

Good Friday Worship
April 10, 2020

A Noontime Prayer Service

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome - Dan Koger

Preparing for Worship (by Jamie Lynn Haskins) – Dan Koger

God of death and resurrection, God of the space between, we have walked this Holy Week road before, but never quite like this. As always, palms are behind us, shouts of “hosanna” ringing in our ears. As always, we look toward your death with grief, your resurrection with great hope. As always, you are here with us through it all. Yes, we have walked this Holy Week road before, but never quite like this.

This year nails will pierce the cross, and we will mourn in our homes rather than in our pews. This year your body will be placed in the tomb, and we will await word from those faithful women as we shelter at home.

This year, resurrection will come (it always comes) and we will shout “hallelujah,” rejoicing in our living rooms, across computer screens, over conference lines, because this year, as in every year, you are still with us. Yes, we have walked this Holy Week road before, but never quite like this.

May we remember, Holy One, that in every familiar and unfamiliar step, every “hosanna,” every “hallelujah,” every Zoom call and every text, you are with us.

As we walk from Good Friday into Holy Saturday, remind us – in death, in resurrection, in joy and grief, in the unknown and the liminal space between, you are still our God, and we are still your people.

Resurrection will indeed come. Amen.

Prelude – “El Shaddai” with “O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus” (*Joan John, piano*)

Call to Worship –Ariel and Jacob Koger

Come to this place apart to pray;

God, who has given us life, meets us here.

Will God be revealed to us on this dark day?

Has not God turned away and forsaken us?

Come, all who are weary and discouraged,

God, whom you have trusted, has not deserted you.

Will God hear our cries and replenish our strength?

Who can believe in the midst of such sorrow?

Come, all who have laid loved ones to rest;

God, who grieves with us, watches with us now.

Will God’s promise of new life be realized?

How shall we know the truth, when Trust is crucified?

A Prayer for Good Friday - Kim Miller

Nothing can prepare us, loving God for the reality of this day. We, Christ’s disciples, did not want to understand that the Day of our Lord would be like this.

Nothing can prepare us for the reality of evil. We did not want to know that those healing hands would be nailed to the cross, or that children would be taken away and killed, or that whole ethnic groups can be exterminated.

Nothing can prepare us for the reality of suffering. We did not want to hear Christ’s cry of despair from the Cross, or the moaning of sick people in pain, or the sobbing of the mothers of hungry children.

Nothing can prepare us, loving God, for the reality of death. We did not want to witness Christ's parting from us, or the last breath of someone we love, or our own mortality.

Nothing can prepare us for the realities of Good Friday. And only you, loving God, can console us with the fulfillment of our hopes on Easter Day. Amen.

Musical Reflection – “Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

“The Seven Last Words of Christ” (with meditations)

“Father, forgive them...” (Luke 23:34) - Cydney Cavender

We have all been sinned against. We have all been affected by evil in this world. But none more than you, Lord. Our pain never compare to yours, and yet despite the pain we caused you, you entered into our pain to experience the consequences of our evil from your perspective. You suffered and died. When we taunted you and mocked you, you gave us your forgiveness. You, the victim, gave forgiveness without asking for anything in return. We always expect to receive forgiveness before we give it. But you gave before we asked. Instead of demanding that we beg for your forgiveness, you have us your forgiveness. Help us to learn to give forgiveness to those who have hurt us. Help us to see first to give and then receive, not receive before we give. When we do this, we will find healing for ourselves.

“Today, you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43) - Larry Frey

Gracious God, we acknowledge that we have all sinned. We all fall short of your glory. If we say we are without sin, we deceive ourselves, and, we deceive you. We have joint responsibility for the consequences of sin in this world. For all the pain and the suffering. For all the injustice. We have deliberately hurt others and you. We have also contributed to the pain and suffering by our silence. but not speaking out, and by not doing enough to stop the suffering. Like the thief on the cross next to you, we cry out to you for forgiveness and, even though we don't deserve your love and forgiveness, you give it to us. Help us to accept your forgiveness – your gift of grace given freely to us. Help us to enter into the experience of forgiveness that you promised the thief.

