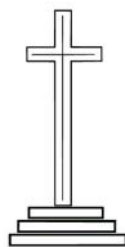


**The Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge  
Woodhouse United Church and  
Grace United Church  
Worship From Home Service  
Good Friday  
Friday, April 2, 2021**



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**Woodhouse Organist: Pat Tiller**

**Grace Pianist: Cheryl Copeman**

**Office Administrator: Jackie Misner-Hilton**

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**Office Hours 9:00 am – 11:30 am (Mon. – Thurs)**

## **Good Friday Service**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Today God makes common cause with our human suffering.

**We read the Scriptures, sing the hymns, feel the feelings of the day Christ died.**

Suffering is not rational. It has no answer.

**But in the cross God meets us in our suffering.**

From this day forward we know that there is nowhere we can go where God is not with us.

### **OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious God of grief and of suffering,  
this Friday seems 'good' for all the wrong reasons.

Be with us in these hours

as we gather in the shadow of the cross of Christ  
and hear again the story of death and the sounds of burial.

This is not where we would choose to be, O God,  
brought face to face with this symbol of death and instrument of  
torture.

Forgive us, where we have sought to avoid such times:  
where we have ignored the cross or denied our own pain,  
or turned our backs on the sufferings of others.

Strengthen us to be here today, that we may know that you are  
here with us.

You know the ways of the world, O God: you have been there; you  
are here;

you have loved and cried and lived and died to be with us,  
to comfort us, to forgive us and to free us.

For this we give thanks.

This we call 'good.'

Amen.

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

"I come to testify to the truth" the Lord said. "What is truth?" we  
reply.

Open our hearts to know your truth, Lord. Speak your truth to us  
now. Amen.

## **SCRIPTURE Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

<sup>13</sup> The LORD says,

“My servant will succeed in his task;  
he will be highly honored.

<sup>14</sup> Many people were shocked when they saw him;  
he was so disfigured that he hardly looked human.

<sup>15</sup> But now many nations will marvel at him,  
and kings will be speechless with amazement.

They will see and understand  
something they had never known.”

53 The people reply,

“Who would have believed what we now report?  
Who could have seen the LORD's hand in this?

<sup>2</sup> It was the will of the LORD that his servant  
grow like a plant taking root in dry ground.

He had no dignity or beauty  
to make us take notice of him.

There was nothing attractive about him,  
nothing that would draw us to him.

<sup>3</sup> We despised him and rejected him;  
he endured suffering and pain.

No one would even look at him—  
we ignored him as if he were nothing.

<sup>4</sup> “But he endured the suffering that should have been ours,  
the pain that we should have borne.

All the while we thought that his suffering  
was punishment sent by God.

<sup>5</sup> But because of our sins he was wounded,  
beaten because of the evil we did.

We are healed by the punishment he suffered,  
made whole by the blows he received.

<sup>6</sup> All of us were like sheep that were lost,  
each of us going his own way.

But the LORD made the punishment fall on him,  
the punishment all of us deserved.

<sup>7</sup> “He was treated harshly, but endured it humbly;  
he never said a word.

Like a lamb about to be slaughtered,  
like a sheep about to be sheared,  
he never said a word.

<sup>8</sup> He was arrested and sentenced and led off to die,  
and no one cared about his fate.

He was put to death for the sins of our people.

<sup>9</sup> He was placed in a grave with those who are evil,  
he was buried with the rich,  
even though he had never committed a crime  
or ever told a lie.”

## MESSAGE

750 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah spoke of the coming of the Messiah. He told of the coming of someone who brought justice to all. Someone who would restore Israel and be a light to the Gentiles. He would possess God-given wisdom. He would be blameless.

But, as you heard in the reading that Matthew shared, he would ultimately be rejected, suffer and die.

The writers of the gospel knew of Isaiah’s prophesy and, just as they interpreted it in the birth stories of Jesus, they once again, see his death as a fulfillment of prophesy.

Before his crucifixion, experiences and stories of Jesus were becoming more plentiful. His following was growing. Here was the Messiah. Here was Emmanuel—God with us.

He was hope for those who were oppressed by the Jewish leaders and the Romans. He was equality for women and strangers. He was love for the rejected. He was healing for the afflicted.

Then, suddenly, everything changed.

It is undisputed that Jesus was crucified. But there continues to be

disagreement about why. In the Jewish tradition of his time, sacrifices had to be offered to atone for sins. And that which was sacrificed needed to be flawless. So an answer that made sense to Jesus' followers was that Jesus was the atoning sacrifice for the sins of all. No more sacrifices would need to be offered. He was the ultimate sacrifice. That understanding continues today although some qualify it by saying that only those who have been "saved" are forgiven.

