

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

Good Friday Passion Play

April 21, 2019

St. John's acknowledges these ancestral territories of the Lekwungen people.

WELCOME

RESPONSIVE GREETING

It is Good Friday, the day we remember Jesus' death.
There is no Easter without Good Friday
New life follows death. Joy follows sadness.

All: We know, but we are afraid.

God knows and understands our fear.
No one will be tested beyond what he or she can endure.

**All: Then let us have courage,
trusting in God to love and guide us.
Let us worship God and look forward to the joy of Easter.**

SONG *The Summons*

Prayer of Approach

We thank you God

All: for the blessed gift of Jesus. We thank you for his love, which nothing could stop, not even suffering and death on a cross. We pray for the courage to follow him, no matter what the cost. We ask for forgiveness when we lack courage. In our worship this morning, help us to experience your love so that we might dare to go beyond the limits of what we think possible. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God,
look lovingly upon this your family,
for whom our Lord Jesus Christ
was willing to be betrayed,
to be given into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who now lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

LOOKING AT JESUS, LOOKING AT OUR HEARTS

Stations are places where people wait while they are going from one place to another. A school-bus stop is like a station. People wait at train stations or bus stations or airports. Think of some stations where you have been.

Stations are also places where people take time to think about Jesus as he went to die on a cross. They are “Stations of the Cross.” They show us how much Jesus loved us.

All sing the Iona chant ‘Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world’ as a refrain between stations.

FIRST STATION: JESUS FACES A MEAN CROWD

LOOK AT JESUS

Jesus is standing before angry people who are yelling and saying mean, hurtful things to him. They scream at him. Some of them tell lies about him, saying that he did bad things.

But Jesus stays quiet, even though he knows that he will be hurt. He knows that God is with him. He even asks God to help him forgive the people who are yelling and telling lies about him.

LOOK AT YOUR HEART

[bell]

Has anyone ever said mean or hurtful things about you, or has anyone ever told a lie about you? If someone did that to you, look at your heart and see how you felt. Maybe you were scared, or hurt, or maybe you felt very angry.

When you see how you felt, show your heart to Jesus. See Jesus loving you when you show him what happens in your heart. Then, when you are ready, you can ask Jesus to help him make your heart more like his. Maybe you want to ask Jesus to help you to remember that God is always with you.

[silence]

[bell]

Each may take up a stone from the pile, and add it to their carrying bag.

We sing ‘Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world’

SECOND STATION: JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

LOOK AT JESUS

When the soldiers put a big, heavy cross on Jesus’ shoulders, Jesus doesn’t fight with them or say angry words to them. He knows that he has to carry this cross a long way, and he knows that the way will be very hard for him at times. But Jesus knows that God is with him, and he asks God to help him to carry this cross, even though it is heavy.

LOOK AT YOUR HEART

[bell]

Have you ever had something happen that was very hard for you? Sometimes children are very sick, or someone in their family is very sick. Sometimes adults or older children do not treat younger children nicely. Sometimes we just can't have things the way we want them.

Take some time to look at what your heart is like when this happens. Then, when you see what your heart is like, show your heart to Jesus. See Jesus loving you when you show him what happens in your heart. When you are ready, you can ask Jesus to help make your heart more like his.

[silence]

[bell]

Each may take up a stone from the pile, and add it to their carrying bag.

We sing 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world'

THIRD STATION: SIMON, A STRANGER, CARRIES JESUS' CROSS FOR HIM

LOOK AT JESUS

Jesus is so tired that the soldiers know he cannot carry the heavy cross by himself. So they look around and see someone who looks strong enough to help Jesus carry this cross. This person's name is Simon.

Jesus just looks at Simon and quietly whispers, "Thank you" to Simon. Then they continue on the long road, carrying the cross together.

Look at Your Heart

[bell]

Sometimes helping someone can be difficult, for so many different reasons. Maybe you haven't finished something that you like to do, when someone asks you for help. Or maybe you just don't feel like helping that person.

Can you think of a time when you were asked to help someone and did not want to help? Show Jesus what it was like when that happened, and picture Jesus loving you as you show him your heart. Maybe you can even hear Jesus whisper, "Thank you for helping." When you are ready, you can ask Jesus to help you to have a helping heart.

[silence]

[bell]

Each may take up a stone from the pile, and add it to their carrying bag.

We sing 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world'

FOURTH STATION: JESUS' CLOTHES ARE TAKEN AWAY, AND HE IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

LOOK AT JESUS

Finally Jesus reaches the hill that is the end of the road he has to walk. Jesus knows that he will die here. But before he dies, the soldiers will do more to him. They pull off his long robe, and almost all his clothes are taken from him.

Jesus stands in front of the crowd with only a small piece of cloth covering part of his body. Jesus asks God to help him remember that he is not alone, that God is with him through all this.

How much Jesus hurts as the soldiers nail him to the cross. He hurts all over; he is tired and thirsty; he knows that he is going to die. But he looks at the people who have hurt him and, instead of saying bad things to those people, Jesus asks God to forgive them.

He looks at his mother and tells her to take care of others. Even when he is dying, Jesus is thinking of other people.

LOOK AT YOUR HEART

[bell]

Can you think of a time when someone hurt you with unkind words or actions? Was it hard for you to forgive that person?

Jesus knows that forgiving is hard to do. That's why Jesus will help to change your heart when you ask him to help you to forgive someone. See how your heart looks after you ask Jesus to do this.

[silence]

[bell]

Each may take up a stone from the pile, and add it to their carrying bag.

We sing 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world'

FIFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

LOOK AT JESUS

Finally, after the long walk, after falling many times, after having the men beat him, after being nailed to the cross and suffering on the cross, Jesus bows his head and dies.

