

GOOD FRIDAY

12:00 noon



Please take this with you and make use of it as a devotional

HYMN – Were you there

Introduction and Welcome _____ **[Dion _____]**

Were You There is a great hymn to start with because it asks the question, were we there? And the answer of course is no. But in our minds, using our imagination, we can enter into the story, and relive something of what the disciples went through.

Our theme today is The Hands of God.

I would invite you to take the booklet away with you at the end and make use of it in a devotional way.

As we continue, some thoughts, as a way of introducing **Good Friday** to us.

We remember today as a black day, a dark day in history.

We re-live it, we remember it, not to glory in the darkness, but to remember.

We remember that humanity can live in the darkness of evil.

And we remember that God loves us unconditionally,
and that God can free us from this
if we will hold Jesus' hand and journey towards the light with him.

So we don't enter into hope-less despair,
but rather we faithfully take a journey,
to remind us that when we get it wrong God will be there with us,
not encouraging us to stay in the dark,
but rather drawing us out, into the light and constant love of God.

Our opening page is BLACK, but our closing page is WHITE

It all happened so fast. One moment Jesus was with us, the next he was hanging on that cross. You wonder, you wonder if there was anything we should have done. And you think back to how you responded in the moment, it was horrible, horrible.

We were there in Jerusalem for the passover festival, when we remember the amazing and miraculous work that God did to bring us out of Egypt. United again, this time for the one purpose of worship and remembrance.

Anyway, long after the resurrection we started to re-tell the story of those horrible days. We think it is important to remember it, even though he is risen from the dead, we think it is important to remember what Jesus went through to save us.

Looking back, in hindsight, you could see both the hands of God, and the hands of others. These others weren't evil, but they did evil. You could see the compassion in Jesus' eyes. The compassion he had for those slowly draining him of his life.



Silence until 12:15

12:15pm **Praising hands** []

Jesus ... went on toward Jerusalem. ... as he rode along, the people spread clothes on the road in front of him. When Jesus was starting down the Mount of Olives, his large crowd of disciples were happy and praised God because of all the miracles they had seen. They shouted,

"Blessed is the king who comes
in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven
and glory to God."

Pause

Often we are quick to praise God.
But our praise, isn't always met with loyalty,
our loyalty can wane.

Pause

Lift up the Palm Branch of praise
Lift up the Palm Cross
The one symbol,
of our praise
of our sin
redeemed through the blessing
of the palm
to remind us to be faithful.

Please distribute the Palm crosses to those present

Silent Reflection on your Palm Cross and the way(s) we praise God



One of our primary roles as Christians, is to remember Jesus and re-tell his story.

Hands eating a basic meal

When the time came for Jesus and the apostles to eat, he said to them, "I have very much wanted to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. I tell you that I will not eat another Passover meal until it is finally eaten in God's kingdom." ... Jesus took some bread in his hands and gave thanks for it. He broke the bread and handed it to his apostles. Then he said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Eat this as a way of remembering me!" After the meal he took another cup of wine in his hands. Then he said, "This is my blood. It is poured out for you, and with it God makes his new agreement



Pause

At the front there is some bread and wine. These are not consecrated, it is not communion. But you may wish to come and take some bread back to your seat as a reminder of the basic meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. We eat the bread to draw us and our senses into the story.

In silence we imagine what that last meal must have been like

12:25 Hands trusting us with ministry []

Jesus said, "Simon, listen to me! Satan has demanded the right to test each one of you, as a farmer does when he separates wheat from the husks. But Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. And when you have come back to me, help the others." Peter said, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to jail and even to die with you." Jesus replied, "Peter, I tell you that before a rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don't know me."

Pause

The disciples were fully trained, yet got it wrong! We get it wrong! But God continues to call us, and entrust the mission of God into our hands, in partnership. We work together with God. God sees the potential in Peter, in you and in me.

Pause

Father forgive us.

Father forgive us.



*We reflect on God's call on our lives,
the way it has stayed the same, and the ways it changes.*

12:30pm **Hands of prayer** []

Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, as he often did, and his disciples went with him. When they got there, he told them, "Pray that you won't be tested." Jesus walked on a little way before he knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you will, please don't make me suffer by having me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want." Then an angel from heaven came to help him. Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood. Jesus got up from praying and went over to his disciples. They were asleep and worn out from being so sad. He said to them, "Why are you asleep? Wake up and pray that you won't be tested."

Pause

Come and eat an olive. Olives are bitter. There was the bitterness of tears and blood flowing down Jesus' face as he prayed.

Taste and be reminded of the cost.



*In Silence we wait with Jesus,
and we bring before God the strong petition of our heart.*

12:35pm **Hands of violence or healing** []

When Jesus' disciples saw (Jesus was about to be arrested), they asked, "Lord, should we attack them with a sword?" One of the disciples even struck at the high priest's servant with his sword and cut off the servant's right ear. "Enough of that!" Jesus said. Then he touched the servant's ear and healed it.

