



Good Friday

April 18, 2025

12:00 p.m.

The Church of the Holy Spirit (Episcopal)

Knowing • Loving • Serving

God + Neighbor

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On Holy Week & Antisemitism

The story of Jesus' death and resurrection makes many references to "the Jews." Language such as "the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews" (John 20:19) and "his blood be on us and on our children" (Mt. 27:25) has fueled centuries of murderous violence and state-sponsored genocide against our Jewish sisters and brothers – all, somehow, rationalized as righteousness in the minds of the persecutors. The 1662 version of our Anglican prayer book, in fact, guided the faithful to pray on Good Friday that God would take from all "Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics" their "ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word." That language survived until 1928.

Our gospels (themselves written decades after the events we remember, grieve and celebrate this week) actually tell a story of what scholar Craig S. Keener understands as "competing Judaisms." Virtually all persons the gospels name this week understood themselves as Jewish – both persecutors and the persecuted. The evangelists wrote as Jewish Christians, critiquing other Jews and particularly leadership, from within – as did the prophets of Hebrew scripture. We have been given the story of the Jews as a sacred stand-in for the larger story of humankind.

There are parts of our own selves that wish, like the Jerusalem leadership, to be rid of Jesus. There are parts of our own selves that, like a number of Jesus' own disciples, seek to position the self as righteous over/against some perceived inferior "other." The gospels never invite or justify such a response. The gospels certainly do not condone antisemitism. The hateful uses to which the Passion story has been put in the course of Christian history should bring us to our knees.

A number of Christian churches have purged NRSV reference to "the Jews" completely from Holy Week liturgies. It can be said that such edits reduce the potential for antisemitic readings of these texts. Our own liturgies have been guided by the wisdom of scholars Raymond Brown and Amy-Jill Levine, who ask us to avoid such editing but instead to hazard discomfort, to reflect upon our own responses to scriptural references to "the Jews" and to move through Holy Week mindful of the sin of systemic Christian antisemitism, committed to confronting it, and honoring the beauty and witness of a kindred faith which continues to inform our own.

Faithfully,



Please stand as you are able as the bell is rung.

Hymn 171 Go to dark Gethsemane

Petra

The Collect

Blessed be our God.
For ever and ever. Amen.

People

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated for the lesson.

The Reading (Luke 22:39-23:12)

Jesus came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.' Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.'

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, 'Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?' When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, 'Lord, should we strike with the sword?' Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!'

Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, 'This man also was with him.' But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know him.' A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' Then about an hour later yet another kept insisting, 'Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.' But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about!' At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?' They kept heaping many other insults on him.

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. They said, 'If you are the Messiah, tell us.' He replied, 'If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.' All of them asked, 'Are you, then, the Son of God?' He said to them, 'You say that I am.' Then they said, 'What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!'

Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.' Then Pilate asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' He answered, 'You say so.' Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, 'I find no basis for an accusation against this man.' But they were insistent and said, 'He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.'

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

Meditation: Herod

Silence

The Prayers

The one who hung the earth upon the waters
Today is hung upon the cross.

Let us pray.

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers as your personal piety guides you.

Lord, who in the moment of your betrayal refused to condone violence, be with those throughout your world who are in danger from violence, or prone to violence.

We hold before you all who suffer in those regions of the world torn apart by war, violence or misrule: Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, Haiti, Myanmar, Sudan and South Sudan, Afghanistan, Ethiopia.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We hold before you the victims of gun violence in our own nation, those who grieve them, and those working for the safety of all. We hold before you those who do not feel safe in their own homes. We hold before you those in our own nation and across the world whose lives and livelihoods and stability are jeopardized by fundings cuts and economic uncertainty.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord who was brought bound to interrogation before Pilate and Herod, guide all who hold authority in the ways of compassion and mercy. We hold before you our president and all those holding or seeking public office. We hold before you all federal and state legislatures and courts. May their work uphold the dignity of every person and safeguard the vulnerable and the maligned. Strengthen us when we would deny your goodness in ourselves and in others. Strengthen those in every land who suffer for the sake of conscience, human dignity and your reign of peace.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your church throughout the world. For its unity in witness and service. For all bishops and other ministers and the people whom they serve. For Julia, our bishop, and all the people of this diocese. For our town of Orleans and its communities of faith and all who join us today and worship here in this community. Confirm your Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Please stand as you are able.

