



GOOD FRIDAY 2020

Prepared by Debbie and Tim Brewster

Welcome

Welcome everyone to our Good Friday Service. Leading up to Easter we have seen our world change dramatically in response to COVID 19. We face fear, loss, anxiety, isolation, and an uncertain future. We remind ourselves that while this is an unusual situation for us, it is and has been the reality of life for much of humankind throughout history.

Good Friday is a time for us to see once again that we are broken people living in a broken world and that we are in need of salvation. We invite you to join us as we open our eyes to see that we do have a rock and a refuge in uncertain times.

As always, a few suggestions before we begin:

1. Get prepared for worship – have your Bible close by, perhaps set up some favorite music to listen to. As it is Good Friday, we will not be having communion today.
2. Get into a ‘sacred’ space. It’s important, when we are not physically in a dedicated worship space (like a church building), to mentally and spiritually shift into a sense of worship. Be intentional. Some examples of how you might prepare: sit somewhere where you feel receptive and responsive to God (e.g. a cosy chair or outside in the garden); have some visual representation of God (perhaps a small cross, your Bible, a symbol or image); start with a few moments of silence and deep breathing.
3. Consider your environment and what will work for you. If you have others in your house – house-mates / family, consider sharing this time with them, each reading or participating as appropriate. Or you might simply reflect individually, in your own time and space.

Especially for this morning:

We would encourage you for today's service to have a cross with you and if possible to find a stone from your garden or it could just be something heavy that can represent burdens that you may carry at the moment. If being creative is something that helps you worship then we encourage you to find two sticks in your garden and to make a cross by wrapping wool or string around the centre. God bless you as we worship together.



(Worship installation by Linda Barry)

“Good Friday”

This week we will start with some well-known hymns. Silently reflect on the words, pray, or feel free to sing along.

“When I survey the wondrous cross”

When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but Loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did ever such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

(Isaac Watts, 1707)

“The Old Rugged Cross”

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suff’ring and shame;
And I love that old cross
Where the Dearest and Best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

So I’ll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it someday for a crown.

Oh, that old rugged cross,
So despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God
Left His glory above
To bear it to dark Calvary.

In that old rugged cross,
Stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see,
For ’twas on that old cross
Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true;
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He’ll call me someday
To my home far away,
Where His glory forever I’ll share.

(George Bennard, 1912)

Bible Reading

Matthew 27: 45-56 (Read by Max Moody)

⁴⁵ From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

⁴⁷ When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.”

⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. ⁴⁹ The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

⁵⁰ And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split ⁵² and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs after Jesus’ resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

⁵⁵ Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. ⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

“What love is this?”

You never change, You are the God You say You are
When I'm afraid, You come and still my beating heart
You stay the same, when hope is just a distant thought
You take my pain, and You lead me to the cross

What love is this
That You gave Your life for me
And made a way for me to know You
And I confess
You're always enough for me
You're all I need

I look to You, I see the scars upon Your hands
And hold the truth, that when I can't You always can
And standing here, beneath the shadow of the cross
I'm overwhelmed, that I keep finding open arms

What love is this
That You gave Your life for me
And made a way for me to know You
And I confess
You're always enough for me
You're all I need
Jesus, in Your suffering
You were reaching
You thought of me
Jesus, in Your suffering
You were reaching
You thought of me

What love is this
That You gave Your life for me
And made a way for me to know You
And I confess
You're always enough for me
You're all I need
What love is this
That You gave Your life for me
And made a way for me to know You
And I confess
You're always enough for me...

Always enough for me
Always enough for me

(Kari Jobe, 2012) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3bo7TUMsck>

Prayer

(Have the stone you collected and a cross with you)

Dear God,

Some of us are exhausted by a constant stream of bad news.

Some of us are exhausted from the effort of trying to not freak out.

Some of us are exhausted by not knowing how we will pay rent.

Some of us are exhausted from the effort of trying to entertain and educate and feed and love children who are stuck at home.

Some of us are exhausted by the 13 hour shifts in a hospital we no longer recognize, working a job we are afraid might kill us.

Some of us showed up to this pandemic with pre-existing physical and mental health conditions that were already exhausting.

Some of us are exhausted by loneliness.

Some of us are exhausted by waiting so long for a new season of Succession.

And some of us are exhausted by the effort of trying to make this all ok for everyone else.

Life is so strained and tender right now.

Lord, in the silence as we hold or imagine the stone in our hands let us name our exhaustion, our worries, our fears, our doubts, our anger, our confusion, our hurts, our failures.

And now Lord may we take the stone in our hand and place it at the foot of whatever cross we have with us at the moment or maybe just at an imaginary cross. As we lay the stone at the cross may we give all of the things we have named to you. As we give them to you may we feel a weight lift and may we breathe in your peace, your restoration, your strength.

