

Good Friday Service – Gospel Highlights

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(30 minutes before service, various candles are lit around room.

*Until service begins, keep up M/M Slide: "**Please enter the worship center quietly. Use these moments for silent prayer.**")*

Song: "How Deep the Father's Love" *(*Light 7 Main Candles & Snuff Side Candles)*

Set the Pace & Prayer

Good evening, and welcome to this special Good Friday service. When you think back on the history of the Church, it seems strange to call the day "good." After all, it was a day that was preceded by unmet expectations, betrayal, deception, and ultimately . . . it was a day of death. But remember, in the midst of all the evil that happened, God was at work and His will was accomplished. God is still at work! He is still working and changing lives, and we have gathered in this place to consider His great work of redemption.¹ The God of hope offers us peace and forgiveness in the midst of darkness, evil, suffering, confusion, and pain.

Tonight, we focus on the final hours before Jesus' death on the cross. As this Good Friday service unfolds we are going to do several things. To begin, **Pastor Dwayne is going to walk us through the Passover meal** with Jesus and his disciples in the Upper Room. We will share the **Lord's Table** together hearing the words Jesus spoke to his disciples at the Last Supper before He was crucified. While we pass the bread and cup, we will **sing together**. Our music will reflect on the sacrificial death of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

This service can also be called Tenebrae (which means darkness/gloom). After sharing the Lord's Table, you will notice that this room will progressively get darker. As we **reflect together on the words of Scripture**, 7 Readers will walk us through the final hours before Jesus' death. After each of the readings, 1 of the 7 candles will be snuffed out 1 at a time. When the last candle is out, we will be left in silent darkness. After a time of solitude, you will be prompted on the screen that our worship service has concluded. Please quietly get up from your seat, and without talking to anyone else, leave the worship center in silence and drive home safely. We will return on Easter Sunday to celebrate the resurrection.

(On the Screen, Project the 7 statements). We have 7 goals tonight: 1) Let us **reflect** & meditate on the Scriptures focusing on the last hours before Jesus' death. 2) Let us **remember** the sacrifice of Jesus Christ & suffering he endured. 3) Let us **recognize** the seriousness of sin & penalty that we deserve. 4) Let us **repent**, turn from sin, and turn to the Lord for forgiveness. 5) Let us **realize** the greatness of our Triune God – To see His character, holiness, justice, wrath, love, mercy & grace. 6) Let us **respond** to the Lord in reverent worship, singing, and prayer. 7) Let us **return** on Easter Sunday in hope of the resurrection. *(Screen goes black).* **Prayer.**

On Screen:

- 1) Let us **reflect** and meditate on the Scriptures.
- 2) Let us **remember** the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- 3) Let us **recognize** the seriousness of sin.
- 4) Let us **repent** and turn to God for forgiveness.
- 5) Let us **realize** the greatness of our Triune God.
- 6) Let us **respond** to the Lord in reverent worship, singing, and prayer.
- 7) Let us **return** on Easter Sunday in hope of the resurrection.

¹ These statements are adapted from a message by Harry Shields of Calvary Bible Church in Neenah, WI.

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Lord's Table

LT Scripture

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. 2The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him (John 13:1-5).

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." 17After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. 18For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:14-19).

Prayer & Serve Bread

Song: "Jesus, Thank You"

LT Scripture

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20).

Prayer & Serve Cup

Song: "Are You Washed in the Blood"

LT Scripture

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4You know the way to the place where I am going."

27Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. 28"You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. 30I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, 31but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now; let us leave" (John 14:1-4,27-31).

(*Stage/House Lights fade LOW.)

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Scripture Reading for Dark Candle 1 – READER 1

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

Mark 14:32-41 (ESV)

32 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." 35 And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." 37 And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39 And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. 41 And he came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. (Reader Pauses). The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." (Reader Pauses).

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

John 18:3

3 So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Matthew 26:48-50a

48 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." 49 And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him. 50 Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you came to do."

John 18:4-8,10-11

4 Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" 5 They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. (Reader Pauses). 7 So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go." 10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) 11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

Matthew 26:52b-53,55-56

"For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? 55 At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. 56 But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

(Reader then snuffs out Dark Candle #1 [on far stage right] and is seated).

