

# Christ Church Gabriola

A Collaborative Anglican – United Church  
Open to All



*When the centurion saw what had taken place,  
he praised God and said,  
“Certainly this man was innocent.”  
Luke 23:47*

## Good or Holy Friday

3 April 2026

Rev. Mona Smart

Musician: Pat Armstrong, Violin

*We acknowledge that these lands upon which we worship are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

## *We Experience Good Friday in Word and Wisdom*

*Words of response are in bold & italics*

### Musical Selection

Pat Armstrong

*A moment of silence as the Christ candle  
and surrounding tea lights are lit...*

### Gathering Words

Today we gather for Good Friday, also known as *Holy Friday*, or *Friday of the Passion of the Lord*, to commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary (Golgotha). Here the word “good” is used in its most ancient sense to mean “pious,” “holy.”

This morning's service is based on the gospel of Luke and his account of Jesus' trial before Pilate.

### Collect

Mysterious God,  
Whose silence speaks louder than our words,  
and whose darkness guides us more surely than our light;  
***As we gather this Holy Friday, we commemorate,  
the cross of suffering that was made the tree of glory,  
where life was lost, there life has been restored;  
May we put our trust in the interweaving of your  
Word and Music, until in Wisdom we know  
ourselves as we are fully known.  
Amen.***

### Meditative Reading: The Good Fridays of Our Lives

The Good Fridays of our lives come unbidden and unexpected  
Bringing the winter of despair and the death of dreams and hope  
***Only love has the power to mend what has been broken  
A love that brings healing to our wounds  
A love that offers hope when we have none  
A love that creates unity where there is conflict  
A love that instills new life into lifeless brown husks  
May this great love be in you, upon you, and among you  
Now and through all of your days.***

### Opening Words

We gather on this Good Friday at the foot of the cross  
which calls us on...

**not in shame, not in fear,**  
but more deeply into the costly journey towards life...  
**where there is wounding,**  
And in Jesus, named for us as the Promised One,  
God is not separated from the pain or the tears.  
**God is with us.**

### Hymn: God in the Darkness

MV #17

#### Opening Prayer

O God true source of humanity, mother and father of us all,  
you renew us so that we may grow in the image of your ways.

We gather together:

**from corner or limelight,  
from fears or from sadness,  
from hope or from gladness,  
in close relationships or from separate lives.**

We gather together:

**longing for the company,  
the levelling, and the deepest joys  
found in your presence.**

We gather together:

**to meet you, to celebrate your love,  
and to rejoice in the possibilities that arise  
when we honour the diversity of our humanity.**

We gather together...

**with you.**

#### Musical Selection

Pat Armstrong

#### Reading 1: Luke 23:1-3

Betty Schultze

Then the whole assembly rose and led Jesus to Pilate. They began to accuse Jesus by saying, "We found this one subverting our nation, opposing the payment of taxes to Caesar and even claiming to be Messiah, a king." Then Pilate questioned Jesus: "Are you King of the Jews?" "You have said it." Jesus answered.

#### Reflection

I remember a man who had dreams of what might be: that people would be set free from ideas and images about God that enslaved them, that people would believe that through their everyday acts of human kindness they are intimately connected with the sacred, that people would live 'in peace, in God's presence all the days of their lives'. I remember a man driven by his dreams.

*(time of silence as the first tea light is extinguished)*

#### Reading 2: Luke 23:4-5

Corinne Carlson

Then Pilate reported to the chief priests and the crowds: "I find no guilt in him!" But they insisted, "He stirs up the people wherever he teaches, through the whole of Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem."

#### Reflection

I remember a man who had his moments of breakthrough, when it must have seemed his dream was being realized: the times people really listened and responded, the men and women who were prepared to walk with him and support him, times when he spoke better and more convincingly than other times. I remember a man enthused by his successes.

*(time of silence as the second tea light is extinguished)*

#### Musical Selection

Pat Armstrong

#### Reading 3: Luke 23:6-9

Paddy Waymark

On hearing this, Pilate asked whether Jesus was a Galilean, and learning that Jesus was from Herod's jurisdiction, sent Jesus off to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at this time. Now, at the sight of Jesus, Herod was very pleased. From the reports he had heard about Jesus, he had wanted for a long time to see him. Herod hoped to see Jesus perform some miracle. Herod questioned him at great length, but Jesus wouldn't answer.

