

**WESLEY UNITING CHURCH
MAUNDY SERVICE
MARCH 28TH 2024**



Rev. Tupe Ioelu

The act of worship

Call to worship

God's word is a lamp to my feet ***and a light to my path.***

PRAYER

We bow our heads in silence for words are too difficult to speak when we think about today.

We bow our heads in silence, in shame at the cruelty that exists in our world.

We bow our heads in silence to listen to your word, to enable you to speak to us.

We bow our heads in silence as Jesus did before, during and after the experiences of his life.

We bow our heads in silence before you.

God of the still, small voice, speak to us after the storms of life have done their worst, speak to our hearts with the silence of your love. Amen.

SONG TIS 345: Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

1

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
were you there when they crucified my Lord?

2

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

3

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

4

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

5

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

6

Were you there when he rose from out the tomb?
Were you there when he rose from out the tomb?
O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when he rose from out the tomb?

Readings – Part one

The Last Supper (Luke 22.14-26).

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves, for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be

who would do this. A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, "The kings of the gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather, the greatest among you must become like the youngest and the leader like one who serves

Who is the greater? (Luke 22.27-38).

For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

"You are those who have stood by me in my trials, and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded[e] to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail, and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." And he said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!" Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day until you have denied three times that you know me." He said to them, "When I sent you out without a purse, bag, or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "No, not a thing." He said to them, "But now, the one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one. For I tell you, this scripture must be fulfilled in me, 'And he was counted among the lawless,' and indeed what is written about me is being fulfilled." They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." He replied, "It is enough."

The Mount of Olives (Luke 22.39-53a).

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said

to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus said to him, "Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as though I were a rebel? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour and the power of darkness!"

Reader: 'The light grows dim' (Extinguish 3 candles)

All: *The darkness deepens.*

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we too have said we will stand by you and yet at times we too run away in fear.

We have said that we will love others as you taught and yet many are the times we don't.

We have said we would offer support with our prayers, and yet so often we can be too busy to pray.

Like the disciples, we fear the unknown, we are worried about commitment, and we deny you in our daily lives at work or school.

Lord Jesus, when we face difficult decisions, help us to act responsibly and to act prayerfully.

Give us the courage to stand by you, quietly confident in the faith that you are as much with us as you were with Peter and the disciples. **Amen**

Readings – Part two

Peter's denial (Luke 22.54b-71).

Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a female servant, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him, for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

The Mocking and Beating of Jesus

Now the men who were holding Jesus[j] began to mock him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophecy! Who is it who struck you?" They kept heaping many other insults on him.

Jesus before the Council

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us." He replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe, 68 and if I question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." All of them asked, "Are you, then, the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!"

Pilate (Luke 23.1-7).

Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man inciting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king." Then Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation against this man." But they were insistent and said, "He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place."

Jesus before Herod

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.

Herod (Luke 23.8-11).

When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his

soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him and sent him back to Pilate.

Reader: 'The light grows dim' (Extinguish 3 candles)

All: *The darkness deepens.*

SONG TIS 350: There is a green hill far away

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 may 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

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

Readings – Part three

Return to Pilate (Luke 23.12-25)

That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people, and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him."

Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

Reader: 'The light grows dim' (Extinguish 3 candles)

All: *The darkness deepens.*

SONG TIS 123: Be still my soul (V1, V2)

1.

Be still, my soul:
the Lord is on your side;
bear patiently the cross
of grief and pain;

leave to your God
to order and provide;
in every change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul:
your best, your heavenly friend
through thorny ways
leads to a joyful end.

2.
Be still, my soul:
your God will undertake
to guide the future as he has the past.
Your hope, your confidence
let nothing shake,
all now mysterious
shall be clear at last.
Be still, my soul:
the tempests still obey
his voice, who ruled them
once on Galilee.

Readings – Part four

COMMUNION

Reader: 'The light grows dim' (Extinguish 3 candles)

All: *The darkness deepens.*

SONG TIS 123: Be still my soul (V3, V4)

3.
Be still, my soul:
when dearest friends depart
and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then you shall better know his love,
his heart,
who comes to soothe your sorrow, calm your fears.
Be still, my soul: for Jesus can restore

the trust and hope
that strengthened you before.

4.

Be still, my soul:
the hour is hastening on
when we shall be for ever
with the Lord,
when disappointment,
grief and fear are gone,
sorrow forgotten,
love's pure joy restored.

Be still, my soul:
when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed
we shall meet at last.

PRAYER

We wait expectantly at the foot of the cross.

Help us to wait when things go wrong, when we are misunderstood, when friends let us down, when the world ridicules us. Help us to expect the peace of God, the loving presence of Jesus, the energy of the Spirit, and the very best of ourselves.

Let us have courage to speak up for Jesus as we wait in silence at the foot of the cross. **Amen.**

(leave in silence)

