

Good Friday Service:

Gathering Song/Reflection: By His Wounds

He was pierced for our transgressions
He was crushed for our sins
The punishment that brought us peace
Was upon Him
And by His wounds
By His wounds, we are healed

We are healed by Your sacrifice
And the life that You gave
We are healed for You paid the price
By Your grace, we are saved
We are saved

Opening Response:

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

C Amen.

P Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me

C Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

P For you have delivered my soul from death, my feet from falling,

C That I may walk before God in the light of life.

P For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.

C Therefore we give glory to God who raised him up and gave us the promise of salvation. Amen.

Confession and Absolution:

P Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

C Lord, we come to you confessing that we find ourselves too often at the crossroads of life and death and find ourselves choosing death. We wander into the darkness that beckons. We go the way of our own imitations of life and find ourselves in the face of death. We enter tombs of our own making that we cannot seem to escape. We stand in terror of death and cannot break its grasp. Resurrecting Lord forgive us our deadly choices and give us your strength to choose life, to go into the light that you have bought for us. Make us who celebrate the gift of life seek to share it with all those who walk with us. Fill us with the Spirit so that we might overflow with the giving that proclaims your very presence with us.

P I have the honor and privilege, by the grace of God, of announcing to you the entire forgiveness of your sins. In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven and free—free to share the steadfast love of God with all. Amen

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 53:10-12

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

The Gospel according to John 19:17-30, Glory to you O, Lord

And he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things, but standing by 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 nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Children's Message:

Does anyone know why Jesus died on the cross? (Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

Who knows what sin is? If you have sinned raise your hand. Come on all of us have sinned.

God's son Jesus is the only one who hasn't sinned he is perfect. And if Jesus died for our sins then we could ask Him to forgive us and He will. ISN'T THAT WONDERFUL!

Now let's see how God does this.

When Jesus lived here on earth and grew up he had 12 close friends he called his disciples. He was having dinner with them and He said one of you is going to give me to the enemies. All his disciples looked at each other wondering who it would be. Many saying never not me. Jesus said ALL of you will run away because you will be afraid when they come to take me away.

One of the disciples named Peter said I will never turn away from you even if ALL the others do. Jesus said yes, even you will, in fact you will say you don't even know me 3 times before the rooster crows in the morning. What sound does a rooster make?

Let's hear all of you make that sound.

Jesus knew all that was going to happen to Him and He was going to let it happen because. (remember..... Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

Now Jesus looked at Judas one of His disciples and said go do it quickly. Judas had gone to the high priests and asked them how much they would pay him to lead them to Jesus. He knew they wanted to kill him because they were jealous of Him.

Does anyone know what it means to be jealous?

That's right it means to want something someone else has a new bike, an iPod, a game, Healy's, even a friend.

They were jealous of Jesus because He could do miracles and He was king of the Jews. They already had a king and thought He wanted to take over.

The men told Judas they'd give him 30 pieces of silver, so he went to collect his money and lead them to Jesus.

Now after dinner Jesus and some of His disciples went to a park to pray. Jesus asked God is there any other way for people to have their sins forgiven then for me to die? He knew the pain He was going to have to suffer. But Jesus was willing to do it. WHY? (Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

Judas knew where they were going so he led the soldiers to the place. The soldiers came with torches and swords hundreds of them. Judas had told the soldiers the one I kiss is Jesus, just so they'd make no mistake in who Jesus was in the dark. So he kissed Jesus and the soldiers grabbed him tied Him up and took Him away to Pilate the governor, who was in charge like a king, he made big decisions, like the police.

Pilate asked Jesus is it true you claim to be king of the Jews? Jesus answered yes this is true. This made the people go wild they were so upset by Jesus answer. They yelled crucify him. (That means kill him) Pilate asked Jesus many questions but Jesus didn't try and defend himself because He knew the people didn't really care.

Pilate said to the people I can't find anything bad that Jesus has done. What do you want me to do with Him? The crowd started yelling louder and louder. Crucifies him, crucify him. Pilate asked why what has he done? But they just yelled louder. Crucify him. So Pilate not wanting the people to turn against him had Jesus beaten. Do you know why Jesus let them do this to Him? (Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

That's right. Now the soldiers blind folded him and took turns hitting him over and over again. Then they put a purple robe on Him and a crown made out of sharp, sharp thorns like this. Do you think it would hurt to have this pushed into your head?

