

# GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

## COMMUNITY WELCOME

- Tawow, Bienvenue, Welcome to this time of worship. While we join remotely in our individual or family places of social isolation and physical distancing, please be mindful that in this moment we are joining in a spiritual way with the entire community of St. Albert United Church who are also participating in this same worship opportunity from their homes and places of safe physical distancing.

- As you and/or your family move through the service, I invite you to read aloud the words of the prayers, readings, etc. Even if you are alone, speaking the words aloud can help internalize and deepen the worship experience. If there are other loved ones gathered with you, I invite you to share the leader parts with all who are comfortable with and able to read.

- In addition, at points in the service below there will be links to YouTube videos of an opening, the All Ages Time and the Message. There will also be links to some music/sung hymns that unfortunately are not local but are legally accessible on the internet. I have included them because we are all aware that music is such an important aspect of worshipping.

- Finally, as many of you are feeling the stress and grief of not being free to socialize with your friends nor to gather in physical community with the members of our faith community, your ministry team are also missing contact with each of you. We pray this and other remote and virtual communal experiences of worship will be a blessing to you all.

A Video Welcome from Mervin <https://youtu.be/kjVbaT8DFMM>

## CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The forecast said Friday was going to be a mix of sun and cloud.

**All: But regardless of what is happening in the sky overhead, there is a shadow of anguish and fear - of isolation and death - looming over us.**

One: The calendar says it is “Good Friday.”

**All: But what is “good” about the ancient story of torture, crucifixion and death? What is “good” about the separation, threat, and grief of life in the middle of COVID19?**

One: Even though it feels unsettled and scary, we enter into this time of physically distant and virtual worship together as a community of faith.

**All: We gather virtually, yet we do so in trust that the pains of our lives are being absorbed into the remembrance of Jesus’ pain and in our oneness, we entrust our spirits into the hands of our loving God.**

## PRAYER OF APPROACH (in unison)

**We join in worship today, Suffering Christ, feeling the vulnerability of your last hours more deeply than any other “Good Friday” in our lifetime. With each shout of “Crucify him!”; with each lash of your flogging; with each jab of the crown of thorns upon your head; with each plodding step carrying the cross on your back; with the pain of each nail being driven into your body; with your last gasp of breath – we hear echoes of the COVID19 suffering that so many are experiencing in our time. Be with us as we journey into your suffering and through this journey may we find healing for our souls. Amen.**

HYMN: [Were You There When They Crucified My Lord](#)

MERVIN: TIME FOR ALL AGES <https://youtu.be/XaWZvIJ1mgs>

HYMN: [Like a Rock](#)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

**If we are honest with ourselves, it is all too easy to see in ourselves the characteristics that we jeer in the betrayal of Judas... that we mock in the running away of the disciples when Jesus was arrested... that we “tsk-tsk” in the denials of Peter. We too have moments of becoming impatient with the slow pace at which God’s justice enters into the reality of our world and want to take matters into our own hands. Often, we too are more concerned with our personal security than in being in solidarity with Jesus’ courageous resolve to not back down from God’s call in our lives. At times, we too find that it is safer to deny our knowledge of Jesus than to bear witness to our covenant relationship with the God of undying love.**

**... silent reflection...**

ANTHEM OF ASSURANCE:

[Jesus Remember Me When you Come into your Kingdom](#)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Introduction: The Gospel reading suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary for Good Friday includes all of chapters 18 and 19 of John’s Gospel. If you have time during the day to read through and contemplate on this entire portion of the passion story you are encouraged to do so. For the purposes of this worship service we will read selected verses from three of the Gospels that focus on the last words of Jesus on the cross,  
- Please share the reading among those who gather physically with you.

(The Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and are used by permission. All rights reserved.)

## LUKE 23:33-46

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews.

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

## MATTHEW 27:45-50

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. 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?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." 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. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

## JOHN 19:23-30

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. 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 fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." 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. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

SILENT REFLECTION: *Please take time to reflect on all we have heard.*

MESSAGE: “Words From the Cross” <https://youtu.be/afi4jIIOcs0>

by Rev. Mervin Gallant

HYMN: [When I Survey the Wondrous Cross](#)

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(The following prayer, slightly adapted for Good Friday reference, is “Prayer Based on John 3” by Cora Krommenhoek in *Courage for Hallelujahs: Alternate Worship Resources for Lent and Easter* edited by Keri Wehlander – copyright 1997 The United Church Publishing House - edited words are in italics)

O God, who loves the world, You hold all that you have created within your compassionate embrace *even amid the sufferings of this Good Friday remembrance*. You hold each life torn by pain or sorrow or hatred within your aching heart.

O God, who loves the world, we want to believe that snakes in the grass *and Jesus suffering on a cross* can be transformed into symbols of healing but we are afraid to trust in your great goodness.

O God who loves the world, we cry out for wholeness, for ourselves, for those we love, and for our world.

May your healing presence gently transform the hidden places of our lives where we hold pain in the secret depths.

May your loving presence be a comforting reality for those who find themselves in despair, lost and alone.

May your transforming presence create generosity in place of greed...

Harmony in place of hatred... And everlasting justice where now evil reigns.

O God who loves the world, we bring before you from the silence of our own aching hearts those people and places that most need your healing, loving, transforming presence *on this Good Friday amid a COVID19 pandemic that envelops the whole world.*

*(Take a moment for silent prayer)*

O God who loves the world, this is your world and we claim your power and your presence to make it whole. Amen.

JESUS PRAYER (please recite together)

**Our Father and Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever and ever Amen.**

SENDING ANTHEM: Let the words of this hymn written by Marty Haugen wash over you as we draw this time of worship to a close.

[O God, Why Are You Silent?](#)