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Scripture Reading for Dark Candle 2 – READER 2

Annas Questions Jesus

John 18:12-13,19-24 (ESV)

12So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. 13First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. 19The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said." 22When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" 23Jesus answered him, "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?" 24Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Jesus Before Caiaphas

Matthew 26:57-68

57Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. 58And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. 59Now the chief priests and the whole Council (Sanhedrin) were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, 60but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward 61and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" 62And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" 63But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." 64Jesus 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." 65Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." 67Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, 68saying, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?"
(Reader Pauses).

Peter Denies Jesus

Luke 22:55-62

55And when [the guards and servants] had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. 56Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." 57But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." 59And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." 60But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. **61And the Lord turned and looked at Peter.** *(Reader Pauses).* And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." *(Reader Pauses).* 62And he went out and wept bitterly.

(Reader then snuffs out Dark Candle #2 [on far stage left] and is seated).

Song: "Lamb of God"

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Scripture Reading for Dark Candle 3 – READER 3

Matthew 27:1-5 (ESV)

Jesus Delivered to Pilate

1When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. 2And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor. (*Reader Pauses*).

Judas Hangs Himself

3Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, 4saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." 5And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. (*Reader Pauses*).

John 18:28b-31

Jesus Before Pilate

[The Jewish leaders] did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. 29So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." 31Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death."

Luke 23:2-11

2And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king." 3And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." 4Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." 5But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place." 6When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. 7And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.

Jesus Before Herod

8When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. 9So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. 10The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. 11And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.

(*Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #3 [2nd candle in from stage right] and is seated*).

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Scripture Reading for Dark Candle 4 – READER 4

Matthew 27:11-31 (ESV)

Jesus Before Pilate Again

11Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." 12But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. 13Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" 14But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. (*Reader Pauses*).

The Crowd Chooses Barabbas

15Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. 17So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 18For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. 19Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." 20Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" 23And he said, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

24So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." 25And all the people answered, "**His blood be on us and on our children!**" (*Reader Pauses*). 26Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

Jesus Is Mocked

27Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. 28And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. 31And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

(*Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #4 [2nd candle in from stage left] and is seated*).

Song: "By His Wounds"

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Scripture Reading for Dark Candle 5 – READER 5

Matthew 27:32 (ESV) *Jesus Is Crucified*

32As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

Luke 23:33-38

33And when they came to the place that is called The Skull [Golgotha], there they crucified him, and the criminals [two robbers], one on his right and one on his left.

(*Cross Light Fades ON.)

34And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

John 19:24b-27

So the soldiers did these things, 25but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. (*Reader Pauses*).

Luke 23:39-43

39One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." 42Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (*Reader Pauses*).

Mark 15:33

33And when the sixth hour (noon) had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour (3:00pm).

(Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #5 [3rd candle in from stage right] and is seated).

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Scripture Reading for Dark Candle 6 – READER 6

Mark 15:34 (ESV) The Death of Jesus

34And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Reader Pauses).

John 19:28-30a

28After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." 29A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished" . . . (Reader Pauses).

Luke 23:46

46Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last. (Reader Pauses).

Matthew 27:51-52,54

51And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. 52The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised . . .

54When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Reader Pauses).

Luke 23:48-49

48When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. 49But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

(Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #6 [3rd candle in from stage left] and is seated).

Song: "Blessed Redeemer"

(*At close of song, musicians turn OFF all lights on music stands).

(*Cross Light Fades OFF . . . All stage/house lights are already OFF).

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Scripture Reading for White Candle 7 – READER 7

John 19:31-37 (ESV) *Jesus' Side is Pierced*

31Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. 32So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. 35He who saw it has borne witness--his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth--that you also may believe. 36For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." 37And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced." (*Reader Pauses*).

Matthew 27:57-58 *Jesus Is Buried*

57When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. 58He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.

John 19:39-41

39Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. 40So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

Matthew 27:60

And [Joseph laid the body] in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away.

(Reader turns off lecturn light).

(Reader then snuffs out White Candle #7 [stage center] and is seated).

*(After 1 minute of silent darkness, Bring up last M/M Slide: **"You are dismissed. Please leave the worship center in silence. Let us return on Easter Sunday remembering the hope of the resurrection."** Bring up House Lights a little.)*

[Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is referenced from the English Standard Version, ESV. © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers]