



Purple Theory: Good Friday

Scripture: John 18 & 19:1-30

COVID-19 Recommendations

- This service is designed to be very participatory with several readers, hymns/spirituals, and a message from the cross.
- Consider doing a joint service with other churches. They don't even have to be neighboring churches because of online worship!
- Invite people to pause for moments of silence and guided prayer throughout the day.
- Consider offering Stations of the Cross (typically a Roman Catholic practice, but it is a very deep 14-stage devotion). This can be done online or in person through the church building or community. You can allow people to reserve times to come and walk through the stations.
- For an online service, consider asking people to light a candle and blow it out at the end of the service, or when, in John 19:30, Jesus says, "It is finished." If people have a Christ candle from Advent or Christmas Eve worship, this would be even more symbolic. You can invite them to relight it on Easter Sunday to symbolize the resurrection of Jesus, the light of the world, from the dead.

Call to Worship

We pause on this day to remember God's love and Christ's sacrifice for us.

God, we thank you for this gift in which you gave of yourself for us.

We pause to worship and to reflect, as we remember the agony that Christ endured for us.

What could suffice to show our gratitude, for you canceled a debt of sin, that we could not repay?

Precious Savior, sin has left a crimson stain, but you have washed us white as snow.

Hymn: Jesus Paid It All (Worship & Song #3100)

Prayer

Maker of heaven of earth, Savior of the world, our hearts tremble at the thought of a pierced side, nailed hands and feet, and your sacred wounded head. We tremble at the thought of a parent giving their child to save us. We tremble at the foot of a cross where our Savior took the place for us. And we tremble at a love so great that even millennia later, it still saves and still sets us free – free from sin and shame, free from pasts, free from the finality of death. Thank you, God, for this dark day in time, which lit the path to eternal life in Christ. In God's name we pray. Amen.



Hymn/Spiritual: Were You There When They Crucified My Lord? (UMH #288)

Reading: John 18

Pause for Moment of Silence

Hymn: What Wondrous Love is This (UMH #292)

Readings:

- Reader 1: John 19: 1-16
- Reader 2: John 19:17-30

Sermon: Such a Sacrifice

- 1) Need for forgiveness - We pause this day to recognize the sacrifice of Christ, who understood that we had sinned against God, disobeyed God, strayed from the will of God, and now needed to be forgiven by God. What a great God, that God would create us, give us free will, the choice to obey or not, and then the opportunity to be forgiven.
- 2) Need for reconciliation – Not only was forgiveness needed, but the final step of complete forgiveness is reconciliation. This reconciliation came at a great cost. Charles Wesley writes in the hymn, “Father I Stretch My Hands to Thee,” “What did thine own son endure, before I drew my breath? What pain, what labor to secure my soul from endless death?” Reflect on the need to be reconciled to God and the cost of the reconciliation. In Christ’s death, God not only forgives us of our sins, but reconciles us back unto Godself. The word we translate into English as “reconcile” is, in the Greek, “allasso,” meaning to change or exchange. In other words, God renews us, in that we are no longer estranged from God, separated by the stain of sin. And God reconciles us back unto Godself.
- 3) A time for burial – Read John 10: 38-42 – Just as Christ’s body had to be buried, there are some things in our lives that we have to let go of and bury. Sins, struggles, strongholds must be buried and put away. And we too, must take on the charge from God to shed these things, just as Christ shed his blood, and then to take up the cross which we are called to bear. The call to bear our own cross is a call to serve, a call to love, a call to sacrifice, and a call to reach the lost. It is a call for lives to be changed through the saving power of Christ.

“Must Jesus bear the cross alone, and all the world go free? No, there’s a cross for everyone, and there’s a cross for me.”



Hymn: Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone (UMH #424)

Charge

As you leave this service, may we remember, solemnly, the love of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ, and the saving grace of Christ. In the name of God our Maker, Christ our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Sustainer. Amen.