

The United Church of Canada
Bathurst Pastoral Charge
First United Church, Bathurst
www.firstunited-bathurst.ca

April 19, 2019
Good Friday

Minister	Rev. Neal Palmer	Organist	Martha Vickers
Office Adm.	Isabel Clouston	Greeters	Margaret Payne-Chénard
Custodian	Steve White		Mike Kierstead

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Lectionary for today

John 18:1-19:42

*The asterisk * identifies those times in the service where the congregation is invited to stand as able.*

GATHERING

GATHERING PRAYER (in unison)

Let's pray together...

Holy One,
at the edge of this stark day,
we bring our humanity.
Be with us, we pray.
In the stillness, in the story,
in the shadows of our frailty and faults,
help us discern your presence.
As we remember the events of this day
so many years ago,
show us again the way forward
through the depths and beyond the challenges.
Be our guide, we pray.
Amen.



ANTHEM – “Lead Me to Calvary”

CANDLE LIGHTING

...We are held in the love of Christ.

SUNG RESPONSE –

“O God, Why Are You Silent?” – MV #73 (Verse 1)

O God, why are you silent?
I cannot hear your voice;
the proud and strong and violent
all claim you and rejoice;
you promised you would hold me
with tenderness and care.
Draw near, O Love, enfold me,
and ease this pain I bear.

ENGAGING

SCRIPTURE READING – John 18:1-27

Helen Knowles

BELL (rung three times)

SILENT MEDITATION

POEM – “In the Courtyard” by Beth Donaldson

Helen Knowles

SUNG RESPONSE –

“O God, Why Are You Silent?” – MV #73 (Verse 2)

Now lost within my grieving,
I fall and lose my way,
My fragile, faint believing
So swiftly swept away.
O God of pain and sorrow,
My compass and my guide,
I cannot face the morrow
Without you by my side.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 18:28-40

Joanne Wiseman

BELL (rung three times)

SILENT MEDITATION

POEM – “Released and Condemned” by Beth Donaldson
Joanne Wiseman

SUNG RESPONSE –

“O God, Why Are You Silent?” – MV #73 (Verse 3)
My hope lies bruised and battered,
my wounded heart is torn;
my spirit spent and shattered
by life’s relentless storm;
will you not bend to hear me,
my cries from deep within?
Have you no word to cheer me
when night is closing in?

SCRIPTURE READING – John 19:1-16a *Wayne Lord*

BELL (rung three times)

SILENT MEDITATION

POEM – “Away with Him” by Beth Donaldson *Wayne Lord*

SUNG RESPONSE – “When Jesus Wept” – VU #146

When Jesus wept,
The falling tear in mercy
Flowed beyond all bound;
When Jesus groaned,
A trembling fear seized
All the guilty world around.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 19:16b-27 *Sherry Mitton*

BELL (rung three times)

SILENT MEDITATION

POEM – “He Carries” by Beth Donaldson *Sherry Mitton*

SUNG RESPONSE – “Were You There” – VU #144 (Verse 1)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

SCRIPTURE READING – John 19:28-34, 36-42 *Catherine Eddy*

BELL (rung three times)

SILENT MEDITATION

POEM – “Still” by Jan Richardson *Catherine Eddy*

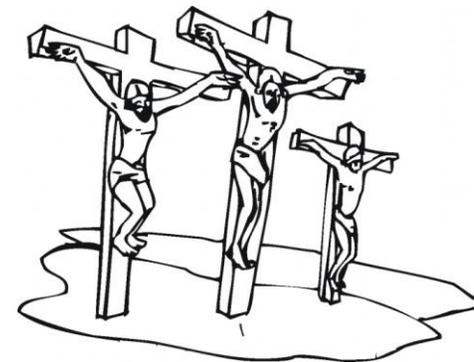
CLOSING

SILENCE

Duet - “Were You There” *Isabel & John Clouston*

BELL (rung three final times)

DEPART IN SILENCE



*But from this earth,
this grave,
this dust,
My God shall raise me up,
I trust.
~Walter Raleigh*

SCRIPTURE READING – John 18:1-27

18 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples.

3 So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?"

5 They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

6 When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground.

7 Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go."

9 This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me."

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus.

11 Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

12 So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

13 First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest,

16 but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.

17 The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

18 Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and

warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

19 Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

20 Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret.

21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said."

22 When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?"

23 Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"

24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not."

