

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

PRAISE: 380 There is a green hill

Prayer

PRAISE: 392 When I survey the wondrous Cross

READING: Luke 23:20-34

Address

PRAISE: 397 In the Cross of Christ I glory

READING: Luke 23:35-47

Address

Prayer of Intercession

PRAISE: 402 Take up your cross

READING: Luke 23:50-56

Address

PRAISE: 405 We sing the praise of him who died

Prayer

PRAISE: 396 And can it be, that I should gain

Benediction. Go in peace,
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God
and Fellowship in the Holy Spirit, be with us all **3-fold AMEN**

CH4 786 May the God of peace go with us
as we travel from this place;
may the love of Jesus keep us
firm in hope and full of grace. Tune: Ae fond kiss

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

CH4 380

1 There is a green hill far away,
outside a city wall,
where the dear Lord was crucified
who died to save us all.

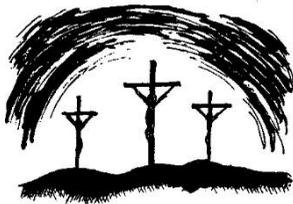
2 We may not know, we cannot tell,
what pains he had to bear,
but we believe it was for us
he hung and suffered there.

3 He died that we might be forgiven,
he died to make us good,
that we might go at last to heaven,
saved by his precious blood.

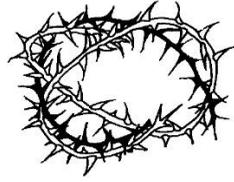
4 There was no other good enough
to pay the price of sin,
he only could unlock the gate
of heaven, and let us in.

5 Oh, dearly, dearly has he loved,
and we must love him too,
and trust in his redeeming blood,
and try his works to do.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)



Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20



Lord,
in Jesus
you gave everything for us.

He embraced the limitations of human life,
accepting the risks, the self-surrender, the pain of love;
the Son of God
became the Man for Us.

His perfect loving,
brought him to the Cross,
for we found such loving
too much to accept.

Lord
help us not to reject you
and your love,
even though it is hard to grasp
the enormity of the gift of yourself.

Lord, you are our God.
We are your people.
Pour your love into our lives,
that we too, may be able to give all
for you, for one another, for the world,
for the sake of our crucified Saviour,
Jesus Christ the Lord.

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Hear us as we pray in the words Jesus taught us, saying

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 day our daily bread,

And forgive us our debts,

as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil,

For Thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

For ever

AMEN



CH4 392

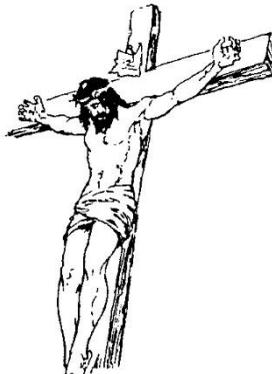
1 When I survey the wondrous cross
where the young Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
save in the death of Christ, my God:
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)



Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Luke 23:20-34

²⁰ Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, so he appealed to the crowd again.

²¹ But they shouted back, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

²² Pilate said to them the third time, "But what crime has he committed? I cannot find anything he has done to deserve death! I will have him whipped and set him free."

²³ But they kept on shouting at the top of their voices that Jesus should be crucified, and finally their shouting succeeded. ²⁴ So Pilate passed the sentence on Jesus that they were asking for. ²⁵ He set free the man they wanted, the one who had been put in prison for riot and murder, and he handed Jesus over for them to do as they wished.

Jesus is Crucified

²⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away, and as they were going, they met a man from Cyrene named Simon who was coming into the city from the country. They seized him, put the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷ A large crowd of people followed him; among them were some women who were weeping and wailing for him. ²⁸ Jesus turned to them and said, "Women of Jerusalem! Don't cry for me, but for yourselves and your children. ²⁹ For the days are coming when people will say, 'How lucky are the women who never had children, who never bore babies, who never nursed them!' ³⁰ That will be the time when people will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Hide us!' ³¹ For if such things as these are done when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

³² Two other men, both of them criminals, were also led out to be put to death with Jesus. ³³ When they came to the place called "The Skull", they crucified Jesus there, and the two criminals, one on his right and the other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

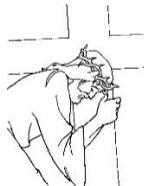
Luke 23:20-34

Pilate comes down to us with a very bad name and reputation as being the Roman Governor who allowed Jesus to be crucified when he was clearly fully aware of his innocence. Luke's description of the scene brings home to us the power of the mob baying for blood - a mob which will not be denied. Other knowledge we have of Pilate's past record, and his insecure position with the Roman authorities, make it possible to appreciate the "behind-the-scenes" pressure that had been exerted by the Jewish leaders. We should also notice that Pilate put up on the Cross "This is the King of the Jews".

