

### **Welcome and Introduction**

A warm welcome to you all and I am glad you were able to join us this evening. It feels good to be able to come back together in our church building after quite a while. We are so blessed to be part of the body of Christ and to be able to enjoy fellowship with one another. Today is Good Friday and we are to remember the Lord's death. Jesus died on the cross. We remember His death and we will celebrate His resurrection on Easter Sunday morning. Jesus is alive and He dwells in our hearts through His Holy Spirit. Let us open our hearts and thank God for the cross, in which He died to save us. After the preaching we will have a time to celebrate Holy Communion and all believers in Jesus are invited to participate.

### **Let's pray...**

Eternal God and creator of all things, we humbly come before you this evening and we thank you for the breath of life. If it wasn't for your great love we would not be here today. You have protected us and spared us from harm and we have survived this pandemic so far and our hearts are full of gratitude and thanksgiving. We would like to present this worship service to you and I pray that you speak to us through the songs, your word and we ask you to hear our prayers. Please forgive our sins and cleanse us from all our unrighteousness. I ask that everyone here will experience your presence and be filled with your love. And I pray that we won't leave this place the same way we came in, but I pray that we'd be encouraged, transformed and filled with your Holy Spirit. We pray all these things in the precious name of Jesus, Amen

### **Song 1 – Worthy is The Lamb (Hillsong Worship)**

<https://youtu.be/OukKIS4EBzi> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

Thank you for the cross, Lord  
Thank you for the price You paid  
Bearing all my sin and shame  
In love You came and gave amazing grace

Thank you for this love, Lord  
Thank you for the nail pierced hands  
Washed me in Your cleansing flow  
Now all I know Your forgiveness and embrace

Worthy is the Lamb seated on the throne  
Crown You now with many crowns  
You reign victorious  
High and lifted up Jesus Son of God  
The Darling of Heaven crucified  
Worthy is the Lamb  
Worth is the Lamb

## **Song 2 – O Praise the Name / Anastasis (Hillsong Worship)**

<https://youtu.be/LqBpifDpNKc> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

I cast my mind to Calvary  
Where Jesus bled and died for me  
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet  
My Saviour on that cursed tree

His body bound and drenched in tears  
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb  
The entrance sealed by heavy stone  
Messiah still and all alone

O praise the Name of the Lord our God  
O praise His Name forevermore  
For endless days we will sing Your praise  
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God

Then on the third at break of dawn  
The Son of heaven rose again  
O trampled death where is your sting?  
The angels roar for Christ the King

He shall return in robes of white  
The blazing sun shall pierce the night  
And I will rise among the saints  
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face

### **Reading - John 19:1-37**

**1**Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. **2** The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe **3** and went up to him again and again, saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' And they slapped him in the face. **4** Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews gathered there, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him.' **5** When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' **6** As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify! Crucify!' But Pilate answered, 'You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him.' **7** The Jewish leaders insisted, 'We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.' **8** When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, **9** and he went back inside the palace. 'Where do you come from?' he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. **10** 'Do you refuse to speak to me?' Pilate said. 'Don't you realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?' **11** Jesus answered, 'You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.' **12** From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, 'If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.' **13** When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement

(which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). 14 It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon. 'Here is your king,' Pilate said to the Jews. 15 But they shouted, 'Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!' 'Shall I crucify your king?' Pilate asked. 'We have no king but Caesar,' the chief priests answered. 16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. 17 Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others – one on each side and Jesus in the middle. 19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. 20 Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. 21 The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, 'Do not write "The King of the Jews", but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.' 22 Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written.' 23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 24 'Let's not tear it,' they said to one another. 'Let's decide by lot who will get it.' This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, 'They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.' So this is what the soldiers did. 25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing near by, he said to her, 'Woman,[b] here is your son,' 27 and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. 28 Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.' 29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. 31 Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. 32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. 33 But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. 36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken,'[c] 37 and, as another scripture says, 'They will look on the one they have pierced.'

