



**The Anglican Parish  
of Greater Hastings**



# **GOOD FRIDAY**

*'Choices' - A Journey to the Cross*

**10.00am - 3 April 2026  
at St Matthew's Church**

## **“CHOICES” – A JOURNEY TO THE CROSS**

### **Welcome**

#### *Sentence for Good Friday:*

All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have all turned to our own way,  
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. *Isaiah 53:6*

#### **Hymn: *Were you there when they crucified my Lord?***

*CP126 – traditional American folk hymn*

- 1** **Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,  
tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?**
- 2** **Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?  
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,  
tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?**
- 3** **Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?  
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,  
tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?**

**Leader:** Our God chose to join us in the crying of humanity.  
Do you choose to follow?

**All:** **We choose to follow Christ and experience that sorrow.**

Our God chose to help us understand the agony of death.  
Do you choose to follow?

**We choose to follow Christ and experience that sorrow.**

Our God gives us the gift of choice between the narrow gate and the broad.

Which do you choose?

**We choose to follow Christ through the narrow gate and there we will find new life.**

## THE CHOICE FACING JUDAS

Reading 1: **John 18: 1-9** - *The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus*

<sup>18:1</sup> After Jesus had spoken, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

<sup>2</sup> Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, 'For whom are you looking?' <sup>5</sup> They answered, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

Jesus replied, 'I am he.' Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus said to them, 'I am he', they stepped back and fell to the ground.

<sup>7</sup> Again he asked them, 'For whom are you looking?' And they said, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

<sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, 'I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.' <sup>9</sup> This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, 'I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.'

*Silence*

We often choose to turn from the truth.

We often choose to blind ourselves to the light.

**As with Judas, the choice is always before us,  
to trust, or to betray.**

**Forgive us, Lord, when we choose to betray.**

## THE CHOICE FACING CAIAPHAS

Reading 2: **John 18: 12-14, 19-24** - *Jesus before the High Priest*

<sup>12</sup> So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

<sup>13</sup> First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

<sup>19</sup> Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

<sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.'

<sup>22</sup> 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?' <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, 'If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?'  
<sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

*Silence*

We often choose to turn from the truth.  
We often choose to blind ourselves to the light.  
**As with Caiaphas, the choice is always with us,  
to accept the responsibility of our positions or to ignore it.  
Forgive us, Lord, when we choose to ignore.**

### **THE CHOICE FACING PETER**

*Reading 3: John 18: 10-11, 15-18, 25-27 - Peter denies Jesus*

<sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

<sup>15</sup> 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, <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> The woman said to Peter, 'You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?' He said, 'I am not.'<sup>18</sup> Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing round it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

<sup>25</sup> 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.'<sup>26</sup> 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?'

<sup>27</sup> Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

*Silence*

We often choose to turn from the truth.  
We often choose to blind ourselves to the light.  
**As with Peter, the choice is always before us,  
to proclaim the truth, or to deny it.  
Forgive us, Lord, when we choose to deny it.**

## THE CHOICE FACING PILATE

### Reading 4: **John 18: 28-40** - *Jesus before Pilate*

<sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> So Pilate went out to them and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this man?' <sup>30</sup> They answered, 'If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.' <sup>31</sup> 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.' <sup>32</sup> (This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

<sup>33</sup> Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' <sup>35</sup> 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?'

<sup>36</sup> 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.' <sup>37</sup> 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.' <sup>38</sup> 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. <sup>39</sup> 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?' <sup>40</sup> They shouted in reply, 'Not this man, but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a bandit.

### Reading 5: **John 19: 1-16** - *Jesus before Pilate* [continued]

<sup>19:1</sup> Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. <sup>2</sup> And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. <sup>3</sup> They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face.

<sup>4</sup> 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.' <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' <sup>6</sup> 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.'

<sup>7</sup> 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.' <sup>8</sup> Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. <sup>9</sup> He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> 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?' <sup>11</sup> 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.' <sup>12</sup> 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.'

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon.

He said to the Jews, 'Here is your King!' <sup>15</sup> 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.' <sup>16</sup> Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

*Silence*

We often choose to turn from the truth.

We often choose to blind ourselves to the light.

**As with Pilate, the choice is always before us,  
to stand firm for what is right, or to try to please everyone.  
Forgive us, Lord, when, in trying to please everyone,  
we do what is wrong.**

## **THE CHOICE FACING THE SOLDIERS**

*Reading 6: John 19: 17-24 - The Crucifixion of Jesus*

So they took Jesus; <sup>17</sup> and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> 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."' <sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> 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 fulfil what the scripture says, 'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.'

*Silence*

We often choose to turn from the truth.

We often choose to blind ourselves to the light.

**As with the soldiers, the choice is always before us,  
to act with respect or to ridicule.  
Forgive us, Lord, when we choose to deny dignity  
to others.**

## THE CHOICE FACING THE WOMEN AND JOHN

### Reading 7: **John 19: 25-27** - *Standing near the Cross*

<sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

*Silence*

We often choose to turn from the truth.

