**Good Friday**

25th March 2016

Pilgrim Uniting Church, 12 Flinders St, Adelaide
[www.pilgrim.org.au](http://www.pilgrim.org.au)

**Choral introit**: O cos ones Giovanni Croce 1557-1609
*‘O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see*
*if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow’.*

Jesus looked towards heaven and prayed: ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began’. (John 17:1, 4-5)

‘I have come that you might have life, and life in all its fullness’. (John 10.10)

Jesus came to reveal life in all its forms and possibilities. He died because he refused to allow a lesser life - evil, compromise, expediency - to consume him. He died because he embraced a life of love completely, and would not be moved from it. And in so doing, he lived fully, and gave an example for us to follow and a way for us to enter life in all its fullness.

We gather today to hear the story of God’s love embodied in Jesus and expressed through his death, on a cross outside a city wall. We gather to reflect, to remember and to sing of that love. May we know God’s presence in this time of sharing, in the story, in our silence, in our song. May we be present to the sacred story and its invitation to us.

*There is no sermon. We invite you to use the readings, reflections, music and silence for contemplation and prayer.*

**Reading 1**: The arrest of Jesus (John 18:1–12)

**Solo**: ‘Erbarme dich’ from the St Matthew Passion J.S.Bach 1685-1750

*‘Have mercy, Lord, on me, regard my bitter weeping.*
*Look at me, heart and eyes both weep to Thee bitterly’.*

*Silence for reflection****.***

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The first**candle is extinguished*

**Reading 2**: Jesus before the authorities (John 18:12-13, 19–24)

**Reflection:**
Jesus spoke out for all to hear. He taught what he believed - and lived it: God’s inclusive love, that saves sinners, learns from children and turns the world upside down. The people in power found that too wild and dangerous, and arrested him. They were face to face with God’s love – and they didn’t recognise it.

*Silence for reflection****.***

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The second candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 3**: The denial of Peter (John 18:15–18, 25–27)

**Reflection:**
Peter denied you – and the cock crowed three times. We imagine his shock and his shame when he came to his senses. We know our own realities - when faith is challenged, and denial is a heartbeat away.

*Silence for reflection****.***

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The third candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 4:** Jesus before Pilate (John 18:28–40)

**Reflection:**
What is truth? Jesus came to witness to the truth: love unchanged by hatred, humility undeterred by power, truth untainted by lies, and real, vibrant, fearless life breaking through it all. The truth was in Jesus, and for some that truth was hard to take. In a world of corruption in the halls of power, Jesus exposed expediency and manipulation, and died with his integrity intact. In a world of poverty, Jesus gave up everything in order to offer life to others. Jesus made it clear that, whatever the situation, practical, sacrificial, cross-bearing love is the greatest confrontation and challenge to the broken systems of our world. Teach us to live by the same creed, to refuse to cling to a life that is less than real, less than honest, humble and loving; and to be resolute in our quest for life in all its fullness.

*Silence for reflection****.***

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The fourth candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 5**: Jesus is sentenced to death (John 19:1–16a)

**Hymn**: O sacred head CP# 120 *(please remain seated)*

*Silence for reflection.*

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The fifth candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 6**: Pilate’s inscription (John 19:16b–22)
Pilate was a powerful ruler - and yet he gave in to political arguments and a mob who shouted for blood. Pilate was a weak man - he could find no fault in Jesus but was prepared to discard him on the town rubbish dump, to die like a criminal on a shameful cross. And yet, Jesus was the one who was filled with the power of God to change the world, to usher in a new reign of peace and justice.

*Silence for reflection****.***

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The sixth candle is extinguished.*

**Hymn**: To mock your reign CP#124 *(please remain seated)*

**Reading 7**: The garment (John 19:23–24)
A seamless robe is out of place in this crucifixion scene. Normally at death, cloth would have been torn as a sign of grief. When Jesus was crucified, the Romans stripped him and divided his personal possessions among themselves - four soldiers and four piles. Jesus’ most valuable possession was the seamless cloth, made with such extraordinary care that the soldiers did not want to ruin it by tearing it into four pieces. So they cast lots for it. Likely, one of his women followers had woven the robe for him. It was made with love and worn with love. It was a sign of love for the one who was love and died for love. Love that could not be torn apart even in the face of death.

