

Friday 7 April 2023

Good Friday

(Service for the whole Church family)



The Liturgy of the Passion comprises two services: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, usually with a vigil (or vigils) between. That's why the Maundy Thursday series does not close with a blessing. That blessing occurs at the end of this service.

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The hymn can be accessed via a YouTube link. Please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

The Welcome

Eternal God,

in the cross of Jesus we see the cost of our sin and the depth of your love:

in humble hope and fear,

may we place at his feet all that we have and all that we are,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

HYMN 1 Halleluia!

[\(please click on the link for the hymn\)](#)

There is a green hill far away

[\(please click on the link for the hymn\)](#)

In the name of the Father and of the Son

and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father

and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All And also with you.

O Lord open our lips:

All and our mouth shall proclaim your praise:

Let us worship the Lord:

All all praise to his name.

All Glory to the Father, and to the Son,

and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now,

and shall be for ever.

Amen.

Prayers of preparation and penitence

God our Father, we come to you in sorrow for the sins that placed you on the Cross:

Your feet were nailed to the Cross. We confess those sins which occurred when we

trespassed from the paths of love. Father, forgive us:

All Save us and help us

Your hands were nailed to the Cross. We confess those sins which occurred when

we used our hands for self and not for your Kingdom,

Father, forgive us:

All Save us and help us

Your head was pierced with a crown of thorns. We confess those sins which occurred when we allowed our minds to turn inward on self rather than outward to our neighbours. Father, forgive us:

All Save us and help us

Your side was pierced with a lance. We confess those sins which occurred when we allowed our hearts to love the world, the flesh and the devil. Father, forgive us:

All Save us and help us

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive us our sins
and make us holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

Praise and thanksgiving

**All Loving Lord, fill us with your life-giving,
joy-giving, peace-giving presence,
that we may praise you now with our lips
and all the day long with our lives,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

This Good Friday, we thank Christ for taking our sins,
Lord of heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

This Good Friday, we thank Christ for His Cross,
Lord of heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

This Good Friday, we thank Christ for winning our salvation,
Lord of heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

Because of Good Friday, we thank God that we can know Him,
Lord of heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

Because of Good Friday, we can be filled with the Holy Spirit,
Lord of heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

Because of Good Friday, the Holy Spirit can help us become Christlike,
Lord of heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

As Good Friday people, we thank God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—for our salvation,
Lord in heaven:

All We give you thanks and praise.

The Ministry of the Word

The Collect

Eternal God,
in the cross of Jesus
we see the cost of sin
and the depth of your love:
in humble hope and fear
may we place at his feet
all that we have and all that we are,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

First reading

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us

whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. *Isaiah 52:13-53:end*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

[The Holy Spirit says] 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.' He also adds, 'I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.' Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. *Hebrews 10:16-25*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 [When I survey the wondrous cross](#) (click on this link to hear the hymn)

Sermon incorporating St Matthew's narrative of the passion

It can be hard to try to understand, explain, or make sense of this day, Good Friday. I don't really try to anymore. I've given that up. What do you say on days like this? What can be said? Most of the explanations that I've heard or tried to come up with myself don't really satisfy. They are mostly avoidance—ways of avoiding death, and a betrayal of Jesus' humanity. I don't want us to do that today.

The risk for us today is to say too much and to try and make this day okay. It's not okay and it never will be. If it were, we'd have no need for Easter. And Easter is not what makes Good Friday 'good'. Easter is what keeps Good Friday from becoming the Last Friday.

There is not a view of this day long enough to eventually say, 'It was worth it.' You know as well as I do that sometimes loss is irreparable. The time is ruined. The suffering cannot be redeemed. We hear that in the story of Jesus' death. We see it in the pictures of the war, the scenes recently the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine. We feel it every time a friend or loved one dies. And we fear it when we think about our own deaths or the fear of losing those closest to us.