We often choose to blind ourselves to the light.

**As with Mary and John, the choice is always before us,  
to take up our responsibilities or to walk away from them.**

**Forgive us, Lord, when we fail to take up our responsibilities  
to each other, to all we meet, and to your world.**

## JOURNEY'S END?

### Reading 8: **John 19: 28-42** - *Jesus death and burial*

<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' <sup>29</sup> 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.

<sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.'

Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

*(Silence - pause as the centre 'Christ' candle in the Lenten wreath is extinguished)*

<sup>31</sup> 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. <sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. <sup>35</sup> (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) <sup>36</sup> These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' <sup>37</sup> And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

<sup>38</sup> 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.

<sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.

<sup>40</sup> They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

<sup>41</sup> 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. <sup>42</sup> And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

*Silence*

Despite all our decisions and the choices we make,  
all our denials, and all our betrayals,  
God continues to love us.

**“For God so loved the world that he gave his only son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish  
but may have eternal life.”** *John 3: 16*

*The Presiding Priest declares the Absolution (based on Isaiah 53)*

Receive God’s forgiveness through our Lord Jesus Christ:  
He covers our weaknesses and carries our sorrows;  
He was pierced for our transgressions  
and crushed for our iniquities;  
He took our punishment upon himself to bring us peace:  
by his wounds, we are healed.  
Like sheep we have all gone astray,  
but the Lord has laid on Jesus the sins of us all.  
In Christ we are forgiven.  
**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Hymn:

***O sacred head, surrounded***

*Words attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux; translated by HW Baker  
CP120 [adapted] - Tune: **PASSION CHORALE** (Hassler)*

- O Sacred Head, surrounded  
by crown of piercing thorn!  
O bleeding Head, so wounded,  
reviled and put to scorn!**

*continued ...*

The pow'r of death comes o'er you,  
the glow of life decays,  
yet angel hosts adore you  
and tremble as they gaze.

2 I see your strength and vigour  
all fading in the strife,  
and death with cruel rigour,  
bereaving you of life;  
O agony and dying!  
O love to sinners free!  
Jesus, all grace supplying,  
O turn your face on me.

3 In this, your bitter passion,  
Good Shepherd, think of me  
with your most sweet compassion,  
unworthy though I be:  
beneath your cross abiding  
for ever would I rest,  
in your dear love confiding,  
and with your presence blest.

*We sit or kneel*

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Let us pray:  
Christ of the Cross,  
break through our boundaries  
when it seems that we have no choices at all;  
help us to see and recognise the opportunities  
you place before us,  
and to act as you would have us act.

Lord, in your mercy:  
**Hear our prayer.**

Christ of the Cross,  
we thank you for your obedience  
and your unfailing love.  
Help us to choose to follow your example  
so that you may lead us on into life –  
lead us to Easter Day,  
lead us to resurrection life.

Lord, in your mercy:  
**Hear our prayer.**

Merciful God,  
Creator of all the peoples of the earth  
and lover of every soul;  
have compassion on all who do not know you,  
let your gospel be preached with grace and power  
to those who have not yet heard it,  
turn the hearts of those who oppose it,  
and bring home to your fold all who have gone astray;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

As Christ teaches us, we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today 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 for ever. Amen.**

Hymn:

**When I survey the wondrous cross**

CP 127 – Words: Isaac Watts (from Galatians 6:14)

Tune: Rockingham

- 1 **When I survey the wondrous cross  
on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.**
- 2 **Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
save in the cross of Christ my God;  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.**
- 3 **See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown!**
- 4 **Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.**

**A SONG OF PRAISE**

- 1 You are worthy, our Lord and God:  
to receive glory and honour and power,
- 2 **for you have created all things:  
and by your will  
they were created and have their being.**
- 3 You are worthy O Christ, for you were slain:  
and by your blood have ransomed us for God,
- 4 **ransomed us from every tribe and people and nation:  
and made us a royal house of priests to our God.**
- 5 To the One who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb:  
be blessing and honour, glory and might,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

*based on Revelation 4:11; 5:9, 10, 13*

## GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTS

Gracious and eternal God,  
look with mercy on this your family  
for which our Lord Jesus Christ was willing  
to be betrayed into the hands of his adversaries  
and to suffer death upon the cross;  
and grant us to rejoice in the benefits of his passion;  
through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, crucified for us,  
we kneel at the foot of your cross to watch with you.  
**Help us to see the cost of our forgiveness  
so that we may be made new through your love;  
for the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

All are welcome, if you wish, to spend a moment in silence  
before the Cross to reflect on what we have heard here  
this morning, and contemplating the life choices before us.  
Then, when you are ready, go in the peace of Christ,  
and you are invited to return on Easter Day  
for the continuation of the story.  
**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### **The Anglican Parish of Greater Hastings**

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A Sanctuary Parish pursuing excellence in ministry*

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