However, there is another understanding of the why of his death. Instead of Jesus died *for* the sins of humankind, it is that Jesus died *because* of the sins of humankind. Greed, jealousy, fear, threat of loss of power, ignorance... in this understanding, people still bear responsibility for their own sins. And Jesus death was a result of the road he chose to travel. His message of a just and loving God was so important that he would not stop sharing it. It challenged many of the laws and practices of the leaders of the Jews...leaders who agreed with the Roman government to keep the people under control in return for the freedom to practice their faith...and to enjoy the perks that come with leadership positions. If they could eliminate this Jesus person then the status quo could continue. The sacrifice of one would guarantee the continuation of the situation of the masses.

But Jesus loved us so much, he would not, could not, stop spreading the love of God.

Throughout history the assassination of powerful leaders has been the sin of groups that do not want change. The civil rights movement in the US in the 60's is an example. The hope in the assassination of Martin Luther King was that the movement would die with him.

I leave it with you to prayerfully consider...

Did Jesus die simply to make atonement to God for our sins? or are we responsible for our own atonement, called to recognize the injustice of the crucifixion, and offer our thanks that Jesus continued to teach us even when he knew that it would cost him his life.

We come to church to hear the Good News of Jesus.

We come to church to learn of God's love for us.

We come to church to learn how to follow the way of Christ so that we might feel the love that God has for us. A love freely given, by grace alone. We don't have to earn it. We are asked only to share it.

That was Jesus' purpose. That was what his whole ministry was about. Love and justice for all. We've heard him say it— Love one another as I have loved you.

Through the Bible, we experience the same Jesus as the people of his day.

Now close your eyes for a moment and pay attention to your thoughts and feelings as I make the next statement.

The Region has decided to close Grace and Woodhouse Churches.

What did you feel? Shock? Despair? Anger? Confusion?

I want you to hold on to those feelings as you listen to the Passion story when Matthew reads to us from the gospel of John.

And, no, the Region is not closing the churches but your thoughts and feelings would have been similar to those of Jesus' followers. as they experienced the events of that day. Shock. Despair. Anger. Confusion.

How and why could God let this happen?

At different points in the readings we will pause to sing a chorus of Were You There. Let's sing the first line.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 18:1-11**

18 After Jesus had said this prayer, he left with his disciples and went across Kidron Brook. There was a garden in that place, and Jesus and his disciples went in. <sup>2</sup> Judas, the traitor, knew where it was, because many times Jesus had met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So Judas went to the garden, taking with him a group of Roman soldiers, and some Temple guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees; they were armed and carried lanterns and torches. <sup>4</sup> Jesus knew everything that was going to

happen to him, so he stepped forward and asked them, "Who is it you are looking for?"

<sup>5</sup> "Jesus of Nazareth," they answered.

"I am he," he said.

Judas, the traitor, was standing there with them. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they moved back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Again Jesus asked them, "Who is it you are looking for?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

<sup>8</sup> "I have already told you that I am he," Jesus said. "If, then, you are looking for me, let these others go." (<sup>9</sup> He said this so that what he had said might come true: "Father, I have not lost even one of those you gave me.")

<sup>10</sup> Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the High Priest's slave, cutting off his right ear. The name of the slave was Malchus.

<sup>11</sup> Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back in its place! Do you think that I will not drink the cup of suffering which my Father has given me?"

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Came With Weapons Drawn?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 18:12-27**

<sup>12</sup> Then the Roman soldiers with their commanding officer and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus, tied him up, <sup>13</sup> and took him first to

Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year. <sup>14</sup> It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish authorities that it was better that one man should die for all the people.

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That other disciple was well known to the High Priest, so he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the High Priest's house, <sup>16</sup> while Peter stayed outside by the gate. Then the other disciple went back out, spoke to the girl at the gate, and brought Peter inside. <sup>17</sup> The girl at the gate said to Peter, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of that man?"

"No, I am not," answered Peter.

<sup>18</sup> It was cold, so the servants and guards had built a charcoal fire and were standing around it, warming themselves. So Peter went over and stood with them, warming himself.

<sup>19</sup> The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered, "I have always spoken publicly to everyone; all my teaching was done in the synagogues and in the Temple, where all the people come together. I have never said anything in secret.