Maybe the most that can be said about this day is, 'That's what happened.' Maybe that's what I should do today. Maybe after we have heard the Passion of Christ, I should have stand before you and say, 'That's what happened,' and then I'll sit down. Isn't that what the gospel is for, what the Gospel writers did? They don't explain this day or make it acceptable. They just tell us what happened.

So let's hear what scripture says and see where this ancient story leads us.

Passion narrative

1 Matthew My name is Matthew. You will now hear part of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ that I wrote. As you hear it, you will learn of his death and passion and the wonderful salvation he achieved for us all.

After mocking Jesus, the soldiers stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon. They compelled this man to carry the cross of Jesus. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his

head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads.

2 Bystanders 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.

1 Matthew In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him.

3 Priests 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. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'

1 Matthew The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

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,

4 Jesus Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?

1 Matthew This phrase means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said,

2 Bystanders This man is calling for Elijah.

1 Matthew 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,

2 Bystanders Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.

1 Matthew Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. 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,

3 Priests Truly this man was God's Son!

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

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth 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. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

3 Priests Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead', and the last deception would be worse than the first. We need a guard of soldiers to make it as secure as possible.

1 Matthew So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing it with a great stone.

1 Matthew This is the Passion of the Lord.

That's what happened.

There is no escape from Good Friday. Trying to explain it doesn't undo today or take down the cross. Trying to understand, justify or apply reason doesn't save us from suffering, death, and the cross.

Jesus is never more real, more human, more embodied, more identified with and like us, than he is on the cross. It's not at his birth, or in his teaching and preaching, or the miracles he performs, or even at his resurrection. It's on the cross in his suffering and dying that his humanity is most fully displayed.

Jesus is never more present to us and our sufferings and deaths than he is today. That's the power and good of this Friday.

And that's not my explanation of this day, that's my experience. Maybe that's what it means to glory in the cross of Christ.

HYMN 3 Lamb of God

(please click on the link for the hymn)

A Statement of Christian Belief

I now ask you to stand and declare the profession of Christian faith into which you were baptised, and into which you live and grow:

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

The Prayers

Jesus, though crucified, is raised from the dead and now draws alongside us as we offer prayers to God for the world, the church, and all for whom Jesus died on the cross. Today we pray for ...

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

We pray for the church of God on this Good Friday that all who are disciples of Jesus will be given the grace and strength they need to walk in the way of the cross, speaking words of love and truth in places of hatred and lies. Today we pray for ...

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

We pray for God's world on this Good Friday that the dying Jesus on the cross and the living Jesus of resurrection will draw all people to himself, the source of eternal reconciliation and salvation. Today we pray for ...

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

We pray for the communities in which we live, work and worship that bonds of love within families and between friends will be healed where they are broken and strengthened where they are weak. Today we pray for ...

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

We pray for all those who are experiencing their own Good Friday darkness that all who suffer pain of body or mind will be held by the hands of Jesus which bear the marks of his pain and the promise of restoration and resurrection. Today we pray for ...

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

Heavenly Father, at the foot of the cross on which Jesus died we offer you these prayers in hope, trusting in your promise to hear us and in your power which raised Jesus from the dead. Let your grace, mercy, love and peace surround us and all those for whom we have prayed in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Today we pray for ...

Lord in your mercy

All Hear our prayer

We gather together all these prayers using the words that Jesus himself taught us:

**All 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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Peace

The Lord Jesus Christ said to his Apostles, 'My peace I leave you, my peace I give you.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All and also with you.

HYMN 4 Nearer my God to thee (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The conclusion and dismissal

**All Eternal God,
giver of love and life,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us
into all the world
to preach the gospel of the Kingdom.
Confirm us in his mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

O Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the living God,
set your passion, cross and death
between your judgement and our souls,
now and in the hour of our death.

Grant mercy and grace to the living,
rest to the departed,
to your Church peace and concord
and to us sinners forgiveness;
and the blessing of God the Almighty,
Father Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and remain with us always.

All Amen

HYMN 5 Were you there? (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

All In the name of Christ. Amen