

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

April 3, 2026

Good Friday

Minister Rev. David Allan **Music Director** Martha Vickers

Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott

Greeters Julie & Harvey Spence

Audio & Visual Technician Shirley Allain & Lester Scott

All musical selections reprinted under license #4-606499, One License for Churches

Lectionary - Good Friday

Psalm 22, John 18:1—19:42

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

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT *(in unison)*

As we gather to worship, let's respectfully pause to remember we live and love and work and worship on lands that are, by law, the unceded territory of the original peoples, the Mi'kmaq. May we live with respect on this land, and live in peace and in friendship with its people.

***GATHERING HYMN:** "When We are Tested" MV #65
(tune: Be Thou My Vision – Slane VU #642)

When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.

When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.

When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for the pow'r to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.

When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Saviour, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

Words by Ruth Duck, 1996

CALL TO WORSHIP:(responsively)

The days leading to today have been difficult enough, and now before the cross, safely keeping our distance yet feeling defenseless, we try to explain and understand both the intimate and the indefensible. Here, on God's Friday, where only days before shouts of hope and joy were heard,

now there are cries for violence and condemnation.

Where once we heard sacred words of compassion, healing and the promise of life,

there is only silence, and pain pressing in on a loving and broken heart.

A man who spread his spirit wide to embrace a thirsty world,

**now stretches his arms on a cross,
parched and powerless,**

and yet who prays for the pardoning of those who do not understand

that confronted by death, we are not defenseless at all.

Together we will read and lean in to listen; we will share the eternal story, the story in which humanity's hope and God's intimate loving promise are found.

OPENING PRAYER: *(responsively)*

God of all of our days, on this most solemn of days we bare our souls to you. Help us to hear our shared story again as though for the first time, that it might touch us, that it might open our hearts to the suffering of the world. When life and love seem to have been crossed out, may we know with all that we are that we are not alone, that you are there.

You are here, and in the strength of your love we dare to rise and reach out.

Though wounded, we dare to believe.

God, hear our prayer,

and in your gracious mercy, answer. Amen

***PSALM 22** Selected verses *(responsively)*

Refrain: Behold the Face of Christ *(choir) MV 114*

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.**

Refrain: Behold the Face of Christ *(choir) MV 114*

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 shriveled;
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.**

Refrain: Behold the Face of Christ *(choir) MV 114*

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.

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE WORD, OUR STORY, woven through with our song:

The Gospel of John, chapters 18 and 19

Margaret Payne Chénard & Mike Kierstead

18:1-27 *Jesus is betrayed and arrested;
Peter denies knowing Jesus
even as Caiaphas questions his teacher and friend*

Hymn: "O Come and Mourn with Me Awhile" **VU 136**

O come and mourn with me awhile;
O come now to the Savior's side;
O come, together let us mourn:
Jesus, our Love, is crucified.

Have we no tears to shed for him,
while soldiers scoff and foes deride?
Ah! Look how patiently he hangs:
Jesus, our Love, is crucified.

Seven times he spake, seven words of love;
and all three hours his silence cried
for mercy on the souls of all:
Jesus, our Love, is crucified.

O love of God! O sin-filled world!
In this dread act your strength is tried,
and victory remains with love:
Jesus, our Love, is crucified.

Hymn: "Were You There"**VU 144**

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?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
 Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
 Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
 Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
 Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when he rose up from the dead?
 Were you there when he rose up from the dead?
 Sometimes I feel like shouting 'Glory, glory, glory!
 Were you there when he rose up from the dead?

They crucified my Lord,
 and he never said a mumbalin' word;
 they crucified my Lord,

Refrain:
and he never said a mumbalin' word.
Not a word, not a word, not a word.

They nailed him to a tree,
 and he never said a mumbalin' word;
 they nailed him to a tree,

Refrain:

They pierced him in the side,
 and he never said a mumbalin' word;
 they pierced him in the side,

Refrain:

The blood came trickalin' down,
 and he never said a mumbalin' word;
 the blood came trickalin' down,

Refrain:

He bowed his head and died,
 and he never said a mumbalin' word;
 he bowed his head and died,

Refrain:

Darkened clouds have rushed to cloak the sun, and soldiers throw dice over the garments of Love's Light. A cold wind whistles through, the light flickers, and the laboured breathing of the soldiers eases even as that of the stretched and crucified quickens, then stops. The parade of less than a week ago is forgotten, all the laments, denials, excuses and betrayals are over. It is all over. Shadows have replaced light; fear has swallowed hope. It seems it is finished...

THE PRAYER OF JESUS:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...

Thy kingdom come...

**thy will be done on earth...
as 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...**

For ever and ever. Amen

***HYMN: "O God, Why Are You Silent" (verses 1-4)**

MV #73

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.

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.

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?

Through endless nights of weeping,
through weary days of grief,
my heart is in your keeping,
my comfort, my relief.
Come, share my tears and sadness,
come, suffer in my pain,
O, bring me home to gladness,
restore my hope again.

The Christ Candle is extinguished

***HYMN: "O God, Why Are You Silent"**

(verse 5)

MV #73

May pain draw forth compassion,
let wisdom rise from loss.
O, take my heart and fashion
the image of your cross.
Then may I know your healing
through healing that I share,
your grace and love revealing,
your tenderness and care.

*As you depart from this space for worship,
take some time for silence,
to listen, to feel, to offer a prayer...*

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, CHAPTERS 18 AND 19

First reading:

1 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.

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

3 So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.
"I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.)

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

7 Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?"
"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

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

9 This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

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

11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him

13 and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard,

16 but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the servant girl on duty there and brought Peter in.

17 "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" she asked Peter.
He replied, "I am not."

18 It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

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

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

21 Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said."

22 When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby slapped him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

23 "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?"

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

25 Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?"
He denied it, saying, "I am not."

He denied it, saying, "I am not."

26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?"

27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

Hymn: O Come and Mourn with Me Awhile

VU 136

Second reading:

28 Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.

29 So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

30 "If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

31 Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." "But we have no right to execute anyone," they objected.

32 This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.

33 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

34 "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

35 "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

37 "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

38 "What is truth?" retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him.

39 But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?"

40 They shouted back, "No, not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in an uprising.

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.

2 The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe

3 and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they slapped him in the face.

4 Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him."

5 When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

6 As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

7 The Jewish leaders insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

8 When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid,

9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer.

10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to 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 set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

13 When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha).

14 It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

15 But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

Third reading:

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

17 Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).

18 There they crucified him, and with him two others - one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

21 The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

24 "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, "They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment." So this is what the soldiers did.

25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son,"

27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Hymn: They Crucified My Lord

VU 141

(Rev. David reads a brief monologue before the fourth and final reading.)

Fourth reading:

28 Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.

32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other.

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

34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.

36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken,"

37 and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

40 Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

41 At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.

42 Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.