#### Reflection

I remember a man who learned of the cruel death of his cousin. He got into a boat, seeking a lonely place, where he could be with his friends to absorb the shock, to grieve quietly, and to calm the feelings of powerlessness and frustration and fear for his own future. I wonder what he prayed about that night? I wonder what helped him leave that lonely place and go forward to confront life, rather than retreat into isolation and safety? I remember a man driven by his convictions.

*(time of silence as the third tea light is extinguished)*

#### Reading 4: Luke 23:10-18, 20

Betty Schultze

The chief priests and religious scholars stood there accusing Jesus vehemently. So Herod and his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and ridicule, put a magnificent robe upon him and sent him back to Pilate. Herod and Pilate, who had previously been set against each other, became friends that day. Pilate then called together the chief priests, the ruling class and the people, and said to them, "You have brought this person before me as someone who incites people to rebellion. I have

examined him in your presence and have found no basis for any charge against him arising from your allegations. Neither has Herod, for Jesus has been sent back to us. Obviously, he has done nothing to deserve death. Therefore, I will punish Jesus, but then I will release him.” Pilate was obligated to release one prisoner to the people at festival time. The whole crowd cried out as one, “Take him away! We want Barabbas!” Pilate wanted to release Jesus, so he addressed them again. But they shouted back, “Crucify him, crucify him.”

### Reflection

I remember a man whose dream was shattered: who broke down and cried over what could have been, who knew the pain of failure and powerlessness, who knew what it was like to feel broken and terribly alone. I remember someone human like all of us.

*(time of silence as the fourth tea light is extinguished)*

### Musical Selection

Pat Armstrong

### Reading 5: Luke 23:24-25

Corinne Carlson

Pilate decided that their demands should be met. So he released Barabbas, the one who had been imprisoned for rioting and murder, and Jesus was handed over to the crowd.

### Reflection

I remember a man who knew he was going to die: who gathered with his friends knowing it was for the last time, who spoke to them about what he really believed, who wanted them to remember him and to keep his dream alive. I remember a testament to love.

*(time of silence as the fifth tea light is extinguished)*

### Reading 6: Luke 23:33

Paddy Waymark

When they had reached the place called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there—together with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.

### Reflection

I remember a man crucified. He was a failure, abandoned by his friends, taunted, despised, enduring a shameful and agonizing death, no consoling or heartfelt presence of his God to help him. I remember a man whose faith in all he believed was tested to the limits.

*(time of silence as the sixth tea light is extinguished)*

### Music of Lament

Pat Armstrong

Sometimes we do what is wrong.

***We feel out of control and helpless.***

***We feel ashamed.***

Yet evil is not all we are.

Sometimes we do what is right.

***We feel proud and courageous.***

***We feel our strength.***

Yet good is not all we are.

Like the wind—sometimes mild, sometimes fierce.

***We hold all the moods and the power inside us.***

***We bring the soft rain and the wild storm.***

It is our nature to contain it all.

May we have peace with who we are—

***and with who we may be.***

May we have peace with who we have been—

***evil and good,  
foolish and wise,***

May we know all that we are—and may we have peace.

### Response: A Reflection

Hymn: *Spirit God, Be Our Breath*

MV #150

### Closing

I remember a man of extraordinary religious insight: utterly convinced of the connectedness between human loving and living in God, determined to give people personal authority in their relationship with God, wanting to set people free from fear of the unknown, who set his heart on breaking down barriers between people...

***We give thanks for the ways in which the life, teaching and death of Jesus have set us free.***

### Sending Forth

It is now time for us to leave this place. As we go, let us commend ourselves into the hands of God remembering that nothing can separate us from the love and source of all life.

*The Christ candle is extinguished  
and the gathered congregation is invited to leave in silence.*

*(The liturgy for today's service is adapted from "A Time of Reflection on Good Friday" by Rev. Rex A.E. Hunt)*