

A joint service between
Bytown Community Church
&
St Giles Presbyterian Church



Friday, April 7, 2023
10:30 a.m.

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg People. The Algonquin peoples have lived on this land since time immemorial. We are grateful to have the opportunity to be present in this territory.

Prelude: The Crucifixion

by Samuel Barber

Vocalist: Katie Gratton

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Come, and watch with me awhile.

All: We come to stand by the cross.

One: Come, and pray with me awhile.

All: We come to stand with Jesus.

One: Come, and mourn with me awhile.

All: We come to weep for Jesus.

One: Come to proclaim 'God's victory
remains with love.'

**All: We come to open our hearts for Jesus,
the Crucified.**

****Hymn: When I survey the wondrous Cross**

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Opening Prayer

Lord God, Lover of us all, we humble ourselves in your presence now, knowing that you changed the world on this day. Through the Cross of Christ, you invite us to turn from despair to hope, from brokenness to wholeness, from death to life. We are humbled by the deep love of Jesus, which led him to give himself over to powers that stand against you and against us on this awesome, awful day. With hearts filled with wonder, and moved to tears, we praise you for such amazing grace that offers us the freedom to live in hope as we live in Christ.

Sung Response: **Behold, the Lamb of God** (in unison) 525

Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world.

First Reading: Matthew 26:57–66

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus

so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' " The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus 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."

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death."

(a moment of silence)

Unison Prayer

Jesus, you stood silent before false accusers. Justice was blind that day, blind to the lies and the desires of the powerful to have their way. If

we were there, would we have spoken up in your defence? Strengthen our hearts this day so we will always stand up for the truth. Amen.

Sung Response: **Behold, the Lamb of God** (in unison) 525

Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world.

Second Reading: Matthew 26:69–75

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A female servant came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he went out to the porch, another female servant saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus the Nazarene." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

(a moment of silence)

Unison Prayer

Jesus Christ, we hate to think that we would desert you if we felt singled out, if people ever challenge us about our faith in you. On this day when we see your commitment to us cost you everything, deepen our commitment to you. Strengthen us whenever we are tempted to deny you in our words or in our actions. Amen.

Sung Response: **Behold, the Lamb of God** (in unison) 525

Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world.

Third Reading: Matthew 27:1–2, 11–24

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so

that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves."

(a moment of silence)

****Hymn: How Deep The Father's Love For Us**

**How deep the Father's love for us,
how vast beyond all measure,
That He should give His only Son,
to make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss.
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the Chosen One,
bring many sons to glory.**

**Behold the Man upon a cross,
my sin upon His shoulders.
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice,
call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there,
until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life.
I know that it is finished.**

**I will not boast in anything:
No gifts, no pow'r, no wisdom.
But I will boast in Jesus Christ:
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer.
But this I know with all my heart:
His wounds have paid my ransom.**

Fourth Reading: Matthew 27:27–40

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You

who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

(a moment of silence)

Unison Prayer:

Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us. People mock you and we do not know what to say. People curse with your name and we say nothing. We watch others carry the cross for you but we draw back at shouldering more responsibility for your sake. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Sung Response: **Behold, the Lamb of God** (in unison) 525

Behold the Lamb of God, behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin, the sin of the world.

Fifth Reading: Matthew 27:45–51, 54

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with

sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split.

Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

(a moment of silence)

Unison Prayer

Jesus, it is hard to stand by and watch you die. The taunts pierce our hearts like the nails. We cannot imagine the pain. Today it feels as if we are there, watching, waiting, weeping. When the darkness of pain overshadows us, help us remember that you know our pain better than anyone else. Amen

****Hymn: Were you there (v.1–5) 233**

Sixth Reading: Matthew 27:55–61

Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary

Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who also was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

Words of Reflection

Unison Prayer

Jesus, to be God's Son is to carry the weight of God's world on your shoulders. No wonder it felt like you were alone in the world. You carry the weight of our sin and sorrow, our failure and frailty. Whenever our eyes take in the cross, help us remember your great love at the heart of our loneliness. May the arms of the Cross, your arms, embrace us and keep us steadfast. Amen.

****Hymn: What wondrous love is this**

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(The service ends. You may sit and pray in silence.)