They made fun of him pushing Jesus around and saying Hail king of the Jews. And why did Jesus let them do this to Him? (Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

Now the soldiers put Jesus clothes back on Him and put a huge, heavy wooden cross on His back to carry up the street to a hill to kill Him on it. As Jesus was carrying the cross He fell in the street He could walk no more, He was so weak from all the beatings. So the soldiers grabbed a man on the street and made him carry Jesus cross the rest of the way. The soldiers hammered big nails in Jesus hands and feet and picked the cross up putting it between two bad, really bad men.

Why did Jesus let them do this to Him? (Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

Poor Jesus, they left Him up there until the sky turned pitch black in the middle of the day and a big earthquake happened that shook everyone and then Jesus was dead. They took Jesus off the cross and put Him in a grave, it was like a cave. One more time. Why did Jesus let them do this to Him? (Because Jesus loves us and so our sins can be forgiven.)

Now you all have to come back on Sunday, Easter morning to hear the wonderful end of this story. See you all then I hope.

Message:

Crossroads. They are there for all of us. We may move along from day to day easily, walking in the sunshine, enjoying the view, feeling at peace. And then it comes. A crossroad. A choice point. There we stand, frozen to the spot. Which way now? Right? Left? Straight? What waits down each of those choices? Which way does our heart call us to go? Which makes sense? Which is God's way?

The answers aren't easy. A crossroad can bring daunting spiritual pain. And it can bring us to our knees. It can even bring us to destruction.

Tonight we look at the reality of the death of Jesus. The story may be familiar to us, but it is not pleasant. The story may, in some sense be horrifying and add to our own fear of death. But in the story there is also a remarkable and astonishing hope.

Tonight we have with us a few experts on the life and death of Jesus, called Jesus of Nazareth.

Our first experts are Mary and Martha and Thomas:

MARTHA:

How important it was to be me, organized...Keep everything running smoothly. Let everyone know, Martha was in control. But then, from out of nowhere, He came into my life and all I knew to be true, went top-sy-turvy. The more I clutched at security, that which I could govern, He seemed determined to scramble my world and allow it to fall to pieces at His feet. Just as quickly as He shattered my self-made being, he deftly picked up the splintered chips and, giving them sense, molded out of them a REASON for living! I was always too busy for allowing myself to just "be." To enjoy, and savor, and share with my Lord... If I could only recapture a moment to anoint His precious hair...Listen to His wisdom...Just sit quietly at His feet...

But Now He's Gone...

THOMAS:

I don't care what they say He is gone...Period! It is finished, done with...and we were fools... For three years, I followed Him...fighting doubts. Yet, when the dead arose, or the blind could see, then I, Thomas... Believed! Where is my king now? With Him those signs died and with His death my dream also died. It's impossible to

sift through it all...Why bother...I must move on. Move beyond the memories and begin my life again... MY WAY! Yet, a part of me remembers...It would be so much easier if only I could forget...Forever... No matter...So what...I must get on with it. The vision is ended... And He is gone!

Song: Were You There?

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?

The voice of John and Peter:

JOHN:

Just a kid...they would smile, tousle my hair and move on. What does he know, a lad too young to have even tasted life. How much bigger was the world they knew. I think they wondered why I was even chosen a youth among men. Yet how often my Lord would call to me, "Young John..." Beckoning... that I might follow Him to a quiet place of enlightenment...from Master to pupil. It was easy for me to believe, I realized Him to be the answer to life's questions...And I will follow Him as long as I have breath, just as I followed Him to that cross. My Lord, Your pain became my pain. You life's blood runs cold within my veins. I feel older than my years...But I can't crumble beneath the grief, I must hold on. I am confident of your promise that Your life is beyond the grave. There's work to be done. I have the strength, Your strength to rely upon. I shall treasure and care for this sorrowful mother who was YOURS, and is now mine. I will take Your good news to a troubled, searching world. I miss You, my Shepherd, but I shall wait, believe and trust in Your promises. As I live, so do You live... You are gone, Yet you remain in me! But You're Gone!

PETER:

And upon this rock...My God, where is that rock you believed in...Depended upon? Shattered, like so much rubble... Big, strong, and proud I boasted that even if I had to die, I would never deny You! I was God's man yet became as a child when my Master was taken. Weak, without direction...frightened, and now alone...hiding... It was being with Jesus, my friend and companion that gave me strength. When He found me I was but an ordinary fisherman...Yet in His presence grew into a leader among men. Why can't I trust...hope...He said this sorrow would be turned into joy but my faith is so weak. I can't seem to understand or believe... Jesus, my denial accuses me, torments me. I turned my back on YOU. How could You ever forgive me? How can I forgive myself and live once more for You? My Lord, renew Your life in me, come into this man-child's heart... Again.....

