

ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH, CANTERBURY



## The Way of the Cross

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026

6pm

[www.ststephenscanterbury.net](http://www.ststephenscanterbury.net)

¶ *The Gathering*

*We STAND as the ministers enter in silence*

*A minister introduces the service*

Eternal God,  
in the cross of Jesus  
we see the cost of our sin  
and the depth of your love:  
in humble hope and fear  
may we place at his feet  
all that we have and all that we are,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

*Collect for Good Friday,  
Common Worship: Additional Collects*

*We remain STANDING to sing the hymn*

**Hymn**

Praise to the Holiest in the height  
*NEH 439, omit vv. 3 & 4*

*At the end of the hymn we SIT*

¶ *Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

*All* **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

## Reading

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, ‘I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.’ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, ‘Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.’

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, ‘The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.’ So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, ‘Rabbi!’ and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.

*Mark 14: 32-36, 43-46*

*At the end of the reading SILENCE is kept, after which the congregation remains SEATED as the choir sings:*

## Anthem

Nolo mortem peccatoris  
THOMAS MORLEY (c. 1557–1602)

*Nolo mortem peccatoris;*                      *Tr.* I do not wish the death of a sinner.  
*Haec sunt verba Salvatoris.*                      These are the words of the Saviour.

Father I am thine only Son, sent down from heav’n mankind to save.  
Father, all things fulfilled and done according to thy will, I have.  
Father, my will now all is this:  
*Nolo mortem peccatoris.*

Father, behold my painful smart, taken for man on ev’ry side;  
Ev’n from my birth to death most tart, no kind of pain I have denied,  
but suffered all, and all for this:  
*Nolo mortem peccatoris.*

*John Redford (c. 1500–1547)*

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were betrayed by the kiss of a friend:  
be with those who are betrayed and slandered and falsely accused.  
You knew the experience of having your love  
thrown back in your face for mere silver:  
be with families which are torn apart by mistrust or temptation.  
To you, Jesus, who offered your face to your betrayer,  
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

### ¶ *Peter Denies Jesus*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

*All* **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

## Reading

At that moment the cock crowed for the second time.  
Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, ‘Before the cock  
crows twice, you will deny me three times.’  
And he broke down and wept.

*Mark 14: 72*

*At the end of the reading SILENCE is kept, after which the congregation remains SEATED as the choir sings:*

## Anthem

Drop, drop slow tears  
JOANNA FORBES L’ESTRANGE (b. 1971)

Drop, drop, slow tears, and bathe those beauteous feet,  
Which brought from Heav’n the news and Prince of Peace.

Cease not, wet tears, his mercies to entreat;  
To cry for vengeance: sin doth never cease.

In your deep floods drown all my faults and fears;  
Nor let His eye see sin, but through my tears.

*Phineas Fletcher 1582–1650*

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, as Peter betrayed you,  
you experienced the double agony  
of love rejected and friendship denied:  
be with those who know no friends and are rejected by society.  
You understood the fear within Peter:  
help us to understand the anxieties of those who fear for their future.  
To you, Jesus, who gazed with sadness at his lost friend,  
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

### ¶ *Jesus before Pilate*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

*All* **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

## Reading

Pilate asked them, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Crucify him!’ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.

*Mark 15:14-15, 17-19*

*At the end of the reading SILENCE is kept, after which we STAND to sing the hymn*

## Hymn

It is a thing most wonderful  
*NEH 84*

*At the end of the hymn we SIT*

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, you faced the torment of barbaric punishment  
and mocking tongue:  
be with those who cry out in physical agony and emotional distress.  
You endured unbearable abuse:  
be with those who face torture and mockery in our world today.  
To you, Jesus, the King crowned with thorns,  
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

¶ *Jesus is led out to be crucified*

*All* We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you  
**because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

## Reading

After mocking Jesus, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

*Mark 15:20-21*

*At the end of the reading SILENCE is kept, after which we STAND for the hymn*

## Hymn

Take up thy cross  
*NEH 76*

*At the end of the hymn we SIT*

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were worn down by fatigue:  
be with those from whom life drains all energy.  
You needed the help of a passing stranger:  
give us the humility to receive aid from others.  
To you, Jesus, weighed down with exhaustion and in need of help,  
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

## ¶ *Jesus is Crucified*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you  
*All* **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

### **Reading**

And they crucified him,  
and divided his clothes among them,  
casting lots to decide what each should take.

