



# Good Friday

April 3, 2026

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 this week 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,



### Our Good Friday offering

By supporting life-giving ministries in the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, (including St. George's, Baghdad; the eye clinic in Ras Morbat, Yemen; the Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza; and other institutions identified by their dioceses) you are ensuring that our siblings in Christ are not forgotten. Plates to receive your offering are located near each entrance.

*Thank you for your generosity.*

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

## Hymn 160 Cross of Jesus

*Cross of Jesus*

### The Collect

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

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 (John 18:1 – 27)

Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth" Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard

what I said to them; they know what I said.” When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, “Is that how you answer the high priest?” Jesus answered, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?” Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

## **Meditation**

*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 guided Peter to return his sword to its sheath, 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 civil unrest: Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Iran, Gaza, the West Bank and the wider Middle East, Haiti, Sudan, South Sudan and our own nation.

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.

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

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. 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 (John 18:28 – 19:30)**

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify

you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.”

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but the emperor.” Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

*Please stand as you are able.*

There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.” This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

“They divided my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.”

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I am thirsty.” A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

*Please be seated. A period of silence is observed.*

## **Meditation**

*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, whose kingdom is not of this world, guide all nations and the peoples of the earth, and particularly those who hold authority, in the ways of compassion and mercy.

We hold before you our president, our governor, 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.

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 who gave your friend to your mother and your mother to your friend, 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, 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 (John 19:31 – 42)**

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.” After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

### **Meditation**

*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, intentionally or negligently.

Forgive us of 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 and racism which distort our souls and do violence to our common humanity.

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

Lord from whose side flowed water and blood, bring us to new life out of death.

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

Lord to whom Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes to honor your body, create in us grateful and generous hearts to give and to serve.

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

Lord whose body was laid to rest in a garden, help us to care for the earth you have given us, and to safeguard all endangered when your gifts are abused or exploited. Guide us to recognize in the trauma and desecration of our planet the body of your pierced Christ who draws all people to himself. Forgive, restore and strengthen us to care tenderly and generously for all you have made.

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.*

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Officiant</i>      | The Rev. Patrick C. Ward  |
| <i>Preachers</i>      | The Rev. Elisabeth Tunney, The Rev. Anne Koehler, The Rev. Nancy J. Hagner  |
| <i>Readers</i>        | Jim Anderson, Melissa Keefe, Doug Fromm<br>Celia Calhoun, Katharine Mockett |
| <i>Music Director</i> | Joan Kirchner   |
| <i>Usher</i>          | John Harter   |
| <i>Audio/Video</i>    | Jen Marlin  |

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