Then follows a description of the journey to the place of crucifixion. The condemned man was required to carry his own cross. The Roman soldiers also had the right to pick any man out of the crowd to carry it for him. They chose Simon from Cyrene, near Tripoli in N Africa. Interestingly, Mark tells us he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, whom he expected his readers to know - which suggests they became disciples. Was Simon influenced by Jesus in his last moments?

So Jesus came to his Cross - and on it, such was his grace and love that he could pray, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."

AMEN



CH4 397

1 In the cross of Christ I glory,
towering o'er the wrecks of time;
all the light of sacred story
gathers round its head sublime.

2 When the woes of life o'ertake me,
hopes deceive and fears annoy,
never shall the cross forsake me;
lo! it glows with peace and joy.

3 When the sun of bliss is beaming
light and love upon my way,
from the cross the radiance streaming
adds new lustre to the day.

4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
by the cross are sanctified;
peace is there that knows no measure,
joys that through all time abide.

5 In the cross of Christ I glory,
towering o'er the wrecks of time;
all the light of sacred story
gathers round its head sublime.

John Bowring (1792-1872)

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Luke 23:35-47

³⁵ The people stood there watching while the Jewish leaders jeered at him: "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah whom God has chosen!"

³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him: they came up to him and offered him cheap wine, ³⁷ and said, "Save yourself if you are the king of the Jews!"

³⁸ Above him were written these words: "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

⁴⁰ The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? You received the same sentence he did. ⁴¹ Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." ⁴² And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!"

⁴³ Jesus said to him, "I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me."

The Death of Jesus

⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵ It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock; and the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father! In your hands I place my spirit!" He said this and died.

⁴⁷ The army officer saw what had happened, and he praised God, saying, "Certainly he was a good man!"

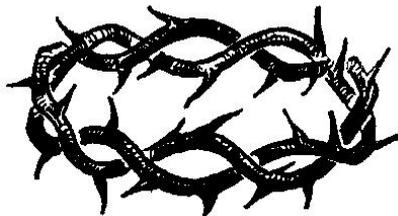
Luke 23:35-47

The mocking continues in different ways. For Jesus, and for us, his crucifixion is a central part of our life, our being. For many of the people of the time it was just a regular spectacle - to be enjoyed for a short time as a break from the drudgery of life. On that day of Passover preparation people would have drifted away more quickly than normal.

For the soldiers it was something they had become used to. If they were hardened by it, it was just another tour of duty. If they weren't, they would want some kind of distraction. For both there was the ritual perk of gambling to see who got the belongings that were left from the "criminals".

It wasn't just a surface mocking. In the words used there is, as it were, a final tempting by the devil. The words question his Messiahship - his whole purpose - his special relationship with God. We see the two different attitudes starkly set out by the two thieves crucified with him. The one railing at him - the other showing faith and belief.

At the end of the passage we have the Centurion, clearly impressed, praising God and saying, "Certainly he was a good man." AMEN



Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Almighty God, you have given us Jesus as a picture of your all-embracing love, in the word made flesh, who died on the Cross to set us free. May that vision never fade from our minds and wills. May that picture remain firm in our minds to guide and sustain us in our living.

Lord, your concern is not just for our spiritual but also for our material lives and health. We bring before you our intercessions for others around us.

Lord, we remember before you all who are in any way affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. We remember those who are ill – at home, in hospital or intensive care; we remember those who are confined to their own homes for their safety – and cut off from normal communication from friends. We remember with thanks all the NHS staff, carers and emergency workers who are doing such a wonderful job – sometimes in dangerous situations.

We pray for the Government, all MPs, Council leaders and staff who are planning and working on our behalf in the crisis. We pray especially for the PM, Boris Johnstone, in his time of need.

We remember too those who have other pressing problems in their lives. Those who suffer from terminal illnesses, those awaiting urgent treatment deferred by the crisis, those whose jobs are affected, those who don't have enough food, those who are deprived of fellowship.

May they all be aware of your love and care around them.

Lord Jesus Christ strengthen all your people in their spirits. Send them present help and uplift them with the hope of your Kingdom. Lord hear their prayer. AMEN

CH4 402

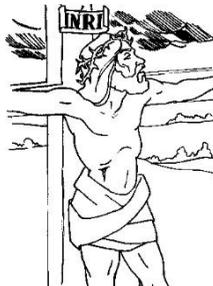
1 'Take up your cross,' the Saviour said,
'if you would my disciple be;
take up your cross with willing heart
and humbly follow after me.'

2 Take up your cross; let not its weight
fill your weak soul with vain alarm;
his strength shall bear your spirit up,
and brace your heart, and nerve your arm.

3 Take up your cross, nor heed the shame,
and let your foolish pride be still:
the Lord refused not even to die
upon a cross, on Calvary's hill.