## **Message**

**Good Friday – Jesus Died on the Cross!**

## **Introduction**

This is a very special week for us as Christians and last Sunday we looked at the passage of scripture which described Jesus' Glorious and Triumphant entrance in Jerusalem. We saw how Jesus was welcomed, acclaimed and worshipped as King by his disciples and the multitude of Jews that were in Jerusalem to celebrate the

Passover. As the week progressed, a turn of events took place. From being acclaimed and worshiped as King, our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed by one of His close friends, arrested, flagged, and sentenced to death and He was crucified! We read the account of the apostle John, who was an eye witness of the events that took place. We can also read accounts in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus died and this is a fact. You may ask why did Jesus have to die or you may have questions like: "Who killed our Lord Jesus Christ?" Did the Jewish people kill Jesus? Or was it the Romans? The answer is simple. It was neither the Jews nor the Romans who killed our Lord Jesus, but His love and passion to save us. In fact, it was because of my sin, my iniquities and my shame that Jesus took the cross. Not only mine, but yours too and of the entire human race. Jesus paid for us all and Jesus died to save us and give us new life in Him. **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."** **John 3:16** There is a lot more in this passage we've just read, which would be worth looking at and meditating on, allowing the Holy Spirit to teach and encourages us through His word. But today I would like us focus only on three points.

### **I – Jesus Christ Was Crucified!**

**"Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others – one on each side and Jesus in the middle."** **John 19:17-18** I can't imagine a worse death than death by crucifixion. Even the Romans who carried out this method of punishment regarded it with horror and wanted to prevent women from ever seeing someone crucified. Cicero, a first century Roman writer and historian declared: 'It was the most cruel and horrifying of all deaths.' Crucifixion probably originating with the Assyrians and Babylonians and it was used systematically by the Persians in the 6th century BC. Alexander the Great brought it from there to the eastern Mediterranean countries in the 4th century BC, and the Phoenicians introduced it to Rome in the 3rd century BC. No Roman citizen suffered the indignity of crucifixion, unless this citizen was guilty of high crime against Caesar. It was the most dreaded kind of death in the ancient world and was reserved for foreigners' slaves and foreigner criminals. That was the kind of death that Jesus died. We've understood and read about the horror of it and we've spoken about it even this evening. One could not exaggerate the horror of it. Films over the years tried to depict the terrible realities of crucifixion to the degree that I think most of us have some understanding of what it was to be scourged, then to be crucified on a cross, nailed and hanged with terrible wounds until the weight of your own body pressures your lungs so you die of asphyxiation. According to historians the victims of crucifixion were often so panicked, terrified, horrified, that they had to be driven like wild animals. Sometimes they would have to be tied up and dragged because the resistance was so great. The horror of scourging would increase the victims fear and anxiety and later take them from the place of scourging up the hill would be a very difficult task, but this was not the case with Jesus. There was no sign of resistance. **"Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).** He carried His own cross after being flagged just as we read in **Isaiah 53:7 that says: "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."** Jesus was willing to follow and there was no resistance. It was by His own will in accordance with the will of the Father. It was God's plan for salvation of humanity. All the events, which took place on the first Holy Week in Jerusalem, were to fulfill the scriptures and John is quoting and pointing them out for us. **"This happened**

