***Were You There?* A Liturgy for Good Friday Mosgiel Methodist Church Friday 15th April 2022**

**Before we Begin** *Is there a cry in the depths of your being, in the heart and soul of your chosen Christ – Self? Stretched between the earth and the heavens, we see a striving so awesome, a strange and harrowing love, a bearing of pain between father and son, a loving right through to the end* Jim Cotter

**BEGINNING** We come again on this Good Friday                                                                                                                                             even if each in our own place  
to the foot of the cross which calls us on,  
not in shame,  
not in fear  
but more deeply into the costly journey  
towards life.                                                                                                                                                                There is wounding, there is weeping.                                                                                                                                           In Jesus as the Promised One,  
God is not separated from that.

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**“THE COMING”** R.S. Thomas And God held in his hand

A small globe. Look he said.

The son looked. Far off,

As through water, he saw

A scorched land of fierce

Colour. The light burned

There; crusted buildings

Cast their shadows: a bright

Serpent, a river

Uncoiled itself, radiant

With slime.

  On a bare

Hill a bare tree saddened

The sky. Many People

Held out their thin arms

To it, as though waiting

For a vanished April

To return to its crossed

Boughs. The son watched

Them. Let me go there, he said.

**PRAYER**                                                                                                                                            This is the day when life is raw,  
quivering, terrifying:  
The day of numbed emotions,  
the day of blunt nails  
and splintered wood,  
of bruised flesh  
and red blood.  
The day we loathe,  
when hopes are crushed.  
The day we long for,  
when pretences fall away—  
Because the worst that we can do  
cannot kill the love of God.  
Gracious God,  
your love is a light in our darkness,  
vulnerable, yet unquenchable.  
We would stand with Christ,  
in the midst of the horrors of this world  
where betrayal and death  
constantly threaten your love and peace.

**TO LAY OUR BURDENS DOWN An Exercise**

**HYMN WOV 258**  When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wond'rous Cross  
On which the Prince of Glory dy'd,  
My richest Gain I count but Loss,  
And pour Contempt on all my Pride.  
  
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the Death of Christ my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his Blood.  
  
See from his Head, his Hands, his Feet,  
Sorrow and Love flow mingled down!  
Did ever such Love and Sorrow meet?  
Or Thorns compose so rich a Crown?  
  
Were the whole Realm of Nature mine,  
That were an Offering far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my Soul, my Life, my All.

**FROM THE FIRST TESTAMENT**  Isaiah 52:13- 53:12

**“*THE SERVANT*”** Iona Community

Who would ever have believed it?

Who could ever have conceived it?

Who dares trace God’s hand behind it

when a servant came among us?

Like a sapling in dry soil,

he was rooted in our presence;

lacking beauty, grace and splendour

no one felt attracted to him.

Yet it was the pain and torment we deserved

which he accepted,

while we reckoned his afflictions

must have come by heaven’s instruction.

Though our sins let him be wounded,

though our cruelty left him beaten,

yet, though how and why he suffered,

God revealed our hope of healing.

**We like sheep despite our wisdom,**

**all had wandered from God’s purpose;**

**and our due in pain and anger,**

**God let fall on one among us.**

**Who would ever have believed it?**

**Who could ever have conceived it?**

**Who dares trace God’s hand behind it**

**when a servant came among us?**

**FROM THE GOSPELS** John 18: 33- 19:34

*The candle is extinguished and we keep two minutes of silence*

John 19:38-42

**A BRIEF REFLECTION**

**GOOD FRIDAY REPROACHES** Janet Morley

*The Reproaches are an ancient part of the Good Friday liturgy,  a series of questions are asked – often chanted – as if by Jesus asking what he had done to deserve his death. This is a contemporary version*

Holy God, holy and strange,

holy and intimate,

have mercy on us.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I brooded over the abyss,

with my words I called forth creation:

but you have brooded on destruction,

and manufactured the means of chaos.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I breathed life into your bodies,

and carried you tenderly in my arms:

but you have armed yourselves for war,

breathing out threats of violence.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I made the desert blossom before you,

I fed you with an open hand:

but you have grasped the children’s food,

and laid waste fertile lands.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I abandoned my power like a garment,

choosing your unprotected flesh:

but you have robed yourselves in privilege,

and chosen to despise the abandoned.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

**Holy God,**

**Holy and strange,**

**Holy and intimate,**

**Have mercy on us.**

I would have gathered you to me as a lover,

and shown  you the ways of peace:

but you have desired security,

and you would not surrender your self.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I have torn the veil of my glory,

transfiguring the earth

but you have disfigured my beauty,

and turned away your face.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I have laboured to deliver you,

as a woman delights to give life:

but you have delighted in bloodshed

and laboured to bereave the world.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

I have followed you with the power of my sp irit,

To seek truth and heal the oppressed:

But you have been following a lie,

And returned to your own comfort.

**O my people, what have I done to you?**

**How have I offended you?**

**Answer me.**

**Holy God,**

**holy and strange,**

**holy and intimate,**

**have mercy on us.**

**PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND CARE**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day 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 forever. Amen**

**HYMN WOV 261** Were You There When They Crucified My Lord Negro SpiritualOmit v 6

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they crucified my Lord? O sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble; were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

**BLESSING FOR GOOD FRIDAY** Jan Richardson

You will know

this blessing

by how it

does not stay still,

by the way it

refuses to rest

in one place.

You will recognize it

by how it takes

first one form,

then another:

now running down

the face of the mother

who watches the breaking

of the child

she had borne,

now in the stance

of the woman

who followed him here

and will not leave him

bereft.

Now it twists in anguish

on the mouth of the friend

whom he loved;

now it bares itself

in the wound,

the cry,

the finishing and

final breath.

This blessing

is not in any one

of these alone.

It is what

binds them

together.

It is what dwells

in the space

between them,

though it be torn

and gaping.

It is what abides

in the tear

the rending makes.

May you abide in the stillness and quiet of this time, knowing resurrection is coming **Amen**