

Good Friday: April 10, 2020

Order of service written by Rev. Nancy Townley and from the Book of Common Prayer

Call to Worship:

Officiant: Blessed be our God.

People For ever and ever. Amen.

Officiant: Let us pray.

People: Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O: We gather in the shadow of the Cross.

P: Evil abounds. Jesus goes forth to suffer and die.

O: How we tremble with fear!

P: How we weep.

O: Why have we forsaken Him?

P: Why have we betrayed and run from his Passion?

O: Lord, have mercy upon us.

P: Christ, have mercy upon us.

READING: Portions of Psalm 22:

Reader 1:

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.

Hymn (next page):

458 My song is love unknown

1. My song is love un - known, my Sa - vior's love to me, love
 2. He came from his blest throne sal - va - tion to be - stow, but
 3. Some - times they strew his way, and his strong prais - es sing, re -

to the love - less shown that they might love - ly be. O
 men made strange, and none the longed - for Christ would know. But
 sound - ing all the day ho - san - nas to their King. Then

who am I that for my sake my Lord should take frail flesh, and die?
 O my friend, my friend in - deed, who at my need his life did spend.
 "Cru - ci - fy!" is all their breath, and for his death they thirst and cry.

Reader 2:

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. 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.

Hymn:

4. Why, what hath my Lord done? What makes this rage and spite? He
 made the lame to run, he gave the blind their sight. Sweet
 in - ju - ries! Yet they at these them-selves dis-please, and 'gainst him rise.

PRAYER:

Leader: Lord, we come before you in the approaching darkness of our

souls. We have traveled this Lenten journey, overcoming and conquering barriers that have kept us from serving you. We gathered at the gates of joy on Palm Sunday, and feasted at the Lord's Table yesterday. But today is a different story. We witness the arrest and trial of the Innocent Savior. We watch as he is moved brutally from place to place, to be judged by people who have hardened their hearts against you. The sorrow that we feel lies heavy upon us. Lift us, Lord. Comfort us. Help us get through this time of darkness. AMEN.

THE APPROACHING DARKNESS **a dramatic presentation of the Crucifixion**

A member of the Sanhedrin:

Reader 3:

This is not a good time. This Jesus came, proclaiming a new law, said he was the King of the Jews. That's dangerous talk. We have a very tentative peace with the Romans. They let us alone to practice our faith and we obey their laws. It is uncomfortable and we long for the avenging Messiah, but it isn't this wilderness preacher. He makes me nervous. He is chipping away at what little peace we have. If he destroys this peace, he will destroy God's people. We can't risk it, no matter how the crowds love him. We just can't risk it.

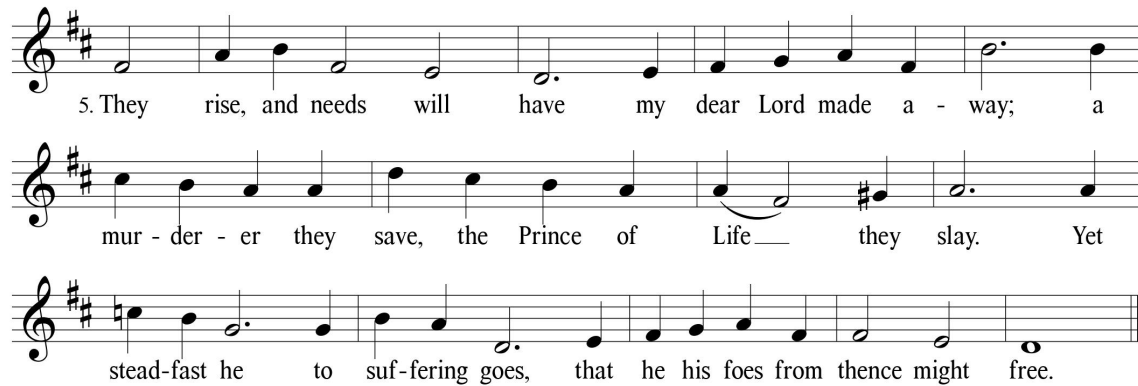
Woman disciple:

Reader 4:

I can't believe this. He has done nothing wrong. He healed people, he taught them the lessons of life; he gave new hope. What is wrong with that? How is that a threat to our faith? How is that a threat to the Roman authority? I was at the table, bringing the food for the supper last evening. He was so serious, sad. The disciples didn't know what to make of his actions. He washed their feet and told them that they had to be like servants if they wanted to serve the Master. He took the loaf of leftover bread and broke it and gave it to them to eat, telling them it was representing his body which was broken for them. He didn't know it, but we women in the background also took bread as he was speaking. He passed the cup to them and reminded them of the new covenant, a new relationship between each of them and God, and said that it was like his blood which would be poured out for them. They dipped their bread in the cup and ate it. So did we. It was awful. I wanted to run, but I couldn't leave. I followed him to the garden of prayer, but at a respectful distance. Hidden in the dark of the bushes, I witnessed the parade of soldiers, the torches, and his capture. My God, my God, what has happened!