Song: Were You There

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?

The voices of Mary Magdalene and Judas:

MARY MAGDALENE:

I used to feel dirty inside but He changed all that. No, I guess what He really did was to love ME into changing, and then He taught me what that beautiful word is all about. Love, that's a laugh! They used to smirk at me and call me "a lover." But the pieces I gave were only fragments...And afterwards, in the light of day, I would feel like withering, wanting to crawl up into some Godforsaken hole...and die... Godforsaken, that was me, a tramp. Men that shared my bed in the shadows spat on me the next day, recoiling, pretending we were no more than strangers. Then suddenly, that glorious day, HE came into my life and instantly He knew ME. I mean He really knew me, inside and out! And, even so, invited me to drink from His own cup, what He called Living Water--water that truly healed me and made me clean! But it hurts--it hurts so bad now. My Lord, You made me tender, I no longer have a shell to protect me...I am so vulnerable! You taught me how to love, but it hurts to love your way...My Precious Lord... And now You're gone...

JUDAS:

When Jesus chose me, I saw in his eyes that he was someone special. He sent me out, with the others to go to the lost and the confused. I knew from the beginning that I was going to have a little trouble with some of what he asked us to do – I mean how can I raise the dead and touch the untouchables? He told us not to worry about having things, you are the equipment, he said but I knew we'd need funds so I worked out a way in order for us to be funded. Right from the beginning I knew I was in the presence of God. Jesus somehow had this presence, and all that he said and did lined up with the scriptures. Not only that, he was proven right time and time again. But why didn't he show us some sign of establishing his kingdom. I became impatient. His miracles show all who can see that He is the chosen one of God. You know, I have a sneaking suspicion that I am the only one among these thick disciples who knows Jesus' true identity. I believe him, I love Him and I know he is the Messiah.... I just wish he would make his move. Last week he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem – he should've been on a brilliant white stallion as a king should ride. He keeps telling us about his impending death but he can't die – not yet. He has too much to do. I'm going to the priests tonight to tell them who Jesus really is, so that they will rejoice that the Messiah has come at last.....

Song: Were You There

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?

The voice of Mary, Mother of Jesus:

I never thought I would be well known, even up to this day. But God had other plans for me. I of course was there that night. At the cross. It is not a time I like to dwell on. Like all deaths, Jesus' death was a time of fear and great sorrow. His death was a terrible pain for me. My very heart was broken. But I know now that it was also a time of irony. Think about it. Think about the amazing contrasts in that death. Here he was, bringing life by dying on a cross. Here was the giver of light dying in darkness.

I didn't see it then, of course, it was simply a time of great sorrow. Even though Jesus had told us often that he would be put to death at the hands of the Romans and religious leaders, we never really believed it. Certainly, I didn't believe it. I had become so used to the miraculous life that Jesus lived, the marvelous things he was able to accomplish. I was so used to the pride I had in him as he went about his ministry of teaching and healing, I just could not imagine that it would end like that. I guess, there at the cross, mostly I was feeling helpless sorrow, almost despair. Here was my lovely child, the light of my life, my very heartbeat, dying in shame.

The pain is so deep, it almost can't be put into words. And yet, I can be relieved about it now because we know that the curtain of death is not the end of the story. It is only the end of the first act in the miracle of life that Jesus bought for us on that cross

Later in life, when I would encounter people who knew Jesus and knew my story, they would ask, "How can you be so joyful when you were there at the death of your son?" And the answer was easy. I was also there when he rose, when he overcame death, when he claimed victory over death and gave us life.

Not that we don't grieve death. Death remains the great robber, the one seemingly taking from us all that we hold dear, including our life. But that's not the end of the story. We know that death is in reality, a new beginning, Jesus has opened the tomb, the stone is rolled away. Death cannot hold us, and we can smile.

Faith in Christ teaches how to live. We live that abundant life, we are filled with the peace and joy that Jesus offers, we live outside ourselves as Jesus call us to do and, in his time, we are ready to die. Abundant life is right around us. When we act in love to those who fill our lives, we act in love toward Jesus. Remember he said, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me' (Matthew 25:40).

Death is not just a mystery for us. It is an ending and a beginning that has been prepared, made holy by Jesus. With me, may you have a joy-filled Good Friday. May you celebrate the victory.

Song: Were You There

Were you there when God raised him from the tomb?