Musical Reflection – “Jesus, Remember Me”

“Woman, behold your son...” (John 19:26) - Deana Otwell-Clinton

We are all equal as we stand before the cross. Your arms, Lord, stretched out, link us all. It joins me to each other person who stands before you, and, joins them to me. We are responsible for each other. As you gave Mary to John, you call us to give ourselves to each other. Help us to accept this responsibility, especially to my neighbors and those who live in my community. As we accept responsibility for one another, and begin to reach out to one another, please bring healing and reconciliation among us. Among us all.

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) - Dan Koger

God of steadfast love, so often it feels as if you have abandoned us. When we look around at the pain and the suffering in this world, we wonder if you are in control. And yet we know, Lord, that as you abandoned Jesus on the cross for that moment that he became our sin, you embraced all of creation with your love and forgiveness. In this moment, the community that was broken was restored through God the Creator, the Son the Redeemer, and the Spirit, the Sustainer. Your brokenness brought about our wholeness, our restoration. In that moment of darkness, your light continued to shine through. May your light shine in our darkness. May you bring wholeness in our brokenness. May we begin to see you for who you really are – a God so committed to healing that you took all the pain and suffering upon yourself and destroyed its' power to destroy us.

Visual Reflection - Psalm 22

“I am thirsty...” (John 19:28) - Shirley Lauer

As you thirsted on the cross, we thirst for more of you in our lives. Your thirst shows us how much you longed for us to be restored. You were willing to engage our sin to such an extent. Help us, Lord, to be willing to enter into the pain and anguish of those around us to the same extent. It is so easy for us simply to observe from a distance. We give handouts and donations so easily, but we are not willing to experience their thirst as you experienced ours. We thirst for you, Lord, and we thirst to love as you have loved. We need more than just our daily bread, we need your kingdom to reign in our lives. To transform us. To heal us. So that we can bring healing and transformation to others.

“It is finished...” (John 19:30) - Richard Francis

Thank you that the goal has been reached. That the work of salvation is complete. Thank you that your kingdom has come and that we can begin to partake of that Kingdom. Thank you that there is nothing more that we can do. You have done it all. Help us not to take this gift for granted, Lord. Help us to live the Kingdom and bring about your kingdom wherever we are and wherever we go.

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit...” (Luke 23:46) - Kim Miller

When we realize that there is nothing more we can do, we too, like Jesus, commit ourselves into your hands. We commit ourselves to your perfect community. Thank you that through the gift of your Son’s life, creation is restored. What was in the beginning in now and always will be. Our community with you is restored, and through that, all community can be restored. Help us to be agents of restoration as we commit ourselves to your perfect community. Help us to bring that community here. We give ourselves to you completely knowing that only in you can we find wholeness and healing. We hand our family, our friends, our community, our church – we hand all of these to you – knowing that only in you can our world find wholeness and healing. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Musical Reflection – “Were You There (the Peguero Sisters)

Words of Hope (based on Psalm 22:21b-31) – Dana Abdella

The Righteous One has not hidden from us, but has heard our cries and come to our aid. You who stand in awe of our God, shout for joy! Our Rescuer saves us from mouth of the lion and the horns of the wild oxen. You who stand in awe of our God, sing praises! The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek comfort shall find it. You who stand in awe of our God, tell of God’s goodness! The ends of the earth, the families of nations, will worship our Deliverer. You who stand in awe of our God, bow down and rise up! Proclaim deliverance to all generations, saying that God has done this! Thanks be to God!

Benediction - Dan Koger

As we walk from Good Friday into Holy Saturday, remind us – in death, in resurrection, in joy and grief, in the unknown and the liminal space between, you are still our God, and we are still your people. Resurrection will indeed come. Amen.

Postlude – “What Wondrous Love is This” (*Joan John, Piano*)