Hymn 158 Ah, holy Jesus

Herzliebster Jesu

Please be seated for the lesson.

The Reading (Luke 23:13-46)

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.’

Then they all shouted out together, ‘Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!’ (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, ‘Crucify, crucify him!’ A third time he said to them, ‘Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.’ But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed.

So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?' Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.

All stand as able.

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last.

Please be seated.

Meditation: The Thief Who Repented

Silence

The Prayers

The one who hung the earth upon the waters
Today is hung upon the cross.

Let us pray.

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers as your personal piety guides you.

Lord who was recognized and named by a repentant thief, help us to remember not only your cross but the countless crosses upon which the innocent and the guilty have been put to death. Strengthen in us the knowledge that no brother or sister is beyond repentance and forgiveness, or to be discounted for sins committed or crimes perpetrated..

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord whose starkest truth is defenseless love, and who seeks only the flourishing of humankind in peace, strengthen us and nurture in us the wisdom to discern and defend your truth in the world. Fortify in us the generosity to respond in love instead of reacting in defensive anger.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord whose cross was carried for a time by Simon, a stranger from North Africa, help us to see beyond the bonds of race and nation and tribe to recognize our common humanity and vulnerability in each other, and especially those with whom we differ. Cure ancient enmities persisting between Christians, Muslims and Jews. On this day particularly, heal us from the sin of abiding antisemitism. As we come near to the cross, we lament Christian acts of prejudice and violence against your faithful people, of whom Jesus Christ was born. Bless all the children of Abraham's covenant – Muslim, Jewish and Christian – so that together we may attain the fullness of your blessing for the world.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord who knew fully human pain, human hunger and human thirst, be with all who suffer this day in body, mind or spirit. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all afflictions and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Please stand as you are able.

Hymn 168 O sacred head

Herzlich tut mich verlangen

Please be seated for the lesson.

The Reading (Luke 23:46-56)

When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.' And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was

waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid.

It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Meditation: The Centurion

Silence

The Prayers

The one who hung the earth upon the waters
Today is hung upon the cross.

Let us pray.

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers as your personal piety guides you.

Lord, help us to look upon the ones we have pierced, diminished, derided or ignored.

Forgive us the evil we have done and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive us for failing to oppose hatred and enmity and injustice. For failing to stand against the sins of classism, racism, greed and abuse of your environment, which distort our souls and do violence to our common humanity.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord whose bravest companions were women, deliver us from those forces and prejudices which privilege some of your children over others.
In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord to whom Josphe brought linen cloth and donated a tomb to receive your body, create in us grateful and generous hearts to give and to serve.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord whose bereaved followers rested on the Sabbath day, help us to be still this day as we remember your works of love and compassion. Forgive us for things done and left undone and libertate us from participation in systems which diminish and exploit.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

Hymn 172 Were you there when they crucified my Lord

Were you there

Please remain standing, or you may sit or kneel for the prayers and concluding collect.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
**and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross joy has come to the whole world.**

May God be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of his countenance and come to us.
**Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

**We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross
joy has come to the whole world.**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
if we endure, we shall also reign with him.

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

O Savior of the world,
who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us:
Save us and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

*You are welcome to remain in church for as long as you wish this afternoon.
All depart in silence.*

The Good Friday offering

For 103 years, Episcopalians have found the Good Friday Offering to be an effective way to express their support for the ministries of the three dioceses of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Pastoral care, education and health care continue to be primary ministries through which the reconciling spirit of the Christian faith serves all in need. Participation in this ministry is welcome. The generous donations of Episcopalians help the Christian presence in the Land of the Holy One to be a vital and effective force for peace and understanding among all of God's children.

**We have placed collection plates at each door to receive your donation.
Thank you for your generosity!**



Officiant & Preacher

The Rev. Patrick C. Ward

Minister of Music

Joan Kirchner

Readers

Celia Calhoun, Doug Fromm, Jean Collins,
The Rev. Elisabeth Tunney, Brian Skea

Usher

John Harter

Altar Guild

Gail Binney-Sterne

Audio/Video

Jen Marlin

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