<sup>21</sup> Why, then, do you question me? Question the people who heard me. Ask them what I told them—they know what I said."

<sup>22</sup> When Jesus said this, one of the guards there slapped him and said, "How dare you talk like that to the High Priest!"

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered him, "If I have said anything wrong, tell everyone here what it was. But if I am right in what I have said, why do you hit me?"<sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the High Priest.

<sup>25</sup> Peter was still standing there keeping himself warm. So the others said to him, "Aren't you also one of the disciples of that man?" But Peter denied it. "No, I am not," he said.

<sup>26</sup> One of the High Priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, spoke up. "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" he asked.<sup>27</sup> Again Peter said "No"—and at once a rooster crowed.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When The Cock Began to Crow?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 18:28-38a**

<sup>28</sup> Early in the morning Jesus was taken from Caiaphas' house to the governor's palace. The Jewish authorities did not go inside the palace, for they wanted to keep themselves ritually clean, in order to be able to eat the Passover meal. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate went outside to them and asked, "What do you accuse this man of?"

<sup>30</sup> Their answer was, "We would not have brought him to you if he had not committed a crime."<sup>31</sup>

Pilate said to them, "Then you yourselves take him and try him according to your own law."



They replied, “We are not allowed to put anyone to death.” (<sup>32</sup> This happened in order to make come true what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he would die.)

<sup>33</sup> Pilate went back into the palace and called Jesus. “Are you the king of the Jews?” he asked him.

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “Does this question come from you or have others told you about me?”

<sup>35</sup> Pilate replied, “Do you think I am a Jew? It was your own people and the chief priests who handed you over to me. What have you done?”

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, “My kingdom does not belong to this world; if my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish authorities. No, my kingdom does not belong here!”

<sup>37</sup> So Pilate asked him, “Are you a king, then?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. I was born and came into the world for this one purpose, to speak about the truth. Whoever belongs to the truth listens to me.”

<sup>38</sup> “And what is truth?” Pilate asked.

CHORUS: “*Were You There When They Asked ‘Are You a King?’*”

### **SCRIPTURE John 18:38b-40**

Then Pilate went back outside to the people and said to them, “I cannot find any reason to condemn him. <sup>39</sup> But according to the custom you have, I always set free a prisoner for you during the Passover. Do you want me to set free for you the king of the Jews?”

<sup>40</sup> They answered him with a shout, “No, not him! We want Barabbas!” (Barabbas was a bandit.)

CHORUS: “*Were You There When They Cried ‘Release the Thief?’*”

### **SCRIPTURE John 19:1-3**

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. <sup>2</sup> The soldiers made a crown out of thorny branches and put it on his head; then they put a

purple robe on him<sup>3</sup> and came to him and said, “Long live the King of the Jews!” And they went up and slapped him.

CHORUS: *“Were You There When They Made a Crown of Thorns?”*

### **SCRIPTURE John 19:4-16a**

<sup>4</sup> Pilate went back out once more and said to the crowd, “Look, I will bring him out here to you to let you see that I cannot find any reason to condemn him.” <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Look! Here is the man!”

<sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the Temple guards saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

Pilate said to them, “You take him, then, and crucify him. I find no reason to condemn him.”

<sup>7</sup> The crowd answered back, “We have a law that says he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.”

<sup>8</sup> When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid. <sup>9</sup> He went back into the palace and asked Jesus, “Where do you come from?” But Jesus did not answer. <sup>10</sup> Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Remember, I have the authority to set you free and also to have you crucified.”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, “You have authority over me only because it was given to you by God. So the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a worse sin.”

<sup>12</sup> When Pilate heard this, he tried to find a way to set Jesus free. But the crowd shouted back, “If you set him free, that means that you are not the Emperor's friend! Anyone who claims to be a king is a rebel against the Emperor!”

<sup>13</sup> When Pilate heard these words, he took Jesus outside and sat down on the judge's seat in the place called “The Stone Pavement.” (In Hebrew the name is “Gabbatha.”) <sup>14</sup> It was then almost noon of the day before the Passover. Pilate said to the people, “Here is your king!”

<sup>15</sup> They shouted back, "Kill him! Kill him! Crucify him!"

Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to crucify your king?"

The chief priests answered, "The only king we have is the Emperor!"

<sup>16</sup> Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Shouted 'Crucify'?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 19:16b-19**

So they took charge of Jesus. <sup>17</sup> He went out, carrying his cross, and came to "The Place of the Skull," as it is called. (In Hebrew it is called "Golgotha.") <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him; and they also crucified two other men, one on each side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," is what he wrote.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Nailed Him to the Tree?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 19:20-25a**

<sup>20</sup> Many people read it, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. <sup>21</sup> The chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am the King of the Jews.'"

