

Friday 18th April 2025
10.30am



Good Friday

*Please use 'T' on your hearing aid if you need to use the
Hearing Loop.*

Today's service is led by: **Fran Boto**

The organist is **Lee Michael Walton**

It is a joy to welcome you to this service!

If you do not attend a church elsewhere, we invite you to join regularly with us in our Sunday worship and other activities – see www.stpaulsurc.org.uk

Feel free to spend time before worship for quiet preparation, especially once the music begins. We light a candle at the start of the service to remind us all of Christ's message of peace.

The Reformed Church recognises God's Word as its supreme authority, and **you are asked to stand as the Bible is brought in** at the start of worship, **and again as the Bible is taken out after the blessing.**

We pray that you will know God's presence as we worship – in church, at home, online, outdoors, at work, school, in all places.

Welcome & Explanation of the service

Call to Worship

Lighting of the Peace Candle

Hymn: 223 R&S There is a green hill far away

First Chapter: Jesus is condemned to death *Celia*

Bible Reading One – Mark 15:1 5,11–15

Jesus was taken in chains to Pilate. The chief priests were accusing Jesus of many things, so Pilate questioned him. 'Aren't you going to answer?' he said. 'Listen to all their accusations.' Jesus refused to say a word, and Pilate was amazed. Pilate spoke to the crowd. 'What do you want me to do with this one you call King of the Jews?' They shouted back, 'Crucify him!' 'But what crime has he committed?' Pilate asked. They shouted all the louder, 'Crucify him!' Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be crucified.

Meditation

Pilate asked what crime Jesus had committed. It was a good question. Jesus had annoyed the religious leaders, of that there was no doubt. He had been critical of social and religious structures. He had healed the villagers; he had told stories to the crowds; he was probably a threat to public law and order. But was that enough to condemn him, to end his life? But he would not defend himself – the storyteller was silent now and the crowd was noisy, and Pilate handed him over to be crucified.

Prayer

For those on trial this week and for those appointed to judge them: God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Second Chapter: Jesus takes up his cross *Linda* *Bible reading Two – Mark 15:16-20*

The soldiers took Jesus inside, to the courtyard of the governor's palace and called together the rest of the company. They put a purple robe on Jesus, made a crown out of thorn branches, and put it on his head. Then they began to salute him: 'Long live the King of the Jews.' They beat him over the head with a stick, spat on him, fell on their knees and bowed to him.

When they had finished mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Meditation

Soldiers, taking the chance for a bit of fun.

They had a heavy day ahead.

Soon they would have to put on their public face – disciplined, controlled, efficient.

But for now a bit of a lark with the lads with no risk of recrimination.

Dead men tell no stories,
and Jesus was going to his death.

Prayer

For those appointed to keep public order, and for those tempted to abuse their power: God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Hymn 221 To mock your reign O dearest Lord

Third Chapter: Jesus falls the first time *Liam*

Bible reading Three – Isaiah 53:1

Who would have believed what we now tell?
Who could have seen God's hand in this?

Meditation

Jesus was exhausted. He was in pain.
He was going to his death.
The cross was heavy and he fell.
He was flesh and blood like us,
he was struggling.

Prayer

For those who are tired or in pain: God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Fourth Chapter: Jesus meets his mother *Sue*

Bible reading Four – Luke 2:22,25,34,35

The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification as the Law of Moses commanded. So they took the child Jesus to Jerusalem to present

him to the Lord.

At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, 'This child is chosen by God for the destruction and salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God, which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart.'

Meditation

She was going to be there at his end –
she who had been there with God at his beginning.
She was his mother. She had fed him and cradled him
and watched over his growing.
Whatever he had said and done, he was still her son
and she would not desert him now.
Whatever pain of his she could embrace she would.
And in the meeting of their eyes there was love,
suffering and shining.

Prayer

For parents whose children are in pain or in trouble:
God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Fifth Chapter: Simon helps Jesus to carry his cross *Helen*
Fifth Bible reading – Mark 15:21

On their way through Jerusalem they met a man named Simon, who was coming into the city from the country, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross.

