

Introduction to Worship

Good Friday 2020



This Good Friday comes during tough times when we are in lockdown.

We cannot join our brothers and sisters in Christ at church, where we comfort one another, or go on Good Friday walks with our brothers and sisters from other denominations in the area.

But we can pray for one another and join together in worship from our homes and remember Jesus.

I've chosen psalm 22 which speaks of Jesus suffering and our own. I've never met anyone who hasn't suffered or experienced brokenness. We are all united in our suffering, whether past or present and we are united in our journey into the future.

I've also chosen Mark's gospel which offers us a surprise and hope in the midst of the chaos and fear that surrounded Jesus death.

Jurgen Moltmann, a well-known theologian answered a question: *Where was God when Jesus was suffering on the cross?* He said God was holding Jesus and suffering with him.

This statue, which is unique, portrays God holding Jesus as he died.

May you find this service helpful and comforting

Rev Tina

<https://www.mountviewuca.org/worship.html>

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Mountview Worship @ Home
Good Friday 10th April 2020

Welcome to our Service

Today is a time to come before God and to put aside our worries and concerns
and find strength in worshipping God

Acknowledgement

We Acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place
We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.



If you have a cross place it on a table in front of you or beside you.

Let us worship God

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

Opening Prayer

Holy God, who has opened our ears to hear your Word,
and our lips to proclaim your truth,
open our eyes this day to see in the cross,
the revelation of your love,
in our beloved Jesus Christ,
crucified on the cross,
for our sake. Amen

Hymn: Beauty for Brokenness

Please read the words prayerfully or sing the hymn

Beauty for brokenness,
 hope for despair,
 Lord, in the suffering,
 this is our prayer.
 Bread for the children,
 justice, joy, peace,
 sunrise to sunset
 your kingdom increase.

Shelter for fragile lives,
 cures for their ills,
 work for the craftsmen,
 trade for their skills;
 land for the dispossessed,
 rights for the weak;
 voices to plead the cause
 of those who can't speak.

*God of the poor,
 friend of the weak,
 give us compassion we pray;
 melt our cold hearts,
 let tears fall like rain.
 Come change our love
 from a spark to a flame.*

Lighten our darkness,
 breathe on this flame
 until your justice burns
 brightly again;
 until the nations
 learn of your ways,
 seek your salvation
 and bring you their praise.

God of the poor...

Graham Kendrick 1950- © CCLI

Readings

Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
 Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. Yet you are holy,
 enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.
 But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock
 at me; they make mouths at me; they shake their heads; "Commit your cause to the LORD;
 let him deliver – let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast.
 On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God.
 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. Many bulls encircle me, strong
 bulls of Bashan surround me; they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax;
 it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
 you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me.
 My hands and feet have shrivelled. I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me;
 they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.

But you, O LORD, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul from the
 sword, my life from the power of the dog! Save me from the mouth of the lion!
 From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.
 I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
 in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
 You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring
 of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
 For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted;
 he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him.
 From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
 The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD.
 May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall
 worship before him. For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. To him,
 indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
 and I shall live for him. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,
 and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

Mark 15: 21-39

15:21 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. 15:22 Then they brought Jesus to the place
 called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). 15:23 And they offered him wine mixed with
 myrrh; but he did not take it. 15:24 And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them,
 casting lots to decide what each should take. 15:25 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they
 crucified him. 15:26 The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."

15:27 And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. 15:29 Those who
 passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and
 build it in three days, 15:30 save yourself, and come down from the cross!"

15:31 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.

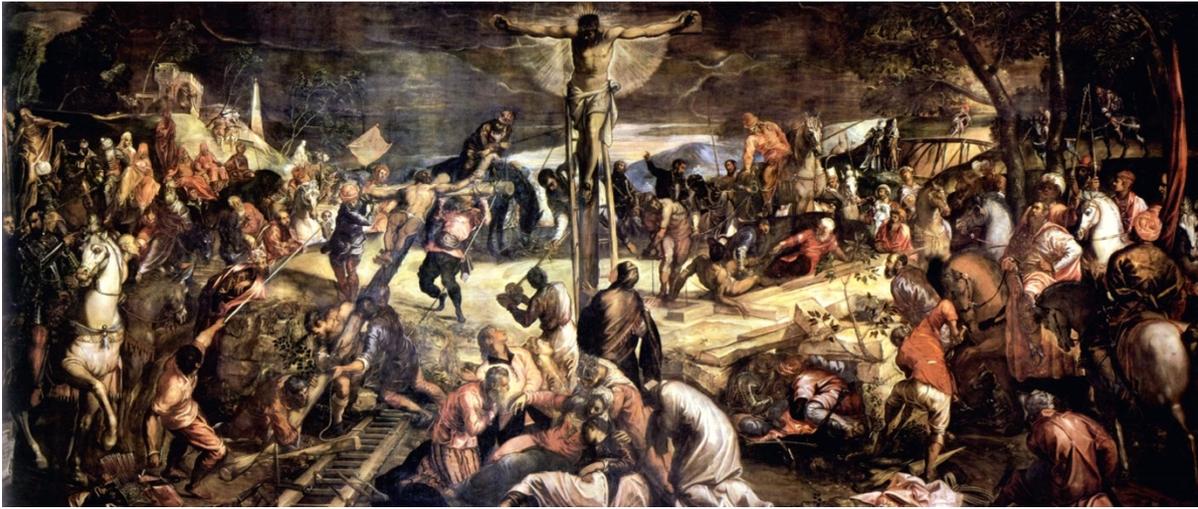
15:32 Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now,
 so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

15:33 When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

15:34 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?" 15:35 When some of the bystanders heard it,
 they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." 15:36 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." 15:37 Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. 15:38 And the curtain of the
 temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

15:39 Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said,
 "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Sermon



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

This picture is a portrait of chaos. Gathered around the cross are the powerful and the powerless, people who grieve and others who celebrate. Some are sad and others happy. There are the strong and the weak, the whole and broken. Such contrasts are part of life's profound beauty and fragility.