***that the scripture might be fulfilled***...We see this when they cast lots over His garments or when the soldiers came and pierced him with a spear instead of breaking His legs. ***“The apostle of who Jesus loves”***; that’s how John described himself, was there as an eye witness and he is now testifying of what he saw with his own eyes. **35** ***“The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. 36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: ‘Not one of his bones will be broken,’ 37 and, as another scripture says, ‘They will look on the one they have pierced.’”*** **35-37** In Exodus 12 and Numbers 9 we read about God’s institution of the Passover to the people of Israel, how each family had to sacrifice a lamb and this lamb had to be perfect and without blemish. Jesus is Lamb of God! Perfect and without sin, he made Himself sin for us. These scriptures also describe not only how the lamb should be killed but also how they were to cook and eat it together. Not a bone of that lamb was to be broken. For every step and every act there was an accurate fulfillment of what the Old Testament anticipated. Everything that was happening was to fulfill divine scriptures. Because of God’s great love for us, He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. When I lived in Egypt I was touched to see that all my Christian friends had tattoos of the cross on their right wrists and how they were not ashamed of the gospel, despite persecution because of the cross. History tells us how Mark went to Egypt and preached the Gospel there and they accepted it and the church grew strong in Egypt. But later when Islam spread out and conquered that part of the world, Christians who lived there had only three options. 1. Convert to Islam, 2. Pay high taxes in order to continue professing their faith, or 3. They would be killed. Many didn’t have the money to pay for the taxes and they chose to die, rather than denying the cross. ***“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”*** **1 Corinthians 1:18**

## **II – To Save Us From Our Sins**

***“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”*** **John 3:14-15** In Numbers 21:4-9 we read about a plague of serpents killing the people of Israel in the desert, just like this virus that is killing people everywhere in the world today. The People of Israel were on their journey towards the Promise Land. They had witnessed God’s miracles in Egypt and how God had set them free. They had also experienced God’s provision of the manna, the bread that came down from heaven. However, their hearts did not change and they kept complaining and speaking badly against God, His provision and against Moses. So, God punished them by sending those poisonous serpents, they were bitten and many were dying. But the people repented and cried out for God to take the serpents away from them. So, God asked Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it on a pole and everyone who looked at the serpent was healed and lived. Although a big issue of this pandemic is that it is killing many people today, another big issue is that we have all been contaminated by sin. For example, many people disregard nature and have no respect for the environment. The BBC news show us the amount of rubbish people left behind in the parks after their picnics at the beginning of this week’s holiday. When I go for a walk with Andrea I feel sad in my spirit as it is very difficult for me to step on the rubbish and to continue walking. I often pick some up to throw in the bin, which is clearly available. It seems like people have lost their conscience of sin and don’t think this is wrong. This is just an example to show how contaminated we are and how much we need a Saviour. The Bible tell us that: ***“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his***

**grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood – to be received by faith... Romans 3:23-25a** Christianity is the only religion that offers an atoning Saviour. It's only by His grace, love and mercy that we are saved. Not from our acts or our righteousness, but because of His love. That is why we call it Good Friday. It is Good News dear friends, indeed! While Jesus was dying on the cross, God was reconciling us with Him. Through Jesus' blood and sacrifice on the cross, God made it possible for you and I to have a relationship with Him. Remembering Palm Sunday, the disciples and the multitude of followers of Jesus were crying out: Hosanna, Hosanna!! Which means; save us, now! Save us, we plea! This was exactly what happened on the first Good Friday. Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. **"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."** **Romans 6:23** Just look to the cross, believe in your heart and you will be healed. You will be saved and will receive the gift of God, which is eternal life in Him. **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."** **1 John 1:9** We don't need to die in our sins. We can be set free and healed to live a life that God desires us to live.

### **III – To Reveal God's Love for us**

**"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."** **Romans 5:8** **"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters."** **1 John 3:16** **"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."** **John 15:9-13** I used to tell this story to my Muslim friends to try and explain to them why Jesus died on the cross. Eastern culture is very different to western culture. Eastern culture is based on honour and shame and that's why the Prophet Mohamed could not understand when the Christians told Him that Jesus died on the cross. That's why our Muslim friends can't understand how God would allow a good prophet like Jesus to die in such a tragic and shameful manner. It is written in their Holy Book that Jesus didn't die on the cross but someone else died in his place. Even nowadays we still hear stories of honour killings done in order to clean the shame of a family. So, I tell them a little story about Fatima who happened to get pregnant without being married. This would be very shameful for the family. They lived in a very small village and sooner or later everyone would know about her shame. Fatima's father was a holy man in the village and well respected by all the people. Fatima was the youngest of three and she had two older brothers. She was much loved by her father and her brothers. Fatima committed a huge mistake and she didn't know what to do. She was desperate because she knew that what she had done brought shame to her family. Her father being a holy man wouldn't be able to cope with the shame and in the law he would have to kill her. So Fatima could not talk to him but she went and confessed what she had done to her older brother. Her older brother was devastated by what he had heard, but still he chose not to tell the father. Instead he took Fatima's shame upon himself and helped her to hide away from their Father and the rest of the family and the village. He finally found a solution, he took Fatima away to a Christian family he knew and told the father that she went to study in another country. There, Fatima had the baby in peace and gave the baby to a family to take care of the

