

Good Friday Reflection & Worship

Scattered & Gathered (Online)

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Preparation

This time of reflection & worship was designed especially for a time of physical distancing. You may follow it in your home, in your backyard, or walking in another safe outdoor space where you (and your household) can be physically distanced from others. It can be used alone or in a family unit of varying ages, and may be adapted for your particular circumstances. If you are alone, you may write your reflections in a journal. If you are with others, talk together. Bring these pages with you wherever you are. You can read as you walk or stop along the way. You will be asked to look around you for items that represent 5 themes. Gather them together if you are at home or carry them home if possible (if small like a stone, a twig). Take a picture if it's something you have to leave behind. Bring them to our evening online conversation.

Here we go...

Opening

Right now we are being asked to stay home a lot. It feels strange not to be together as a church on Good Friday, but as we stay near home, with many other events cancelled, we have the chance to stay close to Jesus and to spend time remembering the story of his life and death and what they show us about his love for us and our love for Jesus. Please sing (or read) this song:

Sing (or read)

(note to planners – if you have the right to reprint music, consider inserting an image of the Taizé song “Stay with me” in this first spot, so people can read the music if they choose)

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Pray

Jesus,
we want to stay with you today and every day.
Help us to stay with you even in the hardest parts of your story.
Thank you for staying with us in the hardest parts of our lives.
Teach us about your love for us.
We are watching and praying.
Amen

Read – Matthew 26:30-36 (Contemporary English Version)

Then [Jesus and his disciples] sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus said to his disciples, “During this very night, all of you will reject me, as the Scriptures say,

‘I will strike down the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.’

But after I am raised to life, I will go to Galilee ahead of you.” Peter spoke up, “Even if all the others reject you, I never will!” Jesus replied, “I promise you that before a rooster crows tonight, you will say three times that you don’t know me.” But Peter said, “Even if I have to die with

you, I will never say I don't know you." All the others said the same thing. Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane. When they got there, he told them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

Look

What do you see around you that makes you think about being "*alone*"? Take your time. If it's something you can touch or hold, do that.

Wonder

Before Jesus was arrested in the garden, he prayed alone. His closest friends fell asleep even though he kept asking them to stay awake with him. After Jesus was arrested, those close friends were afraid and they all ran away.

- What do you think it felt like to be Jesus, praying alone in that garden that night?
- When have you felt alone?
- What does it feel like to pray this prayer with Jesus? "Abba God, if it is possible, don't make me suffer by having me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want."

Sing

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Read – Matthew 26:57-60a (CEV)

After Jesus had been arrested, he was led off to the house of Caiaphas the high priest. The nation's leaders and the teachers of the Law of Moses were meeting there. But Peter followed along at a distance and came to the courtyard of the high priest's palace. He went in and sat down with the guards to see what was going to happen. The chief priests and the whole council wanted to put Jesus to death. So they tried to find some people who would tell lies about him in court. But they could not find any, even though many did come and tell lies.

Look

What do you see around you that makes you think about being "*broken*"? Take your time. If it's something you can touch or hold, do that.

Wonder

A justice system is supposed to be fair and honest, but the court that sentenced Jesus to death was not those things. It was broken. Even Jesus' good friend Peter broke his promise to Jesus when he denied three times that he knew Jesus.

- What do you see in our world that is broken and needs mending?
- What are the things that we might help mend?
- What are the things that we might need to trust God to mend?

Sing

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Read – Matthew 27:27-31 (CEV)

The governor's soldiers led Jesus into the fortress and brought together the rest of the troops. They stripped off Jesus' clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. They made a crown out of thorn branches and placed it on his head, and they put a stick in his right hand. The soldiers knelt down and pretended to worship him. They made fun of him and shouted, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" Then they spit on him. They took the stick from him and beat him on the head with it. When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus, they took off the robe. They put his own clothes back on him and led him off to be nailed to a cross.

Look

What do you see around you that makes you think about being "*hurt*"? Take your time. If it's something you can touch or hold, do that.

Wonder

People hurt Jesus' body and they also said and did cruel things to make fun of him. When we hear cruel things, it can hurt our feelings, or make our hearts hurt.

- When have you been hurt?
- When have you hurt someone else?
- What do you feel when Jesus prays this prayer? "Abba, forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing" (Luke 23:34).

Sing

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Read – Matthew 27:45-51, 54 (CEV)

At noon the sky turned dark and stayed that way until three o'clock. Then about that time Jesus shouted, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said, "He's calling for Elijah." One of them at once ran and grabbed a sponge. He soaked it in wine, then put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus. Others said, "Wait! Let's see if Elijah will come and save him." Once again Jesus shouted, and then he died. At once the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, and rocks split apart. The officer and the soldiers guarding Jesus felt the earthquake and saw everything else that happened. They were frightened and said, "This man really was God's Son!"