4 Take up your cross, then, in his strength,
and calmly every danger brave;
it guides you to a better home,
and leads to victory o'er the grave.

5 Take up your cross and follow Christ,
nor think till death to lay it down;
for only those who bear the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown.



Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Luke 23:50-56

The Burial of Jesus

⁵⁰⁻⁵¹ There was a man named Joseph from Arimathea, a town in Judea. He was a good and honourable man, who was waiting for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Although he was a member of the Council, he had not agreed with their decision and action. ⁵² He went into the presence of Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took the body down, wrapped it in a linen sheet, and placed it in a tomb which had been dug out of solid rock and which had never been used. ⁵⁴ It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

⁵⁵ The women who had followed Jesus from Galilee went with Joseph and saw the tomb and how Jesus' body was placed in it. ⁵⁶ Then they went back home and prepared the spices and perfumes for the body.

On the Sabbath they rested, as the Law commanded.



Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Luke 23:50-56

This short passage reminds us of the people who do things faithfully and quietly - without seeking the limelight or hitting the headlines. We read of Joseph of Arimathea taking Jesus' body for burial, quietly and privately. We read of the women making their preparations to honour Jesus through the spices and perfumes of burial.

We're also given a different feeling of time. The rest of the chapter has been full to overflowing with events, drama, emotion and significance. Now it's as if time has stopped. It has become a time of waiting. There is darkness and despair for those who were closest to Jesus. They have lost a friend and Teacher. For all of them, because they had misread Jesus' message, there is the deeper despair of feeling that their lives have lost all meaning. Yet in this situation time does not stand still - it keeps moving on.

More particularly **GOD** is still present, working out His purpose. He has not given up. He is there underpinning all their lives and about to give their hope and faith a wonderful new meaning. Just because we fail to see the presence of God, that, thankfully, does not mean that He is not there. He is. He is there through the darkest of times and it is His love which brings light and warmth where there has previously been darkness and hurt.

Let us wait upon the Lord with Faith that he will reach out to us in spite of our blindness and unbelief.

AMEN

CH4 405

We sing the praise of him who died,
of him who died upon the cross;
the sinner's hope let men deride,
for this we count the world but loss.

Inscribed upon the cross we see,
in shining letters, 'God is love';
he bears our sins upon the tree;
he brings us mercy from above.

The cross! it takes our guilt away;
it holds the fainting spirit up;
it cheers with hope the gloomy day,
and sweetens every bitter cup;

It makes the coward spirit brave,
and nerves the feeble arm for fight;
it takes its terror from the grave,
and gilds the bed of death with light;

The balm of life, the cure of woe,
the measure and the pledge of love,
the sinner's refuge here below,
the angels theme in heaven above.

Thomas Kelly (1769-1855)

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Almighty Father, as we come to the end of the day of the Cross, we are astounded to see how much it proclaims your measureless love for us weak and erring men and women. We can only give thanks for this gift beyond words you've given us through Jesus.

Holy Spirit of God, come to us and move our hard hearts, that we may sorrow with Christ for our torn humanity, and for all homeless souls, and become his body in the world.

We recollect the final words of Jesus, "*It is finished*".

Prevent us following the thoughts of the disciples who saw it as the end of Jesus' life, the end of a dream and a hope for a new kingdom in their country.

Help us to hear them as Jesus' words, "*It is accomplished.*" The completion of his task in spite of the final temptation in Gethsemane to "*Let this cup pass. Not my will, but thine.*" Let us feel the agony of Gethsemane and the Cross – but accept that this was God's plan – for our sakes.

As the Lord Jesus committed himself into the Father's hand as he was dying, so let us commit ourselves, with all that concerns us, to his infinite power and goodness.

Father, into your hands we commit ourselves and all dear to us, and the world for which we pray. AMEN.



CH4 396

And can it be, that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for me, who caused his pain –
for me, who him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! how can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

'Tis mystery all: the Immortal dies!
Who can explore his strange design?
In vain the first born seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
let angel minds inquire no more.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
let angel minds inquire no more.

He left his Father's throne above,
so free, so infinite his grace –
emptied himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race:
'tis mercy all, immense and free;
for, O my God, it found out me!
'tis mercy all, immense and free;
for, O my God, it found out me!

Good Friday Evening Service – 10/04/20

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
fast bound in sin and nature's night;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
my chains fell off my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.
my chains fell off my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

*When the tune SAGINA is being used,
lines 5 and 6 of each verse are repeated.*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Benediction. Go in peace,
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God
and Fellowship in the Holy Spirit, be with us all **AMEN**

CH4 786 May the God of peace go with us
as we travel from this place;
may the love of Jesus keep us
firm in hope and full of grace. Tune: Ae fond kiss