Were you there when God raise him from the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble

Were you there when God raised him from the tomb?

Prayers:

P Let us bring our prayers and petitions to God who hears and answers the pleas of our hearts. We pray for the nations and peoples of the world and own nation. Send your powerful Spirit into our nation and into this broken world. We ask that you come and comfort those who live in places of violence and persecution, especially those who suffer for your name. Give aid to the oppressed, the persecuted, those trapped in wars and all who cry to you for help. Guide our nation's leaders to be about the task of service to all, especially the needy and vulnerable. Make us agents of healing in this hurting world. In your mercy,

C Hear us, Lord.

P We pray for your church in the world. Give faithful leaders who will shepherd your people in your way. Inspire the people of this congregation and all of the church in the world to be doers of love and service. In your mercy,

C Hear us, Lord.

P Because of your dying love and living hope, Savior, give your Spirit of life and light and hope to us, so that we might truly be the "light of the world" as you have named us. In the face of death give us the light of your promise; in the face of spiritual decay give us your word of cleansing; in the face of suffering give us

your word of hope; in the face of illness and viruses give us healing. Make us agents of your good grace among the dying of the world and make us able to bless them with your promise of life now and eternally. In your mercy,

C Hear us, Lord.

P We pray for the sick, the suffering, the grieving, the dying, the lonely, especially those within the Nora and Kirkebo congregations but also those who have come to us through our streaming services and those that we now name in our hearts. We commit them to your loving care. Heal, help and comfort them according to your will. In your mercy,

C Hear us, Lord.

P These and all other petitions and requests we bring before you in the name of Jesus and we pray the prayer that He taught us to pray

Lord's Prayer:

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 daily our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespassed 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

Song: O Sacred Head Now Wounded

O sacred Head, now wounded
With grief and shame weighed down
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown
How pale thou art with anguish
With sore abuse and scorn
How does that visage languish
Which once was bright as morn

1) Jesus Speaks to the Father - **Candles are removed from the altar**

In the midst of his excruciating suffering, the heart of Jesus was focused on others rather than himself. Here we see the unconditional and divine.

Luke 23:34

Jesus said, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*

2) Jesus Speaks to the Criminal on the Cross – Cross and Book are removed from the altar

One of the criminals who was crucified with Christ, had recognized who Jesus was and expressed faith in him as Savior. Here we see poured out through faith, as Jesus assured the dying man of his and eternal salvation.

Luke 23:43

"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (NIV)

3) Jesus Speaks to Mary and John – Cross on the wall is covered in black

Jesus, looking down from the cross, was still filled with the concerns of a son for the earthly needs of his mother. None of his brothers were there to care for her, so he gave this task to the. Here we clearly see Christ's humanity.

John 19:26-27

When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." (NIV)

4) Jesus Cries Out to the Father – Baptismal Font is covered in black

In of his suffering, Jesus cried out the opening words of Psalm 22. And although much has been suggested regarding the meaning of this phrase, it was quite apparent the agony Christ felt as he expressed separation from God. Here we see the Father turning away from the Son as Jesus bore the full weight of our sin.

Matthew 27:46 (also Mark 15:34)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

5) Jesus is Thirsty – Pulpit is covered in black

Jesus refused the initial drink of vinegar, gall and (Matthew 27:34 and Mark 15:23) offered to alleviate his suffering. But here, several hours later, we see Jesus fulfilling that found in Psalm 69:21.

John 19:28

Jesus knew that everything was now finished, and to fulfill the Scriptures he said, "I am thirsty."

6) It is Finished -

John 19:30

Jesus knew he was suffering the crucifixion for a purpose. Earlier he had said in John 10:18 of his life, "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." (NIV) These three words were packed with meaning, for what was finished here was not only Christ's earthly life, not only his suffering and dying, not only the payment for sin and the of the world—but the very reason and purpose he came to earth was finished. His final act of obedience was complete. The Scriptures had been fulfilled.

... he said, **"It is finished!"** (NLT) – Altar is covered in black

7) Jesus' Last Words – Christ candle is removed from sanctuary and lights are reduced

Here Jesus closes with the words of Psalm 31:5, speaking to the Father. We see his complete trust in the Father. Jesus entered death in the same way he lived each day of his life, offering up his life as the perfect sacrifice and placing himself in God's hands.

Luke 23:46

Jesus called out with a loud voice, **"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."** When he had said this, he breathed his last. (NIV)

Closing Reading, John 19:38-42:

After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

DARKNESS