Look

What do you see around you that makes you think about being "*afraid*"? Take your time. If it's something you can touch or hold, do that.

Wonder

In the story of Good Friday, we see that Jesus felt afraid, his friends felt afraid, and even the people who were guarding Jesus felt afraid about what they had done when they understood that Jesus was God's son.

- When have you felt afraid?
- Who else do you know that might feel afraid right now?

- Imagine telling Jesus your fears. What does that feel like?

Sing

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Read – Matthew 27:55-61 (CEV)

Many women had come with Jesus from Galilee to be of help to him, and they were there, looking on at a distance. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of James and John were some of these women. That evening a rich disciple named Joseph from the town of Arimathea went and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate gave orders for it to be given to Joseph, who took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. Then Joseph put the body in his own tomb that had been cut into solid rock and had never been used. He rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb and went away. All this time Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting across from the tomb.

Look

What do you see around you that makes you think about being “*cared for*”? Take your time. If it’s something you can touch or hold, do that.

Wonder

Even though Jesus’ friends were very sad, and probably still afraid, some of them stayed close to him and cared for him after he had died. The women who were Jesus’ friends were coming to the tomb to care for his body when they discovered that he was alive (but that is Easter’s story!)

- Who is caring for you right now?
- How are you caring for others?
- How does God care for you?

Sing

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Pray

Jesus,
We have stayed with you through your story,
and you have stayed with us.
You always stay with us.
Thank you for caring for us when we are afraid, hurt, broken, or alone.
Show us how to care for others when they are afraid, hurt, broken, or alone,
even when we have to be far apart from each other.
Thank you for your love.
Help us share your love.
Amen

Closing

Gather the items you have collected for the 5 themes (if possible). Before our meeting time today, use them to set your table in preparation for our sharing (online) of the Lord's supper. Set your table with:

- Bread or crackers for everyone in your household to eat (whatever you have on hand)
- A glass of water for everyone
- 5 unlit Candles (if you have them) and matches or a lighter
- Items you picked up on your walk or around your house during your earlier reflections
- The order of worship below

Go in peace.

If you wish today, read the whole passion story: Matthew 26:30-27:66 (or any of the other gospels)

Gathered Worship

Gathering and Welcome

(Print explanation about entering Zoom call, being muted, cameras, chat, etc)

Prayer

Song

Candle lighting

Sharing our Good Friday experiences in small groups

Share something that you saw or thought about today.

What did you see or hear in the story of Jesus, or in your surroundings?

The Lord's Supper

Confessional response: *These we lay down*

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory

Forever and ever.

Amen.

Prayer

Blessing & Leave-taking

The Lord's Supper *(Order of worship for leaders)*

Preparation: At __pm, we join together online with our tables set:

- Bread or crackers for everyone in your household to eat (whatever you have on hand)
- A glass of water for everyone
- 5 unlit Candles (if you have them) and matches/lighter
- Items you picked up on your walk or around your house during your earlier reflections
- This order of worship

Gathering and Welcome

When you enter the Zoom call, you will be on mute. You can look for the icon of the microphone with a red line through it to test turning your volume on and off, but otherwise please remain muted as we gather. If you are comfortable welcoming us into your home in this way, please turn on your camera (icon beside the microphone) so we can see you. Look for the chat button. You can type messages to everyone.

Prayer

Sing (one household)

*Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.*

Candle lighting (5 speakers)

If you have set your table with 5 candles, I invite you to prepare to light them one by one, as we are led. If you do not have candles, you can simply watch and pray.

Leader 1: Together we light a candle for Jesus, for when he was alone.

Candle is lit

We shine a light for all who feel alone today.

Leader 2: Together we light a candle for Jesus, for when systems and promises were broken.

Candle is lit

We shine a light for all that is broken today.

Leader 3: Together we light a candle for Jesus, for when he was hurt.

Candle is lit

We shine a light for all who are being hurt today.

Leader 4: Together we light a candle for Jesus, for when he was afraid.

Candle is lit

We shine a light for all who feel afraid today.

Leader 5: Together we light a candle for Jesus, and for those cared for him.

Candle is lit

We shine a light for all who are caring for others today.

Leader 1: As the dark of night nears to cover and watch over us,

We shine these lights so that none may be forgotten.

