

Good Friday, April 2, 2021
St. Mark's United Church of Christ
St. James United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Kathy Jurk, Organist

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Call to Worship:

L: On this day we gather to remember Jesus our Savior who loved us and gave himself for us. Let us draw near in full assurance of God's endless love and mercy.

P: We give our thanks and praise to Jesus Christ who carries our sorrows, heals our wounds and redeems us from sin and death.

L: They took Jesus, and he went out carrying his own cross, to the place of a skull, called in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him. This is not a day for mourning but for awe, wonder, love and gratitude.

P: All you who bow in reverence, praise Him.

All you daughters of faith, glorify him.

All you sons of faith, stand in awe before him.

Opening Prayer (All together):

Almighty and everlasting God, in your tender love for us you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon himself our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility. Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and come to share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Statement of Faith (Apostle's Creed)

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell: The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead: I believe in the Holy Spirit: The One Holy Universal Christian Church: The communion of saints: The forgiveness of sins: The resurrection of the body: And the life everlasting. Amen.

Song of Prayer:

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

Prayer of Confession:

We can truly share only a limited measure in the suffering of others. We are not Christ, but if we want to be Christians it means that we are to take part in Christ's greatness of heart, in the responsible action that in freedom seizes the hour and faces the danger, and in the true sympathy that springs forth not from fear but from Christ's freeing and redeeming love for all who suffer.

Waiting and dully looking on are not Christian responses. Christians are called to action and sympathy not through their own firsthand experiences but by the immediate experience of others for whose sake Christ suffered. It is infinitely easier to suffer in community with others, than in solitude. It is infinitely easier to suffer publicly and with honor, than in the shadow and in dishonor. It is infinitely easier to suffer through putting one's bodily life at stake than to suffer through the spirit.

We confess that we have chosen ease over the cost of discipleship, indolence over action, we have turned away from injustice, all the while knowing that Christ's hands and feet are our own. Lord, have mercy on us.

Words of Assurance (All together):

For your embracing love – a Father's love, a Mother's love.

The love that sees our failings and forgives us. The love that sees our joys and embraces us. The love that knows no ending or beginning. The love that could die for us and did. We thank you and love you. Amen.

Song of Assurance:

Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed

Scripture Reading:

Matthew 27:24-31; 45-54

Message:

It's Friday, But Sunday's Coming

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

Pastoral Prayer and Holy Communion ~ All are invited to the table.

Pastoral Prayer:

God of mystery and wonder, because we know the ending of the story, it's tempting for us to ignore the darkness of this day. It is tempting for us to go about our business as usual. It is tempting for us to move too quickly to the dawn of light on Easter morning.

But give us courage and strength on this day to live for a while in the darkness, to set aside comfort and pleasure, to feel the darkness in which so many of your children dwell, the darkness into which your son Jesus entered.

As we reflect on the frailty of Christ, remind us of the frailty of all life.

As we cringe at the suffering of Christ, make us mindful of suffering throughout the world. As we witness the death of Christ, bring us back full circle to the beginning of Lent, to the wisdom of Ash Wednesday:

the awareness of our mortality
and the mortality of those we love.

Gracious God, deep in our hearts is an unquenchable trust that life does not end with death. Like a seed which is buried in order to bring forth life, Christ goes to the tomb to usher in new life. We trust that we too will be raised to new life, in this world, here and now, and in the mystery of what lies beyond physical death. We trust that the whole world will be born anew, that your kingdom is coming as a new heaven and a new earth. On this day of darkness, it is for this kingdom that we boldly pray.
Amen.

Into Holy Communion:

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We thank you God, Father and Mother of us all.

From the beginning you made the world and all its creatures;
you made people to live for you and for each other.

We praise you, God.

You created Adam and Eve and gave them a garden;

You showed Noah a rainbow;

You gave strength to Moses to free his people and taught Miriam to sing;

You gave courage to Esther and loyalty to Ruth.

You helped David defeat the giant and gave him a harp to sing with.

We praise you, God.

And yet even they turned away from you and forgot about you, as we do too.

But you did not forget. You sent your only child Jesus to the world

To show how much you love us and to bring us back to you again.

We praise you, God.

As one of us he came, at first as a tender infant,

Then as a child, a youth and an adult.

He rejoiced with those who rejoiced and wept with those who wept.

To the despairing he spoke a word of hope.

To the sick he gave healing. To the rejected he was a friend.

And yet he was betrayed and nailed to a cross.

But he was lifted from the grave and restored to life.

We praise you, God.

On the night before Jesus died, he had supper with his disciples;

He took bread; thanked you, as we have thanked you;

Broke the bread and gave it to his friends, saying,

‘Take this, all of you and eat it. This is my body, given for you.

Each time you do this, remember me.’

After supper he took the wine; thanked you for it, and passed a cup of wine

To his friends, saying, ‘This cup is the new promise God has made with you
in my blood. Each time you do this and drink from this cup, remember me.’

God of Love, send your Holy Spirit upon us and what we do here,

That we and these gifts be touched by your Spirit to be signs of life and love

To each other, and to all the world.

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ we now come to you with the confidence
of children of God to pray:

**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, forever. Amen.**

Offering

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering
baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take
on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

Were You There?

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving: (All together)

Compassionate Father, thank you that you are our strength and our song, you fill our hearts with joy. May we give our offerings to you with gladness and joy. Everything we have belongs to you and we rejoice to give some of your abundant gifts back to you. Bless the tithes and offerings we give today. Let the majesty of the Father be the light that guides us, the compassion of the Son be the love that inspires us and the presence of the Spirit be the power that empowers us. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

A Sending Forth Song

The Old Rugged Cross

Benediction

So may the blessing of the God who calls the people out of Egypt call us out from our comfort and our safety to embrace a journey of challenge and risk.

May the blessing of the Son who kneels and washes our feet call us out from our comfort and our safety to embrace and serve those we meet on the journey.

May the blessing of the Spirit who weaves dreams of a new community call us out from our comfort and our safety to provide welcome and hospitality to strangers as well as friends. *Amen.*

Postlude

Way of Sorrows

Matthew 27:24-31; 45-54

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

