



Worship Service Theme: **Good Friday**

Helpful Elements:

Scarlet veil to cover the cross
Special songbook for Good Friday

Welcome: Welcome, and thank you for joining our service today. My name is _____ and I'll be leading our worship time. Today is Good Friday, the day we remember Jesus Christ's crucifixion and burial. In a shift from our regular services together, this is a more serious time as we look at the suffering and death of our Lord. We intentionally enter into a holy space of sorrow that makes the joy of Easter morning that much sweeter.

You'll notice that our table today is bare, symbolizing the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the stripping of Jesus' clothes before he was crucified. The cross remains, but it is covered in a scarlet veil to symbolize Jesus' blood shed for the sins of all people, including us.

Please pray with me as we open our time together.

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, draw us into your love and mercy as we remember the suffering and death of your son, Jesus Christ. Forgive us for so often ignoring or passing over the painful cost of your grace to us. We glorify and thank you, that your purposes were accomplished through Christ dying for our sins, once for all. In your name we pray. Amen.

Opening Hymn: Doxology

First Reading: Psalm 22. You'll notice that the first words are exactly the words Jesus used on the cross—one of several Old Testament parallels to the crucifixion.

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

² O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

³ Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴ In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them. ...

¹¹ Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help. ...

¹⁶ ... a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet.

Suggested Hymns:

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross Jesus Loves Me

Good Friday readings: Now we begin the story of Jesus' betrayal, suffering, and death, as recorded in the gospel of Matthew. We start with the Last Supper, the Passover meal, during which Judas betrayed Jesus. Then we move into the story of Peter's denial, Jesus' suffering, and then the crucifixion and burial on a Friday, Good Friday, which is why we have this service today.

Matthew 26, starting in verse 20:

²⁰ When it was evening, Jesus reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹ And as they were eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." ²² And they were very sorrowful and began to say to Jesus one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" ²³ Jesus answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. ..."

³⁶ Then Jesus went with the disciples to a [garden] called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ And taking with him Peter and [two others], Jesus began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then Jesus said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." ³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." ...

⁴⁷ [A little later,] while Jesus was still speaking [to the disciples], Judas came, ...and with Judas a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him."⁴⁹ And Judas came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And Judas kissed Jesus.⁵⁰ Jesus said to Judas, "Friend, do what you came to do." Then the crowd came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.

Suggested Hymns:

My Jesus, I Love Thee

Just as I Am

Matthew 26, starting in verse 59:

⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death,⁶⁰ but they found none At last two false witnesses came forward⁶¹ and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶² And the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I command you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy." ⁶⁶ What is your judgment?" The council answered, "He deserves death."

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to Peter and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰ But Peter denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean." ⁷¹ Another servant girl saw Peter, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² And again Peter denied it with an oath: "I do not know the man." ⁷³ After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴ Then Peter began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the saying of

Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Suggested Hymn:
Rock of Ages

Matthew 27, starting in verse 15:

¹⁵ Now at the [Passover] feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner they wanted. ¹⁶ And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸ For Pilate knew that it was out of envy that the religious rulers had delivered Jesus up. ... And being stirred up by the council, the crowd said, "Barabbas." ²² Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" ²³ And Pilate said, "Why? What evil has he done?" But the crowd shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" ...

²⁶ So Pilate released for them Barabbas, and having [flogged] Jesus, delivered Jesus to be crucified.

Suggested Hymns:
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
Abide with Me

Matthew 27, starting in verse 32:

³² As the soldiers went out with Jesus, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, and they compelled Simon to help carry Jesus' cross. ³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴ they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when Jesus tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified Jesus, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. ³⁶ Then the soldiers sat down and kept watch over Jesus there. ³⁷ And over Jesus' head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour [noon] there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour [three o'clock]. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have

you forsaken me?”⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

Suggested Hymns:

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

How Great Thou Art

Matthew 27, starting in verse 57:

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a follower of Jesus. ⁵⁸ Joseph went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and Pilate ordered the body to be given to Joseph. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And Joseph rolled a great stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.

Suggested Hymn:

Were You There?

Closing Prayer: A Prayer of Confession¹

Heavenly God,

You call us to be your voices in this world
and we stay silent.

You call us to be your hands in this world
and we keep them hidden.

You call us to be your feet in this world
and we go our own way.

When we meet those who are doubting
and say nothing, forgive us.

When we meet those who need your touch
and do nothing, forgive us.

When we are called to take up your cross
and carry nothing, forgive us.

Breathe life into these bones
bring freedom to these lives
that we might declare

¹ http://www.faithandworship.com/Prayers_Maundy_Thursday.htm

with heart and soul and voice
that you are our Lord and our God. Amen.

That concludes our service today, as we wait until we meet again on Easter Sunday. Thank you for coming.

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and grant you peace. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Doxology, reprise

[put on instrumental music]