Pause

These people had been with Jesus for 3 year! 3 Years! Yet they still have to ask: "What way should we go? The way of violence, or the way of peace."

Pause

Father, where we don't bring your healing, wholeness and peace.

Forgive us



HYMN – O Sacred Head

Silence – what role do peace and violence play in your life? What way of violence is the Holy Spirit prompting you to lay at the cross? Do you need to forgive someone for their violence towards you? What is the Holy Spirit prompting you to take to God in prayer?

12:40pm **Tying God's hands?** []

The Roman officer and his men, together with the temple police, arrested Jesus and tied him up. They took him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. This was the same Caiaphas who had told the Jewish leaders, "It is better if one person dies for the people."

Pause

It's not that God's hands are tied, it's simply that we limit the options of God working in our lives, through closing our eyes to new possibilities. Our indifference leads to evil. Sometimes when we are indifferent, when we say: "This doesn't matter" then evil rules

Father forgive our indifference

Implant your heart in us today, through your Holy Spirit.

Pause



Some words for prayer and reflection:

limits; limitless.

Indifference; justice.

Tying, binding; freeing.

Closed; Open.

Limited; potential.

Evil; Goodness

12:45pm **Hands wanting....** [_____]

Pilate went back out and said, "I don't find this man guilty of anything! And since I usually set a prisoner free for you at Passover, would you like for me to set free the king of the Jews?" They shouted, "No, not him! We want Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a terrorist.

Pause

At times we want, we want, we want. Our shopping centres, our way of life, can be highly driven, desiring things, wanting...

Pause

Gracious God, help us to believe your prayer, your way of life.

Give us today our daily bread.



Lord's prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

We are reminded that the prayer of Jesus says:
Give us today our daily bread.

Not tomorrow's bread, but just today's.

If we all settled for having enough, then God's Creation would be in better shape. We would not have mined and plundered the Earth's resources so mercilessly. We would have learnt compassion.

*Ponder what you will do about consumerism in your life.
How will you care for God's Creation better?*

12:55pm HYMN – My Song is Love Unknown

13:00pm Hands turning away [_____]

Pilate asked them, "What am I to do with Jesus, who is called the Messiah?" They all yelled, "Nail him to a cross!" Pilate answered, "But what crime has he done?" "Nail him to a cross!" they yelled even louder.

Pause

We were reminded on Palm Sunday that Jesus consciously took the journey to Jerusalem, knowing that this would mean certain death for himself on the cross.

We are thankful to God for the lengths that God goes to, to rescue us.

We are also reminded of the peril of leadership, and how quickly the story moves from: "all spoke well of him" and "Hosanna to the King" through to "crucify him."

In the space of 7 days, those that supported Jesus were calling for his death. As we remember this, may we faithfully re-tell the story and the extent to which God goes to save us.

May we find ways of supporting our leadership.

Pause

As we hold silence together,
we remember the word's.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you today and always. Amen.**

We reflect on God's Grace at work, in our life, in the Church, in the wider world.

13:05pm **Warming hands by the fire** [_____]

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That disciple knew the high priest, and he followed Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest's house. Peter stayed outside near the gate. But the other disciple came back out and spoke to the girl at the gate. She let Peter go in, but asked him, "Aren't you one of that man's followers?" "No, I am not!" Peter answered. It was cold, and the servants and temple police had made a charcoal fire. They were warming themselves around it, when Peter went over and stood near the fire to warm himself.

Go and cup the Christ candle, feel the warmth.

When our loyalty wanes

Father, forgive us, and draw us to you.



13:15pm **Hands, burdened with our sin (Carrying the cross)**[_____]

A reading from John Chapter 19

Pilate ... brought Jesus out. Then he sat down on the judge's bench at the place known as "The Stone Pavement." ... It was about noon on the day before Passover, and Pilate said to the crowd, "Look at your king!"

Kill him! Kill him!" they yelled. "Nail him to a cross!"

"So you want me to nail your king to a cross?" Pilate asked.

The chief priests replied, "The Emperor is our king!" Then Pilate handed Jesus over to be nailed to a cross. Jesus was taken away, and he carried his cross to a place known as "The Skull." In Aramaic this place is called "Golgotha."

Silence

13:20pm **HYMN – There is a Green Hill**

Silence

13:25pm **The hands of another helping (Simon of Cyrene)**[_____]

As Jesus was being led away, some soldiers grabbed hold of a man from Cyrene named Simon. He was coming in from the fields, but they put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Silence

It is not enough to re-tell, we must re-live the Gospel, and that means living its teaching.
Simon of Cyrene helped another he did not know. Will you also help others?

