last and the curtain of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Perhaps this points towards the final destruction of the Temple.

That curtain kept people out of the holy of holiest places where people believed God dwelled in the Temple. Now, the way to God is through Jesus. There are no more barriers. All are welcome.

The centurion, who had witnessed everything, is the first person to say: *"Truly this was God's Son."* He believes and says what the disciples failed to know and believe.

The women stay at the base of the cross with John. They have been there for Jesus since the beginning since Galilee. They are there for Jesus.

Joseph, said to be a secret disciple of Jesus, risks arrest and goes to Pilot and bravely asks for Jesus body. But first, Pilot summons the Centurion to confirm Jesus is dead. I wonder how the centurion felt about being summoned before Pilot, after declaring Jesus was the son of God.

Pilot grants the body of Jesus to Joseph.



Ciseri's painting is haunting. Joseph and most likely Nicodemus carry Jesus and so does John and the women follow. John looks directly at us. I wonder why?

They carry Jesus and mourn. Instead of Jesus' body being thrown into a common grave, Joseph has his body wrapped in a linen cloth and laid in a new tomb, a fitting burial for Jesus. There is no time for washing and embalming the body. By touching a corpse Joseph and Nicodemus have become ritually unclean. They roll a large stone against the tomb's door and leave.

The women watch from a distance and see where Jesus' body has been laid.

For now, they will need to wait until it is time to return to the tomb. Perhaps they will return and wash and embalm his body, with precious oils and spices.

Until then they will dwell in the in-between time, where they experience profound grief, before they are surprised by hope.

Moment of Silence



Prayers for Good Friday

Let us pray, brothers and sisters,
for the holy Church of God throughout the world,
that God may guide it and gather it together.
so that we may worship God in peace and tranquillity.

Silence

God of power and love,
you have shown your compassion in Jesus Christ.

Guide the work of the Church.

Help it to persevere in faith and to proclaim your name to people everywhere.

Taize song: O Lord Hear my Prayer.

Maureen Teresa Ward 2013

<https://youtu.be/f51n-yb11dY?si=cx7c2qmUMqbysnMQ>

Lord, we pray for those in positions of power,
in government and business
Lord, guide their hearts and minds,
so all may live in peace and justice.

Silence

God of power and love,
defender of the poor and oppressed,
call to account the rulers of this world,
so that people everywhere may enjoy
justice, peace, and freedom and a fair share of the goodness of creation.



Taize song: O Lord Hear my Prayer.

Lord, we pray for all who are sick or dying,
especially those within our congregation,
We pray for all who are homeless or in prison,
and for all who suffer from hunger or violence.

silence

God of power and love,
strength of the weary,
hope of the despairing,
hear the cries of your suffering children,
and give us the courage to be agents of your love for them.
We pray in the name of Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Taize song: O Lord Hear my Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now
and for ever. Amen.**



A Lament from the Cross

We are invited to spend some time standing beside the cross.

Behold the cross on which was hung the salvation of the world.
Come, let us worship.

Silence

Look, all you who pass by
 Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow,
 which is brought upon me.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.



Taizé Song: Jesus, remember me.

Jean Paul Parascandalo 2018

<https://youtu.be/YjLZKR3c98?si=tbCv6muuMunzSPF4>

My peace I gave, which the world cannot give,
 and washed your feet as a servant,
 but you draw the sword to strike in my name,
 and seek high places in my kingdom.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

Taizé Song: Jesus, remember me.

I accepted the cup of suffering and death for your sakes,
 but you scatter and deny and abandon me.
 I sent the Spirit of truth to guide you,
 but you close your hearts to guidance.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.





Taizé Song: Jesus, remember me.

I call you to go out and bear fruit,
but you cast lots for my clothing.
I prayed that all may be one,
but you continue to quarrel and divide.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.



Taizé Song: Jesus, remember me.

I came to you as the least of your brothers and sisters.
I was hungry and you gave me no food;
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink;
I was a stranger and you did not welcome me;
naked, and you did not clothe me;
sick and in prison, and you did not visit me.

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

Taizé Song: Jesus, remember me.

Final Prayer



Lord Jesus Christ,
the story of your suffering is written on our hearts,
and the salvation of the world is in your outstretched hands.
Keep your victory always before our eyes,
your praise on our lips,
your peace in our lives. Amen.

May you find in the cross,
a sure ground for faith,
a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sins forgiven. **Amen.**

Hymn 779 May the Feet of God

Robin & Dorothy Mann 2015

<https://youtu.be/WfOFIWxGaP8?si=b2FDVDHZKleoQF68>