



First Presbyterian Church of Mineral Ridge

**Good Friday
March 29, 2024**

Welcome to our church! It is a joy to worship with you
this evening.

WELCOME

READING *Still* by Jan Richardson

SILENCE

READING *John 18:1-12*

After he said these things, Jesus went out with his disciples and crossed over to the other side of the Kidron Valley. He and his disciples entered a garden there. Judas, his betrayer, also knew the place because Jesus often gathered there with his disciples. Judas brought a company of soldiers and some guards from the chief priests and Pharisees. They came there carrying lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus knew everything that was to happen to him, so he went out and asked, “Who are you looking for?”

They answered, “Jesus the Nazarene.”

He said to them, "I Am." (Judas, his betrayer, was standing with them.) When he said, "I Am," they shrank back and fell to the ground. He asked them again, "Who are you looking for?"

They said, "Jesus the Nazarene."

Jesus answered, "I told you, 'I Am.' If you are looking for me, then let these people go." This was so that the word he had spoken might be fulfilled: "I didn't lose anyone of those whom you gave me."

Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) Jesus told Peter, "Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?" Then the company of soldiers, the commander, and the guards from the Jewish leaders took Jesus into custody. They bound him.

REFLECTION

"they came there carrying lanterns, torches, and weapons"

SILENCE

READING

John 18:33-36

Pilate went back into the palace. He summoned Jesus and asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others spoken to you about me?" Pilate responded, "I'm not a Jew, am I? Your nation and its chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus replied, "My kingdom doesn't originate from this world. If it did, my guards would fight so that I wouldn't have

been arrested by the Jewish leaders. My kingdom isn't from here."

REFLECTION

"Jesus replied, *my kingdom isn't from here*"

SILENCE

READING

"The Wisdom to Survive" by Wendell Berry

If we have the wisdom to survive, to stand like slow-growing trees on a ruined place,

Renewing, enriching it,

If we will make our seasons welcome here, asking not too much of earth or of heaven,

Then a long time after we are dead the lives our lives prepare will live here,

Their houses strongly placed upon the valley sides,

Fields and gardens rich in the windows. The river will run clear as we will never know it.

And over it, birdsong like a canopy.

On the levels of the hills will be green meadows, stock bells in noon shade.

On the steeps where greed and ignorance cut down the old forest,

An old forest will stand, its rich leaf-fall drifting on its roots.

The veins of forgotten springs will have opened.

Families will be singing in the fields.

In their voices they will hear a music risen out of the ground.

They will take nothing from the ground they will not return, whatever the grief at parting.

Memory, native to this valley, will spread over it like a

grove, and memory will grow into legend, legend into song, song into sacrament.

The abundance of this place, the songs of its people and its birds, will be health and wisdom and indwelling light.

This is no impossible dream. Its hardship is its possibility.

READING

John 19:16b – 18

The soldiers took Jesus prisoner. ¹⁷ Carrying his cross by himself, he went out to a place called Skull Place (in Aramaic, *Golgotha*). ¹⁸ That's where they crucified him—and two others with him, one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

READING

John 19:25-27

Jesus' mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene stood near the cross. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

SILENCE

REFLECTION

"they stood near the cross"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

O Christ,

for people in hospital rooms
for refugee camps
for border crossings
for city streets
for the people who choose violence
for the people who are afraid
for all of us
we pray

for our own grief
for the pain we carry
for the pain you carry

help us bear witness
help us remain
help us bear love

your love in this troubled world

READING

John 19:28-30

After this, knowing that everything was already completed, in order to fulfill the scripture, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was nearby, so the soldiers soaked a sponge in it, placed it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When he had received the sour wine, Jesus said, "It is completed." Bowing his head, he gave up his life.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Prayer for Overcoming Indifference by Chaim Stern

For the sin of silence,
For the sin of indifference,
For the secret complicity of the neutral,
For the closing of borders,
For the washing of hands,
For the crime of indifference,
For the sin of silence,
For the closing of borders.
For all that was done,
For all that was not done,
Let there be no forgetfulness before the Throne of
Glory;
Let there be remembrance within the human heart;
And let there at last be forgiveness
When your children, O God,
Are free and at peace.

BENEDICTION

"I need to tell of my people in their grief"
by Wendell Berry

I need to tell about my people in their grief. I don't think grief is something they get over or get away from. In a little community like this it is around us and in us all the time, and we know it. We know that every night, war or no war, there are people lying awake grieving, and every morning there are people waking up to absences that never will be filled. But we shut our mouths and go ahead. How we are is "Fine."

The thing you have most dreaded has happened at last. The worst thing you might have expected has happened, and you didn't expect it.

Even so:

"How're you?"

"Fine."

And yet the comfort somehow gets passed around: a few words that are never forgotten, a note in the mail, a look, a touch, a pat, a hug, a kind of waiting with, a kind of standing by, to the end. Once in a while we hear it sung out in a hymn, when every throat seems suddenly widened with love and a common longing.

In the sweet by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore.

SILENCE

At this time, we ask that you depart the sanctuary in silence. We'll gather around the cross outside as we extinguish the lights on the cross, signifying Jesus' death on the cross. At that time, you may depart in silence.

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