child so she could go back and enjoy a relationship with her father. Her shame was on her older brother's shoulders and it stayed with him until he died because he chose not to tell anybody else of what Fatima had done. Just like Fatima, we have sinned against God, our Father who is holy and because of our sin and shame we all deserve to die. But Jesus, (our older brother), took our shame to the cross so that we could enjoy a relationship in peace with the Father.

### **Conclusion**

Jesus died on the cross and it was the most terrible and shameful form of death. He was the perfect Lamb of God and He became a sacrifice for us. He saved us by the blood he shed on the cross. When He died, our sin and shame died with Him. We were set free and saved by His love and grace. This is the good news of Good Friday! Let's thank God for the Cross, which saved us.

### **Let's pray...**

Lord Jesus we thank you for your atoning sacrifice on the cross, for bearing the weight and the pain of our sins. We thank you for your forgiveness of our sin and shame. Thank you for restoring our relationship with the Father and the gift of eternal life you have given us. Amen

### **Holy Communion**

Having gathered around the Word of God I would like to invite you now to gather with me around the Lord's Table. Here we have the two elements: the bread and the wine, which help us to remember Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We remember His death and we celebrate His life in us. **And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. John 6:35** Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are strong, but because you are weak. Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help. Come because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more. Come, because He loved you and gave himself for you. Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body. The apostle Paul in **I Corinthians 11:23-26** he says: **"For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."**

### **Let's pray:**

Dear God, we thank you for your love shown to us in Jesus Christ. We thank you for His life and ministry, announcing the good news of your Kingdom and demonstrating its power in the lifting of the oppressed, the healing of the sick, and the loving of the loveless. We thank you for His sacrificial death upon the cross for the redemption of the world, and for your raising him to life again, as a foretaste of the glory we shall share. We give you thanks for the bread and the wine, symbols of our world and signs of your transforming love. Send your Holy Spirit, we pray, that we may be transformed and renewed in our relationship with Jesus and grown in our love for him and your kingdom. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

### **Song 3 – Were you there when they crucified my Lord**

<https://youtu.be/fpSSclCWJ9M> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord  
Oh were you there when they crucified my Lord  
Ooh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord

Were you there when they nailed him to the cross  
Were you there when they nailed him to the cross  
Ooh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble  
Were you there when they nailed him to the cross

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb  
Ooh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb

Were you there when the stone was rolled away  
Were you there when the stone was rolled away  
Ooh sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble, tremble  
Were you there when the stone was rolled away

The Bread – Jesus said, “This is my body which is for you; do this in memory of me.” Take this in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your heart by faith and thanksgiving. Let’s eat the bread together. The Wine – In the same way, he took the cup after they had eaten and said: “This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this in memory of me.” Drink this and remember that Christ’s blood was shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins so that you could experience this new life in Him. Let’s drink together with our hearts full of joy and thanksgiving.

### **Final Words and Announcements**

I would like to ask you please to continue observing the rules of social distancing, the use of masks, and two different ways in and out of the building, please use hand sanitizer when you come in and also when you leave. There are zoom prayer meetings for the adults, youth and children. Don’t forget if you brought your gifts and tights to leave at the plate provided in the back as you leave. I would like to encourage you to give generously and with joy.

### **Let us finish this service by blessing one another with these words:**

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forever more. Amen!

**See you all on Sunday Easter at 10:45**