*Mark 15:24*

*At the end of the reading SILENCE is kept, after which the congregation remains SEATED as the choir sings:*

### **Anthem**

O Sacred Head, Sore Wounded  
Traditional secular melody in H. L. Hassler's *Lustgarten* 1601  
Harmony by J. S. BACH (1685-1750)

O sacred head, sore wounded,  
Defiled and put to scorn;  
O kingly head, surrounded  
With mocking crown of thorn:  
What sorrow mars thy grandeur?  
Can death thy bloom deflower?  
O countenance whose splendour  
The hosts of heaven adore.

*Paul Gerhardt (1607-76)  
from a 14th century Latin hymn  
Tr. Robert Bridges (1844-1930)*

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you bled in pain as the nails were driven into your flesh:  
transform through the mystery of your love  
the pain of those who suffer.  
To you, Jesus, our crucified Lord,  
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

## ¶ *Jesus Dies on the Cross*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you  
*All* **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

### **Reading**

At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah.' And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.' Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

*Mark 15: 34-37*

*At the end of the reading SILENCE is kept, after which we STAND to sing the hymn*

### **Hymn**

There is a green hill far away  
*NEH 92*

*At the end of the hymn we SIT*

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you died on the cross  
and entered the bleakest of all circumstances:  
give courage to those who die at the hands of others.  
In death you entered into the darkest place of all:  
illumine our darkness with your glorious presence.  
To you, Jesus, your lifeless body hanging on the tree of shame,  
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

*The congregation remains SEATED as the choir sings:*

## Anthem

Solus ad victimam  
KENNETH LEIGHTON (1929–88)

Alone to sacrifice thou goest, Lord,  
Giving himself to Death whom thou hast slain.  
For us thy wretched folk is any word?  
Who know that for our sins this is thy pain?

For they are ours, O Lord, our deeds, our deeds.  
Why must thou suffer torture for our sin?  
Let our hearts suffer in thy Passion, Lord,  
That very suffering may thy mercy win.

This is the night of tears, the three days' space,  
Sorrow abiding of the eventide,  
Until the day break with the risen Christ,  
And hearts that sorrowed shall be satisfied.

So may our hearts share in thine anguish, Lord,  
That they may sharers of thy glory be;  
Heavy with weeping may the three days pass,  
To win the laughter of thine Easter Day.

*Peter Abelard (1079–1142), trans. Helen Waddell*

### ¶ *The Glory of the Cross*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you  
*All* **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

*We all STAND and the choir leads the acclamation*

### Acclamation

Praise to you O Christ, King of eternal glory.  
Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death,  
even death on a cross.  
Therefore God has highly exalted him  
and given him the name that is above every name.  
*All* **Praise to you O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

*All* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

## Reading

Jesus said to the crowd, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say - “Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’

*John 12: 2332*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*All* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The congregation remains STANDING as the choir sings the anthem*

## Anthem

God so loved the world  
SIR JOHN STAINER (1840–1901)

God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

*John 3:16-17*

*At the end of the anthem we all SIT or KNEEL*

## Prayer

Most merciful God,  
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
delivered and saved the world:  
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross  
we may triumph in the power of his victory;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

*Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Lent,  
Common Worship*

### ¶ *The Conclusion*

Standing at the foot of the cross,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

*All* **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,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
Son of the living God,  
set your passion, cross,  
and death between your judgement and us,  
now and at the hour of our death.

Give mercy and grace to the living,  
rest to the faithful departed,  
to your holy Church peace and concord,  
and to us sinners eternal life and glory;  
for you are alive and reign with the Father  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

*After a moment of silence, we all STAND to sing the concluding hymn*

## Hymn

My song is love unknown  
*NEH 86; omit vv. 4 & 6*

*At the end of the hymn we remain STANDING for the blessing*

## Blessing

May the Father,  
who so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
bring you by faith to his eternal life.

*All* **Amen.**

May Christ,  
who accepted the cup of sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will,  
keep you steadfast as you walk with him the way of his cross.

*All* **Amen.**

May the Spirit,  
who strengthens us to suffer with Christ that we may share his glory,  
set your minds on life and peace.

*All* **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

*The ministers and choir depart in silence.*