Jesus Christ died in the midst of this chaos. We cannot begin to imagine how he was feeling when he was dying. The gospels help us witness the fragility of Jesus in his suffering and his eternal beauty in his divinity and death. The beauty of a noble and divine human being embodying God and the best of us and the fragility of a suffering man. John's gospel tells us Jesus' death on the cross was a moment of God's glory. We may not have been at the crucifixion, but we do know that it changed everything for us and set us free from all that can defeat us.

In the midst of the chaos a centurion witnessed the death of Jesus.
He stood facing Jesus and saw him die and at the moment of his death called out:
"Truly, this man is the Son of God."

The centurion was a man toughened by war and the constant violence of crucifying rebels and anyone considered an enemy of Rome. He commanded one hundred men, some of whom may have whipped, humiliated and mocked Jesus. It was the Romans who convicted Jesus for the crime of being; "King do the Jews." The Centurion had his orders and commanded the soldiers who tortured, mocked, and humiliated Jesus.

Perhaps the centurion made Simon carry Jesus Cross. He had that power. Jesus was crucified on a hill called Golgotha, outside the city of Jerusalem's walls and the centurion stood below the cross looking up at his face. Something profound must have happened for him to realise Jesus was different from all the other people he had his soldiers crucify.

He may have witnessed Pilate's confession that Jesus was innocent. Perhaps Jesus' trial went against Roman notions of justice and he witnessed Pilate in his weakness giving into the crowds to maintain peace and sacrificing Jesus to prevent a riot. Perhaps he was there when Pilate called in hundreds of soldiers to make sure the peace was kept. Like all Romans he would have considered his Emperor his god and Jesus a zealot and rebel. So, what made him go against his beliefs?

I wonder if he witnessed cosmic and earth-shattering events such as darkness for three hours or heard about the temple curtain being torn in two. Perhaps he saw how Jesus responded to being tortured and saw how Jesus maintained a sense of dignity and peace within himself. Perhaps he witnessed Jesus call out to God, forgive those who hurt him and show love and compassion for his mother, entrusting her into John's care.

Would this be enough?

This Roman Centurion became the first convert after Jesus' death. He declared what many were unable to do, and his conversion has been remembered throughout all history.

Mark's gospel says he stood before Jesus when he died. Perhaps he looked into Jesus eyes when he died. When people die it is a sacred moment where they surrender their soul into God's keeping. I've seen people's faces filled with light, peace, joy and love when they go home to God. It's a moment of grace. The person's face reveals their trust for God, the bliss of reunion and a sense of relief at going home to God. It's a privilege to be there and accompany them on their journey home. The centurion would not have been a stranger to death. Something else happened when Jesus died. Perhaps the Centurion looked into Jesus face and saw God. It's beyond our knowing to imagine what he saw. We can ask questions. What would Jesus' face looked like when he, Emmanuel, God with us, released his spirit into the care of God? We can ponder. Would it would be like God being united with God? Whatever the Centurion saw it was enough for him to declare: "*Truly, this man is the Son of God.*"

The death of Jesus is unforgettable. His death has blessed us all throughout the ages. The fragility and beauty of Jesus death on the cross has touched our hearts.
Truly, Jesus is the Son of God.

Rev Tina

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Let us pray for the church throughout the world
For God to guide us all
During these challenging times

God of Power and love,
You have shown your compassion in Jesus Christ.
You guide the work of your church and
empower and strengthen all those in leadership and ministry
and all those who serve your church
You help us persevere in faith and serve your church.

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

God of power and love
Defender of the poor and oppressed
We bring before you all those who are struggling
The poor, the homeless, those who are ill,
The lonely, the forsaken, the broken,
Students who are far from home, feeling alone
and without resources or a home,
those who have lost their jobs
those who have Covid-19 or are recovering
those with cancer or mental health issues
bless, heal, comfort and guide all who we bring before you
on the stretchers of our prayers

Lord, we pray for families separated,
for those feeling alone and afraid, anxious and worried.
Calm us all Lord with your peace,
help us be guided by our feelings and thoughts, so we take care and are cautious,
but not overwhelmed. Help us combine wisdom and caution, hope and faith
so, we may find a way forward

Lord we bring before you our loved ones
and ourselves in this moment of silence

silence

God of power and,
 strength of the weary and hope of the despairing,
 hear our cries and give us courage to continue reaching out to others
 in their time of need and accepting their comfort and help in our time of need.
 We pray all this in the name of Jesus Christ, our saviour, amen

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in Heaven,
 Hallowed be your name,
 Your kingdom come,
 Your will be done,
 On earth as it is 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 forever. Amen*

Hymn: Jesus Christ is Waiting

Read or sing prayerfully

Jesus Christ is waiting,
 waiting in the streets;
 no-one is his neighbour,
 all alone he eats.
 Listen, Lord Jesus,
 I am lonely too.
 Make me, friend or stranger,
 fit to wait on you.

Jesus Christ is healing,
 healing in the streets;
 curing those who suffer,
 touching those he greets.
 Listen, Lord Jesus,
 I have pity too.
 Let my care be active,
 healing just like you.

Jesus Christ is calling,
 calling in the streets,
 'Who will join my journey?
 I will guide their feet.'
 Listen, Lord Jesus,
 let my fears be few.
 Walk one step before me;
 I will follow you.

John L. Bell 1949-; © One Licence

Dismissal

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 and
 Your peace in our lives, amen