We know that not a single one of us is promised another day, God.

But we ask for the strength for just the one we are in.

Give us today our daily strength.

Strength for today, and if you could spare it, bright hope for tomorrow.

God unbound by time, help us to know that you are already present in the future we are fearing.

Amen.

(Prayer adapted from "Sunday Prayers by Nadia Bolz-weber 5 April 2020")

Good Friday Reflection:

It is good to be worshipping together today. I love the last words of that prayer by Nadia Bolz-Weber, "God unbound by time, help us to know that you are already present in the future we are a fearing."

I have been thinking about how God is not only present in our future but how God is able to resurrect our future. Many of you will remember the well know sermon by Tony Campolo "It's Friday but Sunday's coming". On Friday Jesus was crucified and there was despair in the world and a sense of hopelessness amongst the disciples. They didn't realise that Sunday was coming. Sunday when the resurrection occurred and everything became new. At the moment it may feel like we are living in a Friday in some sense ... but be assured Sunday is coming. Through Christ's resurrection there is hope, there is life, there is forgiveness, there is resurrection. I have been reflecting this week about what resurrection will look like after all this. What new growth and new learnings will appear for us as individuals and as a human race? Will we change for the better? Will we let God resurrect us?

But for now, on this Good Friday, I sit quietly, I lament, I grieve ... for all that is happening, and for so much more. I think of Jesus and the power of the cross ... and I remind myself that we are loved, we are known, we are forgiven and I remember that Sunday is coming. Sunday is coming.

I invite you now to take some time now to reflect on the words of the next song or listen on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aowdjLeaCYs>

"The power of the cross"

Oh, to see the dawn
Of the darkest day:
Christ on the road to Calvary.
Tried by sinful men,
Torn and beaten, then
Nailed to a cross of wood.

This, the pow'r of the cross:
Christ became sin for us;
Took the blame, bore the wrath—
We stand forgiven at the cross.

Oh, to see the pain
Written on Your face,
Bearing the awesome weight of sin.
Ev'ry bitter thought,
Ev'ry evil deed
Crowning Your bloodstained brow.

Now the daylight flees;
Now the ground beneath
Quakes as its Maker bows His head.
Curtain torn in two,
Dead are raised to life;
"Finished!" the vict'ry cry.

Oh, to see my name
Written in the wounds,
For through Your suffering I am free.
Death is crushed to death;
Life is mine to live,
Won through Your selfless love.

This, the pow'r of the cross:
Son of God—slain for us.
What a love! What a cost!
We stand forgiven at the cross.

Words and Music by Keith Getty & Stuart Townend
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Community News:

We hope you have found time during this week to pause and to engage with the wonderful Easter Prayer labyrinth prepared by Julia and the Maundy Thursday service prepared by the people from Shakhara. We hope that this has helped you to press deeper into your relationship with God.

A reminder that online Alpha begins on Sunday 19 April and Thursday 23 April. Alpha is a chance to explore some of the big questions about life and the Christian faith and it is open to anyone. It was good to see in the weekly email from Kaye a list of people's birthdays for this week. If you are someone celebrating your birthday we want to wish you an extra special birthday and pray God's deep peace and blessing for you. Today we want to say a very special happy birthday to Keith Hicken who turns 90 today. Happy birthday Keith! We all send you and Beverley our love, prayers and best wishes.

As a church we are setting aside time each Tuesday night from 7.30 – 8.30pm to pray. Please join with us in praying at this time, as you are able.

We want to mention again to keep checking your emails for weekly communications from the church. In this you will find updates about some of the other wonderful things happening with kids, youth and other groups in the church.

Lastly a reminder to join with us live on the Ringwood Church of Christ Facebook page for our Easter dawn service this Sunday morning at 6.15am as we watch the sunrise. If you don't have Facebook then we still encourage you to take time to pray and worship with us wherever you are before the sun rises at 6.44am. We also invite you to join with us at 11am for live communion and then for morning tea together via our zoom foyer experience. The links for these will be in the email sent to you or on our Facebook page.

Closing prayer:

Loving God, we thank you for this time of worship. Thankyou that Sunday is coming. Thank you that because of what Jesus did on the cross we can know hope, forgiveness, resurrection and abundant life in you. Thank you that you are already in our future and we need not fear. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Additional worship resources:

Poem "What kind of king are you" <https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/301941-kind-king-powerful-poem-palm-sunday-holy-week.html>

Acapella version of "Were you there when they crucified my Lord"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRaFdFkOVyY>

Song "God of Calvary" by Chris Tomlin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ac3BhvK2blg>