*Silence for reflection****.***

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The seventh candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 8**: The death of Jesus (John 19: 25–30)

**Solo**: The Crucifixion Samuel Barber 1910-1981

*Silence for reflection.*

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The eighth candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 9**: The spear pierces Jesus (John 19: 31–37)

Our prayers for others:

Compassionate God, as we remember Jesus, whose love for humanity brought him to the cross, we remember the world for which he died. We remember the seamless fabric of creation, which humanity seems set on tearing, gambling for its possession: felling forests, burning fossil fuels, gouging out open cut mines, polluting the rivers, over-fishing the seas. We pray for forgiveness for what we are doing to your world, and fresh eyes to see new ways of being.

We remember people who are suffering from drought, from floods, and other natural disasters. We pray that the response of nations and communities will be swift and compassionate.

We remember places and nations where there is conflict*,* and where people flee from danger. We pray for compassionate responses from nations who can offer refuge for desperate people.

We remember conflicts in our own nation – the sharp divisions between rich and poor, the crisis of confidence in those in power. We pray for a fair distribution of resources, and compassionate care for the weakest and most vulnerable in our own society. We pray for justice in our land.

We remember conflicts very close to home, recognising when we have a part in them. We pray for healing.

And we remember those we know who are suffering now, in body, mind or spirit. We believe in a mystery: just as Jesus shared our mortality and pain as he died on the cross, so you are with those who suffer now, and your wounded hands stretch out with healing and hope.

We offer our prayers for others, in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray:

**Lord’s Prayer** *(printed inside cover of hymn book)*

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The ninth candle is extinguished.*

**Reading 10**: In the burial garden (John 19: 38–42)

**Solo**: ‘Blute nur, du liebes Herz’ from St Matthew Passion J.S.Bach

‘Bleed now, Thou dearest heart.
Ah! A cild which thou hast trained,
which upon thy breast remained,
now a serpent has become.
Murder is the parent’s doom’.

Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just, **have mercy upon us.**

*The final candle is extinguished.*

**Reflection**:
The darkness may try to hide it,

but this is truly Good Friday;

a day of endless miracle, of incredible wonder.

That Jesus would crucify darkness
in his own fragmented body.

That he would hold the gaze of hatred,

look boldly in the face of evil

and speak the soft words of forgiveness,

promising a world made new,

and an eternity brought into the present moment. *(John van de Laar, adapted)*

**Blessing**
So now, as we stand by the cross, may God
- who, in Jesus, shared human life and death -
comfort and bless each one of us.
Let the wisdom of Jesus sustain not just us,
but all who are weary.
Let his strength give courage to all who endure,
so that none will falter or lose heart.
Let his faith bring light to all who believe,
so that together we will cry out for justice,
and live with grace and mercy.
May we know that whatever we have done, we are forgiven;
whatever is happening in our lives, God is with us;
whoever we are, God loves us.
Beyond brokenness is love inexhaustible,
Beyond death is love incomparable.
Go, and live in the hope of resurrection, now and always. Amen

**Choir**: Ave verum corpus Philip Stopford b. 1977

‘Hail, tru Body, born of the Virgin Mary, who having truly suffered, was sacrificed on the cross for mankind, whose pierced side flowed with water and blood: May it be for us a foretaste (of the Heavenly banquet) in the trial of death. O sweet Jesus, O holy Jesus, O Jesus, son of Mary, have mercy on me. amen.

*Please remain as long as you wish in quiet contemplation, and leave when you are ready.*

Presiding Ministers Rev Sandy Boyce

 Rev Jana Norman

Organist & Choir Director Peter Kelsall

Assistant Organist Christopher Bridge

Soloists Charlie Kelso, Phoebe Paine

Violin Lee Thompson

 The Choir of Pilgrim Church

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