**Worship for Good Friday 2021, 10.30am**

**Led by Kate Hunt**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84447754110?pwd=RVNDenQzSkE4SmRsUnUxcENwU1k2dz09>

Meeting ID: 844 4775 4110 Passcode: 131071

Before beginning the reflection, you might like to gather together - palm cross/leaves, a small cup of vinegar, chain, small bowl of water and towel, candle, a cross, some rocks/stones, nails, seeds/compost/pots

**Welcome**

Welcome to our worship for Good Friday.

Today across the partnership

we are travelling around a labyrinth.

This is a special labyrinth,

Designed to help us think about Christ’s suffering

As he journeyed towards the cross,

and to reflect on the events of Easter.

It will help us think and pray

About our own lives too

And about people who are suffering

In the world today.

Unlike a maze there are no dead ends.

We cannot get lost.

This labyrinth is based on one from a fountain

in Damascus.

There is one way in

And one way out.

We will walk around the labyrinth together

And meet different stations.

Designed to help us

Pray, think and meet God.

Hopefully, you have some of the materials

Needed to follow the action.

But don’t worry if you haven’t.

You have come

And together we will journey

Once we have reached the centre

We continue on

Until we move

out into the wider world.

**Gathering**

gather round
I have a story to tell
of one who reached inside himself
and took a handful of love
like a pile of stardust
and said: this is for you
it is all you need
it is all you will ever need
there is enough here
to change the whole world
take it

many laughed at him
mocked him
and ignored the invitation

but some dared to take it
and those who did
noticed something about this love
they found they could do what the gift-giver could do
they could stand with the lost
welcome the traveler
eat with the hungry
they found themselves doing what the man first did to them
give something of themselves to others
they became like the man
offering themselves
and as they offered themselves
others took the invitation
and many still do
and many still trust
it is enough to change the whole world

~ written by Roddy Hamilton, and posted on **Listening to the Stones.**<http://newkilpatrickblog.typepad.com/nk-blogging/mucky-paws/>

**Station 1 Palms**

Place your finger on your labyrinth.

This is where our journey to the cross begins

With palms, coats laid on the ground

Hosannas filling the air.

The Messiah was coming into town

Many people expected

A political king,

coming to kick out the Romans

to take over the town

Days later,

the crowds were shouting,

‘Crucify!’

Today, in some ways

Nothing has changed.

We are still fickle

With the famous

Loving them one minute

And hating them the next

***Reflect***

*Pick up your palm cross*

*Or the leaves*

*Let us quietly pray for those in the public eye*

*Either because they want to be*

*Or because they have been suddenly*

*thrust into the news*

**Station 2 ‘Take this cup from me’**

We move along to station 2

The night before he died,

Jesus went to pray at the Mount of Olives

He cried out to God in anguish,

Asking him to take the cup of suffering

Away from him

But then he added,

‘Yet not my will but yours be done.’

***Reflect***

*Dip your finger into the cup of vinegar*

*Taste*

*Think about the pain of that moment*

*And the anguish that Jesus went through.*

*Now think of someone who is afraid today*

*Someone who is going through the process*

*Of making an agonising decision*

*Who knows that doing the ‘right thing’*

*Will be difficult,*

*Pray for them now.*

**Station 3 God in chains**

Judas betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver,

The price of a slave

The temple guard arrested Jesus

While he was in the garden

And took him to the house of the High Priest

To be tried

***Reflect***

*Touch the chain*

*Think about the many prisoners in the world today*

*Some are guilty of many crimes*

*But some are innocent prisoners of conscience*

*Arrested for things that are legal in our country*

*Some people feel like prisoners*

*Trapped in their houses*

*By illness,*

*Fear*

*Isolation*

*Ask God to help everyone you have thought about.*

**Station 4 Pilate avoids the issue, letting Jesus die**

The Jews wanted Jesus to die,

but Pilate knew he was innocent.

When Pilate saw that…an uproar was starting,

He took water and washed his hands

in front of the crowd.

‘I am innocent of this man’s blood,’

he said. ‘It is your responsibility!’

Then he…handed him over to be crucified.

Matthew 27:24,26

***Reflect***

*We all want to avoid conflict,*

*and we sometimes allow innocent people*

*to suffer because of it.*

*When Pilate washed his hands,*

*it was symbolic of the fact that*

*he was avoiding the issue;*

*when we wash our hands*

*let it be a sign of repentance-*

*that we are sorry*

*for all those times when we did nothing*

*and others suffered because of it.*

*Use your small bowl of water to wash your hands.*

Your hands are full of blood,

Wash and make yourselves clean

Take your evil deeds, out of my sight!

Stop doing wrong, learn to do right!

Seek justice,

Encourage the oppressed.

Defend the cause of the fatherless,

Plead the case of the widow.

**Isaiah 1.15-17**

**Station 5 A scarlet robe and a crown of thorns**

The soldiers mocked Jesus.