13:30pm **Praying hands, grieving for the Holy Land** [_____]

A large crowd was following Jesus, and in the crowd a lot of women were crying and weeping for him. Jesus turned to the women and said: Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me! Cry for yourselves and for your children. Someday people will say, "Women who never had children are really fortunate!" At that time everyone will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" They will say to the hills, "Hide us!" If this can happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?

Silence

13:35pm **Hands of nails, hammers and death** [_____]

Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. When the soldiers came to the place called "The Skull," they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.



HYMN – When I survey

*Run your nail through your hands,
notice it is cold and hard.*

*Pray for something in your life that is cold and hard,
and ask for forgiveness,
when you are ready, you may bring it forward and put it in the basket at the foot of the Christ candle.*

13:45pm **Silence - until 2:00pm**

14:00pm **Grace** [_____]

One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!" But the other criminal told the first one off, "Don't you fear God? Aren't you getting the same punishment as this man? We got what was coming to us, but he didn't do anything wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into power!" Jesus replied, "I promise that today you will be with me in paradise."

Taize Chant – Jesus Remember me

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.

Silence

REFLECTION: Grace makes beauty out of ugly things

It's easy to leave Good Friday to history, to 2000 years ago, to a moment, in a series of moments that had huge historical and spiritual significance but is still far enough away to be safe.

But what it shows is a world, a people capable of injustice, bigotry, hatred, abuse, torture, denial, mockery. A world much like today. A world that has the mass extermination of millions of Jews, the Killing Fields, Execution, terrorism, dictatorship, racism, sexism, two world wars, hundreds of other wars, the Cold War, 9/11, the annihilation of a number of indigenous cultures, the ongoing destruction of acres of wilderness, a world divided by religion, by economics, by ethnicity, by history, by hatred.

Friday is a stark realisation that this is who we are.

We are the mocking voice, we are the haters.
We cause injustice. We tolerate abuse. We condone torture.

It is an incredibly ugly world.
It is a world that desperately, desperately needs God.
It is a world that needs grace.

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.

There is beauty hidden amongst the horror of Friday. Tiny particles of grace shining through the shadows. Willing sacrifice. Forgiveness. Jesus spent his last moments not thinking about himself, the pain he must have been suffering but thinking of others - his mother, another dying man, forgiving everyone present at his execution. In amongst the hatred and brutality there is still the recognition of who he was, the Son of God.

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.

It is grace that makes Friday Good.
Good Friday is about the transformative nature of grace.

We need to be at the foot of the cross and acknowledge who we really are without God. Then we need to receive the grace offered to us so we can journey through to Sunday. This is what Good Friday is. This is where we are now and now grace will take us on.

It is grace that holds us in the waiting. In the hours after Jesus died when all hope is lost. In the waiting of Saturday, sitting in fear and deep grief.

Sunday will come. We will be restored to God, to creation and to ourselves. We will stand transformed from mocking haters into the people God wants us to be.

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.

- Angela Blundell, 2014

2:10pm **Hands throwing a dice, looking for a way out [_____]**

After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they divided up his clothes into four parts, one for each of them. But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams. The soldiers said to each other, "Let's not rip it apart. We will gamble to see who gets it." This happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say,

"They divided up my clothes
and gambled for my garments."

Pause

In Lotto we look for a way out of life, for a way out of debt, or for an alternate way after unfulfilled hope. We remember Jesus' words: "Not my will, but your will be done."

Pause

Gracious God

Show yourself for us

so we do not go about in ignorance;

reveal yourself to us

for in you we know your presence, your call, your will.

Silence – what is it that you are avoiding in your life, and want to try and escape?



2:15pm **Mother's hands cradling her baby** []

Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too.

Pause

As a mother you know the potential of your baby. You have hopes, dreams and aspirations for them. Sometimes these are robbed, by evil, by a broken world, or by things not being as they should.

Pause

For those who have yet to reach their full potential
May we be active in helping to nurture all children, may we be caring, may we be loving.



2:20pm **Final will and testament** []

When Jesus saw his mother and his favourite disciple with her, he said to his mother, "This man is now your son." Then he said to the disciple, "She is now your mother." From then on, that disciple took her into his own home.

Pause

Even in dying, Jesus was caring. His family had estranged themselves from Jesus. Yet, at the final moment there is restoration, there is care, there is love. There is always hope.

Pause

For an area in our family that needs restoration and hope
Grant us the grace to eat together, to restore relationships and live whole lives.

Silence – Jesus very publicly faced his mortality. What example does this give us?



Rosemary is the herb of remembrance.

Hopefully you picked up a piece of rosemary as you came in.

You may now wish to rub it between your fingers and smell it.

Let the smell draw you into the story,
Jesus praying with his friends in the garden,
a thief asking for forgiveness,
forgiveness being given,
a new future being given,
for a thief, for a mother, for a brother,
for you and I.

