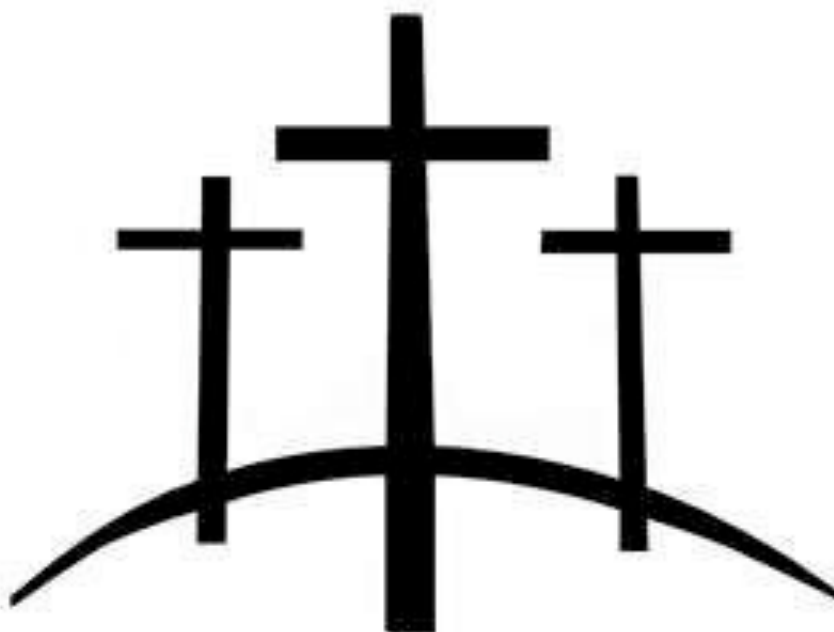


*The First Congregational Church in Worcester*

*Good Friday Worship*



*April 2, 2021*

# *The First Congregational Church in Worcester*

Good Friday Worship

April 2, 2021

Prelude

*Partita on Ebenezer ~ Behnke*  
*I ~ Theme*  
*II ~ The Cross*

Invocation

Old Testament Reading

*Isaiah 52:13-53:12*

\*Hymn

*Were You There?*

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?	Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?	Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.	Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?	Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

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The Reading of the Passion Story

*John 18:1-19:42*

Prayers on the Seven Last Words

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

**Almighty God, to whom your crucified Son prayed for the forgiveness of those who did not know what they were doing, grant that we, too, may be included in that prayer. Whether we sin out of ignorance or intention, be merciful to us and grant us your acceptance and peace: in the name of Jesus Christ, our suffering Savior. Amen.**

"Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

**O Lord Jesus Christ, who promised to the repentant the joy of paradise, enable us by the Holy Spirit to repent and to receive your grace in this world and in the world to come. Amen.**

"Woman, behold your son . . . Behold your mother."

**O Blessed Savior, who in your hour of greatest suffering expressed compassion for your mother and made arrangements for her care, grant that we who seek to follow your example may show our concern for the needs of others, reaching out to provide for those who suffer in our human family. Hear this our prayer for your mercy's sake. Amen.**

"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"

**O Lord, I call for help by day, and in the night I still must cry. Regard me, listen to my prayer. My soul is troubled, I am weak, cut off as one whom you forsake, forgotten near the pit of death. Your wrath weighs heavy on me here. Your angry waves upon me break. Friends watch in horror from afar. I am shut in without escape. My eyes are dim because I weep. My hands are lifted up to you. Do you work wonders for the dead? Can graves tell out your mighty deeds? There, who can know that you can save? Lord, do not hide your face from me. You have afflicted me from youth. Your anger is destroying me. Your flood of anger closes in. The darkness is my closest friend-shunned and forsaken, all alone.**

"I thirst."

**O blessed Savior, whose lips were dry and whose throat was parched, grant us the water of life that we who thirst after righteousness may find it quenched by your love and mercy, leading us to bring this same relief to others. Amen.**

"It is finished."

**O Lord Jesus Christ, who finished the work that you were sent to do, enable us by your Holy Spirit to be faithful to our call. Grant us strength to bear our crosses and endure our sufferings, even unto death. Enable us to live and love so faithfully that we also become good news to the world, joining your witness, O Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

**Father, into whose hands your Son Jesus Christ commended his spirit, grant that we, too, following his example, may in all of life and at the moment of our death entrust our lives into your faithful hands of love. In the name of Jesus who gave his life for us all. Amen.**

### Call to Confession

In the loneliness of Good Friday, we come to you, God, wondering how to find your will in the midst of tragedy. All the grief and sorrow we have known is rekindled at the cross. The pain is more than we can bear. Do you, like Peter, hear the cock crowing? How often have your good intentions been denied by your own words and actions? As the prophet said, "All we like sheep have gone astray." God invites us to lay aside the burden of our sin and come home.

### Prayer of Confession

**Dear God, we repent of small misdeeds to satisfy our consciences, for we cannot deal with our denial of you. We seek to find life apart from you, for the cross is too threatening for us. We want comfort, not sacrifice. We embrace privilege, not pain. Yet the love of Christ brings us to our knees in awe and wonder. O God, we want to lay aside our preoccupation with self to become full participants in your realm. Rescue us from ourselves, O God. Deliver us from sin and bring us home. Amen.**

### Assurance of Forgiveness

In Jesus Christ, we know the forgiveness of God brought near. God dwells within and among us, the power of love, always available. Surely one has borne our griefs, carried our sorrows, and offered us healing. Receive once more the gift of wholeness. Find your strength renewed and your hope rekindled. Be bold to accept your call to discipleship.

### The Lord's Prayer

**"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever". Amen.**

### Meditation

Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the whole world.

**Come, let us worship the Christ, the child of God.**

Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the whole world.

**Come, let us worship the Christ, the child of God.**

Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the whole world.

**Come, let us worship the Christ, the child of God.**

\*Hymn

*O Sacred Head*

O sacred Head, now wounded,  
 with grief and shame weighed down,  
 now scornfully surrounded  
 with thorns, thine only crown!  
 O sacred Head, what glory,  
 what bliss till now was thine!  
 Yet, though despised and gory,  
 I joy to call thee mine.

What language shall I borrow  
 to thank thee, dearest Friend,  
 for this, thy dying sorrow,  
 thy pity without end?  
 Oh, make me thine forever,  
 and should I fainting be,  
 Lord, let me never, never  
 outlive my love to thee.

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Benediction

Postlude



Participants

Rev. Robert H. Jackson, Pastor  
 Scott M. Yonker, Minister of Music