They put a robe on him,

Twisted thorns into a crown

And rammed it on his head.

They beat him and cried

‘Hail! King of the Jews!’

Some people say that

When Jesus suffered

The pain of the crown of thorns

He healed us of every

evil thought we’d ever had.

The prophet Isaiah said,

‘By his wounds we are healed.’

***Reflect***

*Tell God now about your struggles*

*With some of those secret things*

*that you have problems with*

*and light a candle,*

*asking God to bring light and warmth*

*to those places deep inside*

**Station 6 Heavy loads**

The cross was such a heavy load

That they had to force a passer-by,

Simon, a Libyan,

to carry the cross behind Jesus.

Legend says that Jesus fell down

Under the weight of the cross

Three times

***Reflect***

*Take a rock now and hold it.*

*What loads are you carrying deep inside?*

*Work pressures?*

*Worries about money?*

*Fears?*

*Illness?*

*Anxiety about the future?*

*Ask God to show you those worries*

*You particularly need to let go of,*

*Pray over the worries for a while,*

*Then place the rock at the foot of the cross*

*Or put the rock down.*

*And as you do*

*Try to give that burden to God.*

**Stage 7 The cross**

Just sit at the cross for a while

Spend some time with God

Talking about whatever you wish

With a smiling face,

Jesus looked at his side…

There he showed me a place,

Beautiful and delightful,

Large enough for all humanity

To rest in peace and love…

And as I looked,

He showed me his heart,

Broken in two…

He helped me to understand,

A little, anyhow,

How God was teaching

Us poor souls,

To appreciate the eternal love of God

That has no beginning or end.

At the same time,

Our good Lord said,

Most beautifully,

‘See how I have loved you.’

 Paraphrased from Dame Julian of Norwich

**Station 8** **‘Father forgive them, they don’t know what they are doing!’**

These are the words Jesus cried out

As they were banging the nails

Into his palms.

Sometimes,

It is very hard to forgive

Especially when we are still hurting.

But when we are wounded by someone,

Jesus is hurt too.

***Reflect***

*Hold a nail in your hand*

*And ask God*

*To give you the strength*

*To be able to forgive the way he did.*

**Station 9 Unless a seed…**

Jesus said, ‘Unless a seed falls

to the ground and dies

it remains only a single seed.

But if it dies,

it produces many seeds.’

***Reflect***

*Take a seed and hold it in your hand.*

*Think about the lives*

*That have changed*

*Because of Jesus’ sacrifice.*

*Thank him.*

*Think also*

*About the sacrifices*

*Other people have made*

*To try to make the lives of others better-*

*Martin Luther King*

*Mother Theresa*

*And the thousands of ordinary people*

*Who sacrifice job prospects,*

*Families, homes, money,*

*And security to help others.*

*Thank God for them too.*

*Then if you can,*

*Plant a seed as a sign*

*That you want to play your part*

*To help make others’ lives better*

*In whatever small way you can.*

**Station 10 The stone the builders threw away**

‘The stone the builders rejected

Has become the cornerstone

The Lord has done this,

And it is marvellous in our eyes’

Jesus quoted this psalm,

Referring to himself.

He knew that most of the Jewish people

Were going to reject him.

Yet he also knew

That many people from far-off lands

Would accept him as the Messiah

***Reflect***

*Think and pray for a minute*

*About a time*

*When you felt rejected.*

*Remember how hurtful it was*

*To be ignored or passed over.*

*Then ask God to come*

*into the memories of that time,*

*and heal them,*

*as he knows what it is like*

*to feel that way.*

*Pray for any people who are feeling rejected now*

*When you are ready,*

*Take a stone*

*Ask God to show you ways*

*to make other people*

*feel welcome and wanted.*

**Station 11 The body in the tomb**

Later, on the Friday,

Once Jesus was dead,

Joseph and Nicodemus took Jesus’ body

And laid it in a tomb.

Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes

To anoint the body.

Taking Jesus’ body,

The two of them wrapped it with the spices,

In strips of linen.

***Reflect***

*Sit and contemplate the body for a while.*

*It is hard for us*

*To contemplate*

*How the disciples must have been feeling,*

*Because we know*

*The happy ending*

*On the next page of the book.*

*If you have planted a seed*

*Perhaps with your fingertips*

*you can sprinkle*

*Water on it now*

*Pray for all those*

*Who have lost someone close to them recently*

**Station 12 Footprints of the risen Christ**

Our God leaves footprints

When he whispers, ‘Peace be with you’.

His breath steams up the wineglass

And the blood beats in his veins

His feet might be scarred

With a jagged body piercing

But the bruises are fast-fading

That the soldiers left behind.

This man is not a parable.

A story for the springtime

Or a tacked-on happy ending

Making tragedy less bad.

No, this corpse lay rigid;

Frozen stiff with rigor mortis.

Bandaged and unfeeling

And then simply came to life.

A resurrection.