26 One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"

27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

POEM – “In the Courtyard” by Beth Donaldson

In the whispers around the edges
Haunt as we remember his words;
“Very truly, I tell you...
Before the cock crows...”
The accusing curiosities mount;
“Isn’t he one of them?”
Hushed and condemning;
“Wasn’t he among those who followed?”
But he had said, too:
“Where I am going, you cannot follow me now.”
All these years and months of following;
Now, to deny
Now, to abandon
Now, to allow betrayal?
“Why can I not follow you now?”
Why does our courage leave us when
All we desire
Is to rise
To your vision
Soar to your affection
And stand tall in your truth and trust?
Instead
We find ourselves
Frozen by our frail and lonely
Humanity.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 18:28-40

28 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.
29 So Pilate went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?”
30 They answered, “If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.”
31 Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.” The Jews replied, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death.”
32 (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)
33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”
34 Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?”
35 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?”
36 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 Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.”
37 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.”
38 Pilate asked him, “What is truth?” After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, “I find no case against him.
39 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?”
40 They shouted in reply, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a bandit.

POEM – “Released and Condemned” by Beth Donaldson
Holy Creator, Parent, and Friend,
To you we pray in this gloaming:
From a world that chooses might over right;
For all pressed down by empire’s gluttonous appetites;
Children of war,
Families in famine,
Communities in conflict,
All who flee in helpless hope for sanctuary.
From the platform of rigid legalism
That cannot see the saving love
Standing naked before it
Asking us to hear, see, know
A God who loves with reckless abandon.
To you we lift our prayers of wonder
At how it happened
That those “so loved”
Could allow fear to win;
That day – this day?
To you we raise our silent wonder
At evil’s insipid ability
to destroy Adams,
Edens,
Eves, and mornings,
Joy,
Truth,
Hope.
Have mercy, Divine Embrace;
Have mercy, Living Breath.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 19:1-16a

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.
2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.
3 They kept coming up to him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ and striking him on the face.
4 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.’
5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, ‘Here is the man!’
6 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.’
7 The Jews 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.’
8 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever.
9 He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, ‘Where are you from?’ But Jesus gave him no answer.
10 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?’
11 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.’
12 From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews 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.’
13 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.
14 Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, ‘Here is your King!’
15 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.’
16a Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

POEM – “Away with Him” by Beth Donaldson

They mocked and condemned;
Their thorny disdain
pressing ever more deeply
into his tired mind
with each hateful word.
“Crucify him! Crucify him!” they shouted
Wrapping him in the bruised
Purple of their fickleness and fear;
“Away with him” they insisted,
Draping him in the royal
Richness of their pain and anguish –
Demanding he carry it now.
“Shall I crucify your King?” he asked;
And we say “yes”
With each willingness
Not to feel
Not to see
Not to know
The crucifixions of love
Happening everywhere – always.
Until we allow ourselves to take in
The drops of red suffering
Beneath the woven crown and willing heart
Of a savior whose love
Was too much.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 19:16b-27

16b So they took Jesus;
17 and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.
18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.
19 Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”
20 Many of the Jews 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.
21 Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’”
22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”
23 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.
24 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.”
25 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.
26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.”
27 Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

POEM – “He Carries” by Beth Donaldson

He carried the cross;
He carries us now;
Our bodies heavy and stiff
from the weight of living:
the strains of loving, hurt,
and occasional exuberance.
We lie over his shoulder
in cruciform, reaching
for the things that never offer
the soft quenching
and kind welcome
we ache for.
He died there,
taunted again
sour words meeting his ears
as sour wine met his lips;
his life wrestled over
and torn
gambled away by hypocrisy and greed.
And below, she wept
sisters standing vigil
a wall of Marys,
marred, maimed,
Married to grief now:
an arranged marriage,
eternal,
empty.
He died there,
but not before
one more grace
“Woman, behold thy son.”
“Friend, behold thy mother.”
He died there,
draping the arms of his love
across our broken stiff-armed center
offering us
to each other.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 19:28-34, 36-42

(At the point at which the reader speaks the words, “It is finished,” have someone extinguish the Christ candle.)

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), ‘I am thirsty.’

29 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.

30 When Jesus had received the wine, he said, ‘*It is finished.*’ Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews 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.

32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

36 These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, ‘None of his bones shall be broken.’

37 And again another passage of scripture says, ‘They will look on the one whom they have pierced.’

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

41 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.

42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

POEM – "Still" by Jan Richardson

This day

let all stand still

in silence,

in sorrow.

Sun and moon

be still.

Earth

be still.

Still

the waters.

Still

the wind.

Let the ground

gape in stunned

lamentation.

Let it weep

as it receives

what it thinks

it will not

give up.

Let it groan

as it gathers

the One

who was thought

forever stilled.

Time

be still.

Watch

and wait.

Still.