

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Notes about the service: This is a time of somber remembrance of what Jesus endured on the cross; the torture, the ridicule, the pain, the nails, the thorns, the cross. The focus is upon Jesus and his willingness to die to set us free. With this in mind, Pastor may be heard but not seen at times. The space will be dark with only the light of candles illuminating the space. These candles will be extinguished one by one after each reading. At time in the reading that is the crucifixion, you will hear three loud bangs... this symbolizes the nails going into the hands and feet of Jesus. Please have a candle of your own that is lit at the beginning of service. You will be directed at the appropriate time to extinguish your candle.

The passion and death of Jesus according to the Gospel of John.

We begin... **In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We continue our journey with Jesus and begin where we left off last night...

Jesus before Pilate

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. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jewish leaders replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Pilate Again Questions Jesus

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" 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?" 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 Jewish leaders. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." 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." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

First Candle is Extinguished.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

After he had said this, he went out to those gathered again and told them, "I find no case against him. 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?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Second Candle is Extinguished.

Pilate Orders the Flogging of Jesus

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. 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." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The people 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."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 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?" 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."

Third Candle is Extinguished.

Pilate Tries to Release Jesus

From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the people 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."

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. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the people, "Here is your King!" 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." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

Fourth Candle is Extinguished.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of those gathered 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. Then the chief priests of the Jewish people said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.' " Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

You will hear 3 loud bangs... then the pastor will continue with the cross in view...

Behold the life-giving wood of the cross, on which hung the one, who freed the world.
Come let us come in adoration.

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Come let us come in adoration.

Behold the life-giving wood of the cross, on which hung the one, who freed the world.
Come let us come in adoration.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.
By your holy cross, you have renewed the world.

Fifth Candle is Extinguished.

The Soldier Cast Lots for Jesus' Clothing

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.

Jesus Gives his Mother into the Care of His Disciple John

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.

Sixth Candle is Extinguished.

Jesus Dies on the Cross

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.

Christ Candle is Extinguished.

At this time... each person will extinguish the candle that they have lit at home.

A moment of silence.

Pastor will play... Where you there. (time 0:2:15)

(Instrumental on the "Lent: The Forty Day Journey" track. Amazon Music. No further credentials provided.)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.
By your holy cross, you have renewed the world.

Jesus' Side Is Pierced

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jewish leaders 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. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?
Answer me.

I gave you a royal scepter, but you gave me a crown of thorns;
I gave you the kingdom and crowned you with eternal life,
but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

ALL: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?
Answer me.

I struck down your enemies, but you struck my head with a reed;
I gave you my peace, but you draw the sword in my name,
and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

ALL: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?
Answer me.

I lifted you up to the heights, but you lifted me high on a cross;
I raised you from death and prepared for you the tree of life, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

ALL: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?
Answer me.

I grafted you into my people Israel, but you made them scapegoats for your own guilt,
and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

ALL: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: O my people, O my church, what more could I have done for you?
Answer me.

I came to you in the least of your brothers and sisters,
but I was hungry and you gave me no food,
thirsty and you gave me no drink,
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,
and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

ALL: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: Remember my beloved, the words that were spoken from God last night. You are forgiven, you are renewed, you are freed... in the cross of Christ... you and I are one in God and God in us.

P: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

ALL: By your holy cross you have renewed the world.

The Burial of Jesus

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jewish leaders, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jewish people. 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. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

P: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

ALL: By your holy cross you have renewed the world.

P: Let us pray as Jesus taught us to pray:

ALL: Our Father, 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, forever and ever. Amen.

During the prayer, the Christ candle is taken out of sanctuary. A loud bang will be heard, symbolizing the closing of the tomb.

The service will end in silence and the zoom connection will end abruptly.