

The Passion Story and Prayers for Good Friday (2022): Silent Cry

(Largely inspired by the worship resource prepared by Murray Pruden, Indigenous Minister for Pacific Mountain Region)

Welcome

Call to Worship: *After journeying through the Desert of Divisions*

During Lent, silence is our desert.

We are sent there by the Spirit to encounter temptations.

We are ministered there in our exhaustion,

to provide for our souls, by the mercy that rises in the emptiness.

The desert tells a million stories if we are willing to listen to dust.

(Images)

We are formed by many kinds of silence:

The silence of Gethsemane, *(image)*

The silence of absent friends, *(image)*

The silence of a stunned world, *(image)*

Silence that wounds and betrays,

Silence that blesses and renews.

**May our silence be a spacious invitation for lost voices in forgotten languages
to share the gospel of mountains and rivers.**

Prayer:

Holy One, Great Spirit, Child of Life:

Meet us where we stand, tempted by bread and pinnacles,

and give us words, if words are what you need for justice,

and silence, if that is the way to resist the temptations

to hear only what we want to hear,

**to receive only what we want to receive.
Holy One, Great Spirit, Child of life:
pray your wisdom into our famished desert hearts
until our words and silence dance together
and feast in the wonder of being heard and loved. Amen.**

1st Hymn: VU 142 *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*

Scripture: John 18:1-11 **The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus**

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

Prayer:

Creator,

As we start this path with Jesus, give us the moments to reflect within and around us. Allow us to make sense of those moments of what was, is, and is to become. Guide us as we go together with you and others on this Passion story that we tell every Good Friday. Let us be reminded that without darkness, we cannot see the light; that without the seed, a tree will not grow. Give us the strength to overcome.

As we reflect on the betrayal of Jesus, we reflect on betrayal we may have lived through in our lives as well. We pause and take the time to remember, search,

breathe, and then let go... "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" Give us the ability to let go as Jesus has asked us to.

Amen.

(Extinguish the 7th candle.)

2nd Hymn: VU 149 *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* (V. 1, 3, 4)

Scripture: John 18:12-14 **Jesus Before the High Priest**

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Prayer:

My God,

There are many judgements amongst humankind. Many times we react rather than stop, pause, and reflect on what we believe is the truth. Today, my God, grant us the blessing of patience and resolve to not only speak our truth but also to live it and look upon others in the same blessed way. Let us live in wisdom so that no one would have to die for our truth but instead will live for our love.

Amen.

(Extinguish the 6th candle.)

3rd Hymn: VU 136 *O Come and Mourn with Me Awhile* (V 1, 3)

Meditation from *Silent Fast*

Silence has its own voice. Sometimes we are silent because we choose not to speak.

Sometimes we are silenced because our voices are ignored or disparaged.

We may have the privilege of being silent because we do not have to negotiate a place for our voice. With that privilege comes the responsibility to use our voice to empower others whose voices challenge and disturb the status quo. With that privilege also comes the responsibility to be silent so others can speak.

We are silent because we are listening.

I am silent because I am _____

(Silence)

Silence has its own voice.

Scripture: John 18:19-24 *The High Priest Questions Jesus*

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Prayer:

God,
Give me the heart to listen. Grant me the words to tell others of what is true. Settle the anger, hurt, and sorrow that I may keep in my heart. And release the goodness that you created in me to others in order to create the peace that is needed in these times of judgement. Our truths are not wrong but are a lesson to what you have asked to be—a path to your love. Thank you.
Amen.

(Extinguish the 5th candle.)

4th Hymn: VU 147 *What Wondrous Love Is This*

Scripture: John 18:28-38 *Jesus Before Pilate*

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The

Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.) Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

Prayer:

Creator of Heaven and Earth,

We come to you asking this question: "What is truth?" As we travel forward in this time of our lives, we observe many changes and actions of others that we may not always agree with. Allow us to see the truth in the changes in our world and act in ways that are for the well-being of those experiencing these changes. This may give us the answer to the truth we seek in our lives. It may also bring us to peace with the changes in the world we live in. Let your truth, Creator, be our hope.

Amen.

(Extinguish the 4th candle.)

5th Hymn: VU 144 *Were You There*

Scripture: John 18:38-19:16 **Jesus Sentenced to Death**

Pilate entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the

Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

Prayer:

Loving God,
Many times we cry over the injustices of this world. We get discouraged and frustrated from the harm we see around us. And in many instances we, too, are guilty of these injustices, sometimes without realizing it. Calm our spirits from these patterns of behaviour and give us a renewed thought and observation of these injustices. Place in our hands a new gift of life—a way of forgiveness, understanding, and loving creation. Allow us to be encouragement and peace during times of harm and hate. And, together with our siblings in the Spirit, we can be the path to loving one another, the commandment that Jesus left us. In loving companionship, Amen.

(Extinguish the 3rd candle.)

6th Hymn: VU 148 *Jesus, Remember Me* (X2)

Scripture: John 19:16-30 **The Crucifixion of Jesus**

So, they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary

Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So, they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Prayer:

**Great Mystery,
Hear my prayer, from my heart and mind in silence,
as I reflect on the crucifixion of Jesus.
Allow the Holy Spirit to enter my temple
as I remember the journey Jesus Christ has taken.
Let this be a moment for you, Great Mystery,
to guide me to what I need to receive in my life
so that I understand a little more of my path and your creation.**

(Observe a moment of silence.)

**It is finished.
Amen.**

(Extinguish the 2nd candle.)

7th Hymn: VU 182 *Stay With Us Through the Night*

Scripture: John 19:38-42 **The Burial of Jesus**

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so, he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden, there was a new tomb in which no one had ever

been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Prayer: Please say together An Indian Prayer by Chief Yellow Lark, Lakota Sioux

**Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds.
And whose breath gives life to all the world.
Hear me! I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.
Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes
Ever hold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made.
My ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may understand
The things you might teach me.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden
In every leaf and rock.
I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother.
But to fight my greatest enemy, myself.
Make me always ready to come to you
With clear hands and straight eyes.
So when life fades, as the fading sunset.
My spirit may come to you without shame.**

*(Extinguish the 1st candle.
Everyone is asked to leave, in silence.)*