Sharing our experiences in small groups (Breakout groups)

Explain breakout groups – 4-5 people

Share something that you saw or thought about today as you followed Jesus' journey to the cross. What did you see or hear in the story of Jesus, or in your surroundings?
Will be brought back to the whole group after _ minutes

Optional – invite a few reflections for whole group?

The Lord's Supper

(Liturgy taken from this AMBS webinar: <https://www.ambs.edu/publishing/hope-and-resilience/planning-easter-worship>)

Explain that when more than one of us talks at the same time, it will sound a little strange, but that's okay. It is good to be together in whatever ways we can.

Invitation *(Adapted from Words for Worship 2 #120)*

Leader 1: Friends, this is the feast of the people of God.
We have set our tables in the east and west, north and south,
yet wherever we are, this is the Lord's table.

Leader 2: Come, you who hunger,
filled with wanting and waiting.

Leader 3: Come, you who thirst
for the peace of Christ.

All 5: Come to the table of the Lord.

Leader 4: Come, not because you are worthy
to sit at Christ's table.

Leader 5: Come because you are willing
to serve at Christ's side.

All 5: Come to the table of the Lord.

Leader 2: For the Lord our God has gathered us here
Leader 3: and Jesus the Christ is our Host.

Leader 4: Come, you who are blessed;
Leader 5: Come, you who are broken.

All 5: Come to the table of the Lord.

Prayer of Preparation and Confession

(Adapted from the Mennonite Minister's Manual by Michelle Curtis)

(unmuted – explain)

Leader 1: Let us pray together with our eyes open, and when I gesture we will say together, **these we lay down**. Let's practice [gesture], **these we lay down**.

Before we take the body of the Lord, before we share his life in bread and wine, we recognize those things we carry within us for which we are sorry: **these we lay down**.

(silent prayer)

Leader 2: The words of hope we often failed to give, the prayers of kindness buried in our pride, the signs of care we argued out of sight: **these we lay down**.

(silent prayer)

Leader 1 : Our narrowness of vision and of mind, our need for other folk to serve our will, and every word and silence meant to hurt: **these we lay down**.

(silent prayer)

Leader 2: Of those around in whom we meet our Lord, we ask their pardon and we grant them ours; every contradiction to Christ's peace: **these we lay down.**

(silent prayer)

Leader 1: Lord Jesus Christ, companion at this feast, we empty now our hearts and stretch our hands, and ask you to meet us here in bread and wine which you lay down.

Amen.

Assurance of forgiveness

Leader 2: In the name of Jesus, we assure you that you are forgiven, loved, and free. Amen.

Leader 1: And all God's people said:

People: Amen.

Leader 1: Pass a sign of peace with those around you (wave, peace sign, hand on heart)

(mute all)

Prayer

Leader: When we come to the prayer Jesus taught us, feel free to use your heart language. I will be using the version printed on your order of worship

Let's pray:

Holy God,

You formed the earth from chaos;

You molded us in your image.

With mercy higher than the mountains and grace deeper than the sea
you called and led your people.

When we chose to flee from you,

you came to us through Jesus,

and adopted us as your own.

With bread and wine, Jesus sealed your covenant with us.

Gathered at his table, we remember his life, lived and offered up for others.

In dying, he set us free from death.

In rising, he opened the way to eternal life.

Come now, Holy Spirit, upon us and this meal
that we might feed on Christ

and share his bounty with the world.

We ask this through our Savior,

who taught us to pray, saying:

Our Father, in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
Forever and ever.
Amen.

Words of Institution

We will eat the bread and drink the cup together, so please wait for that moment.
When I hold the elements up to my screen, I invite you to hold your hands up for a moment, as if to receive it.

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it [*break bread*] and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” [*Leader offers bread to the camera.*]

Sung: Taste and see (Sing the Journey 86) refrain

Eat, beloved, eat the Lord’s bread

At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus loved his neighbours by turning water into wine. Today we have water in our cups, and we remember the transformation that Jesus can bring into every situation. Near the end of his life, after breaking the bread, in the same way, Jesus took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.” [*Leader offers cup to the camera.*]

Sung: Taste and see (Sing the Journey 86) refrain

Drink, beloved, drink the Lord’s cup

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
Thank you for this familiar ritual.
We ask that it might strengthen us for all that is unfamiliar.
Like the women who waited in uncertainty until that Easter dawn,
not knowing that that would be the moment when everything would change,
wait with us now, and bring your resurrection power
when we least expect it and most need it.
May this bread and this cup nourish us,
reminding us who you are
and who we are in you.
Amen.

Blessing & Leave-taking

We have met from east and west and north and south to share this meal.
May God’s Spirit lead you into a holy time of waiting for Easter dawn to break.
Extinguish candles
Go in peace