Meditation

Simon from Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus,
what a tale you had to tell your children!
You helped Jesus, you gave him your strength on the
streets of Jerusalem.
Willing or unwilling, you, Simon, have become part of his
story, and he part of yours,
for you helped him When he needed you.
What would we give to be Simon?

Prayer

For a willingness to serve you, in friends and in strangers,
God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Hymn: 474 Brother, Sister, let me serve you v 1,2,3,4 and 6.

Sixth Chapter: Jesus falls the second time *Joshua*

Sixth Bible reading – Isaiah 53:7

Ill-treated and afflicted, he never said a word.
Like a lamb led to the slaughter house,
like a sheep dumb before its shearers,
he never opened his mouth.

Meditation

I am finding it hard to watch you, Jesus,
to see you struggling, to see you on the ground.
Into your silence I want to shout:
'Why do they keep on hurting you?
What have you done wrong?'

Prayer

For those who today will struggle and fall:
God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Seventh Chapter: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Seventh Bible reading – Luke 23:27,28 *Cathy H*

A large crowd of people followed Jesus; among them were some women who were weeping and wailing for him. Jesus turned to them and said, 'Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me, but for yourselves and for your children.'

Meditation

Weep for the mothers and children of Jerusalem,
for Israelis and Palestinians,
for Jews and Muslims and Christians,
Weep for Ukrainian mothers, weep for Russian mothers
for the strangers in their midst.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
Pray that her people may live together in justice.

Pray that all people may live together in peace.

Prayer

For those who live in places of conflict and danger;
for peacemakers and peacekeepers in every land:
God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Eighth Chapter: Jesus is stripped of his clothes *Pat G.O.*

Bible reading – Mark 15:22 -24

They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull.

They tried to give him wine mixed with a drug called myrrh, but Jesus would not drink it. Then they crucified him and divided his clothing among themselves, throwing dice to see who would get each piece of clothing.

Meditation

Stripped now –
of clothing
of disciples
of friends.
Alone, naked and vulnerable,
with nothing to protect you from the pain to come.

Prayer

For those deserted by friends,
for those who are alone and vulnerable:
God in your mercy,

HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Ninth Chapter: Jesus is nailed to the cross

Bucket passed round and everyone drops a large nail into the bucket.

Bible reading – Luke 23:35,49

Fran

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him; the people stayed there watching him, the leaders jeered at him and the soldiers mocked him. Some women, his friends from Galilee, looked on at a distance.

Meditation

We look on from a distance:

a distance of time and space and culture,

a distance of *a Friday morning in Croydon* in Lent.

And for us it hurts to watch Jesus dying, even at a distance.

It hurts to know that we are being rescued.

It hurts to know how much we are valued and loved.

Prayer

For the depth of your love for us, we thank you.

God in your mercy,

HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Stay with me chant - sung 3 x

Stay with me,

Remain here with me

Watch and pray,

Watch and pray. Taize Community

Everyone lights a candle if they wish.

Reflection *Poem by Revd. John Swales* *Fran*

Tenth Chapter: Jesus dies on the cross *Joyce*

Tenth Bible reading – Luke 23:44–46

It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock. And the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Father into your hands I place my spirit.' He said this and died.

Meditation

In your hands he placed himself:
all that he was,
all that he had ever been,
all his beauty,
all his obedience,
all his loving.

Eleventh Chapter: Jesus is taken down from the cross

Bible reading – Mark 15:42–46

Cathy D

And when evening came, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Joseph took the body down and wrapped it in a linen sheet.

Meditation

Pietà. Jesus is dead and lies in the arms of his mother.
Death is hard and final
and yet, whatever happens on this earth,
children never die to their mothers.
In the memory of those who loved them, loved ones
remain. And for us, and for all God's people,
our hope is safe in God.
From swaddling bands to grave clothes,
all the days of our living and dying,
we are cradled and wrapped in love.

Prayer

For our families and friends who have died,
for ourselves as we carry their stories:
God in your mercy,
HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Hymn 217 When I survey the wondrous cross

Blessing and Dismissal.

**Service on Easter Sunday led by Revd. Nicola Furley-Smith
10.30.**