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, "What I have written stays written."

<sup>23</sup> After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took the robe, which was made of one piece of woven cloth without any seams in it. <sup>24</sup> The soldiers said to one another, "Let's not tear it; let's throw dice to see who will get it."

This happened in order to make the scripture come true:

"They divided my clothes among themselves  
and gambled for my robe."

And this is what the soldiers did.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Cast Lots For His Clothes?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 19:25b-30**

<sup>25</sup> Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, "He is your son."

<sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "She is your mother." From that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

<sup>28</sup> Jesus knew that by now everything had been completed; and in order to make the scripture come true, he said, "I am thirsty."

<sup>29</sup> A bowl was there, full of cheap wine; so a sponge was soaked in the wine, put on a stalk of hyssop, and lifted up to his lips. <sup>30</sup> Jesus drank the wine and said, "It is finished!"

Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When he hung his head and died?"*

### **SCRIPTURE John 19:31-37**

<sup>31</sup> Then the Jewish authorities asked Pilate to allow them to break the legs of the men who had been crucified, and to take the bodies down from the crosses. They requested this because it was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses on the Sabbath, since the coming Sabbath was especially holy. <sup>32</sup> So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water poured out. (<sup>35</sup> The one who saw this happen has spoken of it, so that you also may believe. What he said is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.) <sup>36</sup> This was done to make the scripture come true: "Not one of his bones will be broken." <sup>37</sup> And there is another scripture that says, "People will look at him whom they pierced."

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Pierced Him in the Side?"*

## **SCRIPTURE John 19:38-42**

<sup>38</sup> After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. (Joseph was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was afraid of the Jewish authorities.) Pilate told him he could have the body, so Joseph went and took it away.

<sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes. <sup>40</sup> The two men took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial. <sup>41</sup> There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried. <sup>42</sup> Since it was the day before the Sabbath and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus' body there.

CHORUS: *"Were You There When They Laid Him in the Tomb?"*

### **PRAYER**

Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy church of God  
throughout the world,  
that God may guide it and gather it together  
so that we may worship God in peace and tranquility.

### ***silence***

God of power and love, you have shown your compassion in Jesus Christ.

Guide the work of the church. Help it to persevere in faith  
and to proclaim your name to people everywhere.

Let us pray for all who serve the church  
with the gifts God gives them.

### ***silence***

God of power and love, your Spirit guides the church and makes it holy.

Strengthen and sustain all who minister. Keep them in health and safety

and help each of us to do faithfully the work to which you have called us.

Let us pray for people everywhere who are preparing for  
baptism and confirmation,  
that they may respond to God's love  
and grow in grace all their life.

***silence***

God of power and love, you bless the church with new members.  
Nurture them in faith. Bring them to new birth as your children.  
Keep them in the company of the saints.

Let us pray for all who do not know God,  
that the light of the Holy Spirit  
may awaken them to faith.

***silence***

God of power and love,  
may all your children everywhere know your goodness.  
Help us, your church, to become more perfect witnesses of your grace  
so that all may see you in us.

Let us pray for all in positions of power  
in government and business  
that God may guide their hearts and minds  
so all may live in peace and justice.

***silence***

God of power and love, defender of the poor and oppressed,  
call to account the rulers of this world,  
so that people everywhere may enjoy justice, peace, and freedom  
and a fair share of the goodness of creation.

Let us pray for all who are sick or dying,  
all who are homeless or in prison,  
and for all who suffer from hunger or violence.

***silence***

God of power and love,  
strength of the weary,  
hope of the despairing,  
hear the cries of your suffering children  
and give us the courage to be agents of your love for them.  
We pray in the name of Christ our Saviour. Amen.

**EXTINGUISHING OF CHRIST CANDLE**

We acknowledge our Creator and the world around us and our place within it. We acknowledge the many nations who call this land home. We acknowledge the Indigenous and non-Indigenous brothers and sisters who walked this land in the past and those who walk it today, this, the traditional and treaty lands of the Anishinaabek (Ahnish-in-nah-bek), Neutral, and Haudenosaunee (Ho-deh-no-show-nee) peoples.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

Office Hours Monday-Thursday

9:00 am-11:30 am

Our office is operating remotely,  
feel free to call and leave a  
message or send an email and we  
will respond during office hours.

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