How could this be?

Hymn:



Soldier:

Reader 1:

I do what I'm told. They assigned us to go and bring back this wilderness rabble-rouser, Jesus from Nazareth. So I went. I didn't see anything particularly threatening about him. His buddy, Judas, was the one who told the authorities where we could find him. He got paid - in silver. I don't like that business - paying for a life. He didn't seem surprised, but he did seem disappointed when this Judas kissed him on the cheek. One of his disciples drew a sword and cut off the ear of one of the servants who accompanied us. I've got to tell you, I could hardly believe what I saw. Jesus put his hands on the man's ear and it was healed. Healed! I shook my head - must be the night air, I thought. It really couldn't have happened. No matter. My job was to bring him in. He didn't struggle and we shuttled him back and forth between the religious authorities, Annas and Caiaphas, and Pilate, the procurator, the Roman law in these parts. After that, we were dismissed for a while.

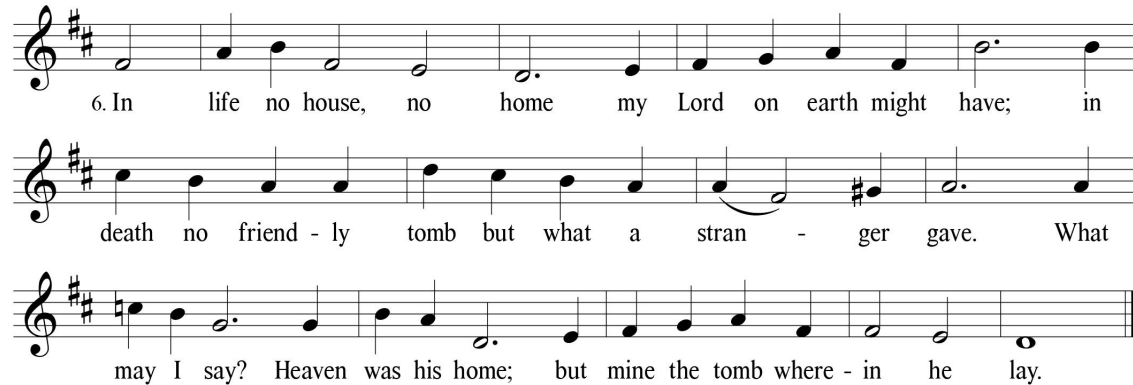
Woman in the courtyard:

Reader 2:

I knew who that tall, muscular man was, all right! I'd seen him with the others who followed this Jesus. I heard the whisperings from the others all around, but I was the only one who was brave enough to speak up. "You're one of his disciples, aren't you?" I said to him. "I don't know what you're talking about. I don't know him", he growled at me. I knew that I was right and I wasn't going to let it be. I challenged him again, and again he told me that he didn't know this Jesus. Okay, one more try. "Are you not one of this man's disciples?" "I am not". And then a strange silence fell over the area. You could hear a rooster crowing. The man turned ghastly white and ran

away. He was guilty of something. Probably more guilty than anything these authorities can drum up against the one they captured tonight.

Hymn:



Pilate:

Reader 3:

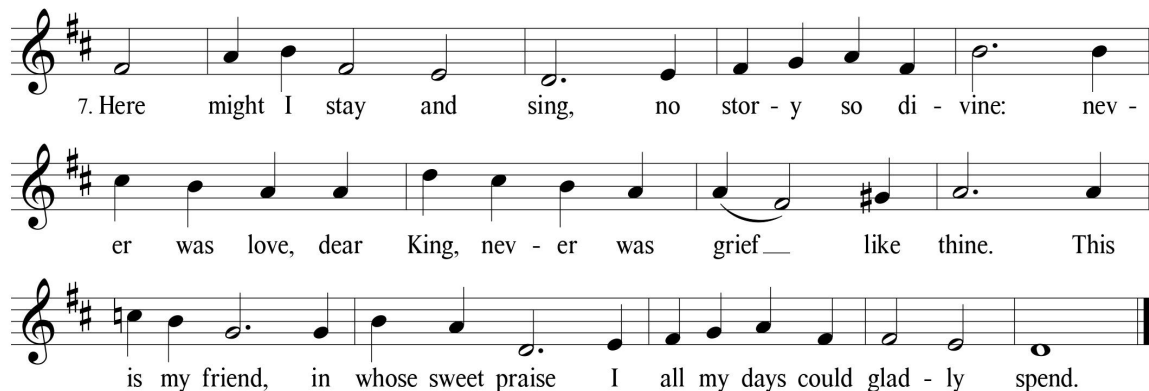
These people are going to drive me crazy. They are in an uproar because of some wilderness preacher. I examined him, asked him pointed, direct questions. His answers puzzled me, but I really could not find any reason why he should be brought before me. He did not commit a crime against our Roman government. He was just a thorn in the hide for the Jewish religious authorities. They wanted to have him killed and by their law, they couldn't do it. They wanted to take care of the matter for them. Scapegoat! That's what he was! I asked him if he was the King of the Jews, a charge the religious people were trying to pin against him so that I would do something. You know Caesar is our king. Anyway, he said "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". Doesn't sound too treasonous to me. I had him flogged, thinking that would placate their blood lust. The soldiers played a little game with him. They stripped him, flogged him, put an old purple cloak on him and someone made a crown out of thorn bushes and jammed it on his head. They shouted "Hail, King of the Jews!" and spit at him. Well, they were just having a little jest with him. I finally had to do something. The crowds were getting out of hand, demanding the extreme punishment, crucifixion. I gave them a choice, Barabbas, a murderer in our custody, or this flogged and bleeding Jesus. To my surprise, they chose Barabbas, and I had to wash my hands of the whole deal. They made their choice. It was over. But, is it? Is it really over? I think not.

Woman at the crucifixion:

Reader 4:

The crowds that had cheered at his entrance to Jerusalem, now jeered him as he dragged his heavy cross to the place of crucifixion. It was Golgotha, the Skull, a place where the vilest criminals were nailed to a cross and died a slow and agonizing death. My God, it was so horrible. How could they do this to him? He had done nothing wrong? How could God let this happen to this kind healer? My heart was breaking. He had healed me of a host of diseases when all others had given up. He looked at me, smiled, and told me of God's love for me.....for me? And I could feel that love, God's love, pouring over me. It was unlike anything I had known before. I left everything and followed Jesus, like so many others. The words of compassion, the healing love, the reminders of how God wants us to live - I could listen to Jesus forever. My soul was healed; my spirit was restored. But now, now it was being dragged with him to Golgotha. He stumbled and fell. A strange man was grabbed from the crowd and forced to carry the heavy cross when Jesus could no longer do it. I couldn't break away. I followed. My God, I followed..... I stood near his mother, and Mary Magdalene, and John. And we watched and wept. But no one made us leave.

Hymn (next page):



Jesus:

Reader 1:

"My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?" *Pause*

"Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." *Pause*

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing?" *Pause*

"Woman, here is your son. Here is your mother" *Pause*

"I am thirsty" *Pause*

"It is finished!" *Pause*

" Father, Into your hands I commend my spirit! *Pause*

Reader 2:

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 their 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 had 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." After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the authorities, 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 customs of the Jews. 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.

The Solemn Collects

Officiant: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

Reader 3: Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;

For its unity in witness and service

For all bishops and other ministers

and the people whom they serve
For Thomas, our Bishop, and all the people of this diocese
For all Christians in this community
That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love,
and preserve it in peace.

Silence

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole
body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified:
Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before
you for all members of your holy Church, that in their
vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you;
through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Reader 4: Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for
those in authority among them;

For the President of the United States

For the Congress and the Supreme Court

For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations

For all who serve the common good

That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live
in peace and concord.

Silence

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of
peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for
the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until
the earth is filled with the knowledge of your
love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Reader 1: Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;

For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute

and the oppressed

For the sick, the wounded, and the crippled

For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish

For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair

For the sorrowful and bereaved

For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger

That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Reader 2: Let us pray for all who have not received the Gospel of Christ;
For those who have never heard the word of salvation
For those who have lost their faith
For those hardened by sin or indifference
For the contemptuous and the scornful
For those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and persecutors of his disciples
For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others
That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience.

Silence

Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls: Have compassion on all who do not know you as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ; let your Gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it; turn the hearts of those who resist it; and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray; that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Reader 3: Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence

Reader 4: O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[John Johnson Meditation on Good Friday](#)

We end and leave in silence.

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