Pause and thank God for what you have been given.

Pause and ask for forgiveness for
what you have not done
and what you have done.

Once you have done this you may wish to come forward and put the rosemary in the basket at the foot of the Christ Candle,
or you may wish to keep it with you.

2:30pm **HYMN**

How Deep the Father's Love

2:40pm **Turning off the light switch** []

Jesus knew that he had now finished his work. And in order to make the Scriptures come true, he said, "I am thirsty!" A jar of cheap wine was there. Someone then soaked a sponge with the wine and held it up to Jesus' mouth on the stem of a hyssop plant. After Jesus drank the wine, he said, "Everything is done!" He bowed his head and died.

Pause

There comes a time, when we realise we have done what we can do. Together, let us ask for God's peace.

Extinguish the Christ Candle

Let us pray:

Lord, it is the night.

The night is for stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;
what has not been done has not been done;
let it be.

The night is dark.

Let our fears of the darkness of the world
and of our own lives rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us, and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities.

In your name we pray. **Amen.**¹



SONG – Be Still for the presence of the Lord

1 NZPB, pg 184

The temple is split, both literally, and spiritually. The leaders did a horrible thing. They fought, amongst themselves and with God. And they lost on two counts.

Firstly spiritually they split themselves off from God. They lost God, they killed God in their midst. And this split the people too. They were meant to lead, but they showed themselves to be unable to lead.



Secondly, when you split a group of people, those people become weaker. The temple curtain tore. It tore, not only spiritually to show we now have access to God the Father, but also to show us the establishment is torn, and broken when we live by ourselves. If we wish to live then we need to make sure we are following God's ways. We thank God everyday, for the Holy Spirit, and the way God guides us. It is so easy to make big mistakes, but if we pay attention to the Holy Spirit, we make less mistakes. Because we have to be quiet, and compassionate like Jesus was. It seems to be only in the quiet that we really hear the Spirit's guidance. We say the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, and it is.

But anyway, we were talking about the temple physically splitting. And it did. We didn't heal the factions we had, and the temple fell. If only we had listened to Jesus' ways earlier. But it's too late now.

And anyway, we know now that it's not about buildings, but about the people. Jesus showed us that, and the Holy Spirit continues to convict us of that.

Mark always reminds us that we can find God on the way, right where we are. We thank him for his conviction of this, and reminding us that it's all about the people.



2:53pm **Gentle Hands**

There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God's kingdom to come. He was also a member of the council, but he did not agree with what they had decided. Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. He took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in fine cloth. Then he put it in a tomb that had been cut out of solid rock and had never been used. It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

- Lk 23:50-54

The candle is gently wrapped with the cloth.



Silence

2:55pm **Hands, looking through binoculars at a distance** [_____]

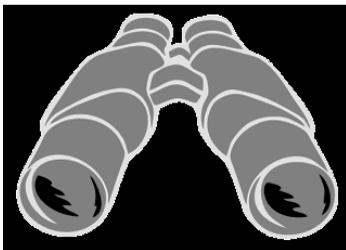
All of Jesus' close friends and the women who had come with him from Galilee stood at a distance and watched.

Pause

Lord, when we disengage.

May your Holy Spirit re-ignite your ways in us

We pray: Gracious God, help us to engage, to not fret over what might have been, but rather to fully live into your tomorrow and your resurrection. May we be a healthy, whole witness to your body at work, in Creation, in Papakura, in New Zealand. **Amen.**



2:58pm **Calloused hands** [_____]

Joseph ... put the body in a tomb that had been cut into solid rock. Then he rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body was placed.

Some rough calloused hands, do the final gentle work to care for Jesus

Pause



HYMN – Glory be to Jesus

Final thought

We leave with the hope of Easter on the horizon.
As the back page, moves from Dark, into light.
May the light of Christ always guide you.

May faith, May hope, May love
be alive in you

today

and always.

Peace be with you.

Blessing

[Dion]

May Christ the crucified convince you that God loves you
and has forgiven you.

May the cross carry you through whatever pain and suffering assails you.
May you go forward with courage in the faith of Christ

And may God, Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life,
bless you today and always. **AMEN.**

- ANZPB, p535 (adapted)



Resources needed

1. Bread
2. Wine/Grape-juice
3. Rosemary
4. Nails
5. Olives (pitted or stuffed)
6. Christ Candle
7. Shroud for candle
8. Basket for confession at the foot of Christ Candle
9. Palm Branch
10. Palm Crosses

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History in 2013 a similar version was used for a combined Good Friday service between *Cross Roads Methodist and Papakura Anglican*. In 2014 it was expanded and *re-mixed* to be used as a **3 hour** devotional.

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EASTER IS ON THE HORIZON

FAITH

HOPE

LOVE