Now this part of his life is over. There is nothing left for Jesus to give or to do. Jesus has given his life for all of us.

LOOK AT YOUR HEART

[bell]

Did you ever feel that you wanted to make something better, or that if you only tried harder, something would change that you want to change? Or maybe you felt that you did not try hard enough at something, and something bad happened.

If you can think of a time like that, then show Jesus your heart, and let him love you. When you are ready, you can ask Jesus to help your heart be more like his heart.

[silence]

[bell]

Each may take up a stone from the pile, and add it to their carrying bag.

We sing 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world'

SIXTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS, AND HE IS LAID IN A TOMB

LOOK AT JESUS

Now Jesus' lifeless body is taken down from the cross. No more pain or suffering for Jesus; all the pain is over. Mary, Jesus' mother, holds him tenderly in her arms. How sad she is.

And how sad Jesus' friends are. They are crying as they hold his body.

Jesus' friends wash his body and wrap it in a clean sheet. They touch his body gently, and then they put his body into a tomb. When they are finished, they push a very large stone over the entrance, so that no one can go inside.

Now there is darkness in the tomb where Jesus' body lies, and all of his friends go home because they are very sad and tired.

LOOK AT YOUR HEART

[bell]

Can you remember a time when you were very sad to say "Good-bye" to someone? Maybe you were leaving the person for only a short time, or maybe it was for a long time. Maybe you said "Good-bye" to someone you loved when that person died.

Take a few moments to think about one of those times you were sad saying "Good-bye," and show Jesus how your heart felt then. Try to picture Jesus loving you, and being with you with your sad heart. Let Jesus love you a lot; Jesus knows how sad your heart is.

[silence]

[bell]

Each may take up a stone from the pile, and add it to their carrying bag.

We sing 'Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world'

PSALM 22

My God, my God, why have you
deserted me?

Why are you so far away?

Won't you listen to my groans
and come to my rescue?

I cry out day and night,
but you don't answer,
and I can never rest.

All: My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

Yet you are the holy God,
ruling from your throne
and praised by Israel.

Our ancestors trusted you,
and you rescued them.

All: My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

When they cried out for help,
you saved them,
and you did not let them down
when they depended on you.

But I am merely a worm,
far less than human,
and I am hated and rejected
by people everywhere.

All: My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

Everyone who sees me
makes fun and sneers.

They shake their heads,
and say,

"Trust the Lord!

If you are his favorite,
let him protect you
and keep you safe."

All My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

I have no more strength
than a few drops of water.

All my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like melted wax.

My strength has dried up
like a broken clay pot,
and my tongue sticks

to the roof of my mouth.
You, God, have left me
to die in the dirt.

All: My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

Brutal enemies attack me
like a pack of dogs,
tearing at my hands
and my feet.

I can count all my bones,
and my enemies just stare
and sneer at me.

They took my clothes
and gambled for them.

All: My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

Don't stay far away, Lord!
My strength comes from you,
so hurry and help.

Rescue me from enemy swords
and save me from those dogs.
Don't let lions eat me.

Rescue me from the horns
of wild bulls,
and when your people meet,
I will praise you, Lord.

All: My God, my God, why have you deserted me?

ACTIVE PRAYER OF RESPONSE *"Laying Our Burdens Down"*

Could we all now take in our hands one of the stones we have held during the service.

Stones are what people wanted to throw at Jesus
during his life;
stones are also what surrounded him in the tomb
and through them he pushed his way
back into life on the third day.

Could we,
as we remember our Lord's death
and see how he was crucified
by the action or the apathy

of people like ourselves,
remember that it was for our sake he died?

Let us remember the wrong things in our life
which burden us,
threaten each other,
and offend God.

And after we have recognized
what these things are,
let us give them to God to take away.
For Jesus is the one
who said, 'Give me your burdens,'
and Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.

We'll be silent for a moment
and then we'll sing,
'We will lay our burden down.'
And as we sing,
we can, if we want to,
take the stone, representing our burden,
and lay it at the foot of the cross.

[Silence, then...]

Let us listen to these words of Jesus,
spoken directly to us:

*Reader I am the good shepherd
and I know my sheep
and I lay down my life for them.*

*There is no greater love than this
that a man should lay down his life
for his friends
and you are my friends,
if you do what I have commanded.*

*Whoever believes in me,
I will never turn away.
Whoever has faith in me,
even though he or she dies,
will live for ever.*

*Now I am going to my Father
and your Father,
to my God
and your God,
but I shall come back
and take you to myself,
that where I am, you may be also.*

CLOSING RESPONSES

With Jesus we can say:

All 'Father, into your hands we commit our lives.'

In your hands our lives are safe, come what may.

We know that your forgiveness is greater than our sinfulness and the bad side of us is in your hands. Even though there may be difficulties and danger ahead, we are in your hands. And when we pass through a valley of a dark shadows, we will pass through it fearing no evil, knowing that you are with us, and that we are in your loving hands.

All: Amen.

Eggs and Ashes, Wild Goose Worship Group

SONG *Canticle of the Tuning*

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the one who waits.
You fixed your sight on the servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain:

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn.**

Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me.
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and those who would for you yearn,
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. (*Refrain*)

From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
These are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. (*Refrain*)

Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forbears heard
is the promise that holds us bound,
'Til the spear and rod be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around. (*Refrain*)

Paraphrase of Luke 1:46-58 (Magnificat)

Words: Rory Cooney (1990)

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GOING OUT

Our service of worship is complete.
As we leave the church, may we be filled with the love of Christ
until we worship again in the joy of Easter.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

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