**PRAYERS AND READINGS FOR HOLY WEEK 2020**

**Monday – Maundy Thursday inclusive.**

**Monday April 6th :**

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.  
Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Matthew 21: v12-22.**

Jesus at the Temple

Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. “It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’”

The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant.

“Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him.

“Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read,

“‘From the lips of children and infants  
    you, Lord, have called forth your praise’?”

And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, “May you never bear fruit again!” Immediately the tree withered.

When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. “How did the fig tree wither so quickly?” they asked.

Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

**Hymn verse**

There is a green hill far away,

Without a city wall;

Where the dear Lord was crucified,

Who died to save us all.

**Tuesday April 7th :**

Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race

sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross:

grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,

and also be made partakers of his resurrection;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Matthew 25: 31-46**

The sheep and the goats

‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

‘Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” ‘Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison and go to visit you?”

‘The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” ‘Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was ill and in prison and you did not look after me.”

‘They also will answer, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or ill or in prison, and did not help you?”

‘He will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”

‘Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.’

**Hymn verse**

There was no other good enough

To pay the price of sin

He only, could unlock the gate

Of Heaven and let us in.

**Wednesday April 8th :**

Lord Jesus Christ,

you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,

and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:

give us the mind to follow you and to proclaim you as Lord and King,

to the glory of God the Father.

**Amen.**

**Matthew 26: v 1-16.**

The Plot Against Jesus

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, “As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas,and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. “But not during the festival,” they said, “or there may be a riot among the people.”

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. “This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.”

Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over

**Hymn verse**

We may not know, we cannot tell,  
What pains He had to bear;  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there.

**Maundy Thursday**

**Thursday April 9th:**

**Today is the day Christians remember the Last Supper. Jesus meets with His disciples in the Upper room in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover with them for the last time. He knows that He is about to be betrayed and go to His death on the Cross where He will pay the price for the sins of the world.**

**He uses this great Jewish Liberation festival of Passover to give us a permanent reminder of His death on the cross for us.**

**At Passover each year the Jews celebrate their release from slavery in Egypt. They have a great family meal where there is bread and wine together with a feast of lamb, eggs, bitter herbs and other symbolic food. At this meal Jesus took bread and wine, gave thanks and then in what must have been very shocking to His disciples changed the words to those which have become central to our Christian Faith: Jesus said ‘This is my body broken for you; do this in remembrance of me’. And then He did the same with the wine – ‘This is my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins’.**

**We can’t enjoy our own Passover meal together this year but we can remember His death on the cross for you and for me – a much greater liberation as we are set free from sin and death; we can give Him thanks and recommit ourselves to Him.**

**Please join us for a short service on Good Friday as we remember His death on the Cross for us.**

**Let us pray:**

God our Father, you have invited us to share in the supper

which your Son gave to his Church to proclaim his death until he comes:

may he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love;

who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Matthew 26: v 17-30.**

The Last Supper

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?”

Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?”

Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

**Hymn verse**

O, dearly, dearly has he loved,

And we must love him too,

And trust in his redeeming blood,

And try his works to do.