



First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

602 North Orchard Street Tacoma, Washington 98406

Guided Meditation for Good Friday



First Christian Church
Tacoma, WA

Art and Readings gathered by Barbara Blaisdell

Welcome to this time of prayer and meditation. Good Friday is a sacred day in the life of the church, when Christians meditate and reflect on the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. As you pray, be mindful of your breath, symbol of the breath of God in you. Feel free to light candles in memory or in honor of those people and places for whom and which you pray. And then, you're invited to open this booklet, which has been prepared to aid you in your time of prayer. The readings are from scripture, from praise songs and hymns, and from saints and spiritual leaders of the church, both ancient and contemporary. We hope you find this time sacred and meaningful.

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, be with me in this time of prayer and meditation. Make your Spirit of love known to me. Guide and direct me that I might be made closer to you. Amen.

Opening Reading

When all within is dark,
and former friends misprize;
from them I turn to you,
and find love in Your eyes.

When all Your face is dark,
and I my soul despise;
from me I turn to You,
and find love in Your eyes.

When all Your face is dark,
and Your just angers rise;
From You I turn to You,
and find love in Your eyes.



Christ by Cimabue

~Israel Abrahams, based on poem by Ibi Gabirol

Opening Hymn

O Sacred Head Now Wounded (Chalice Hymnal #202)

1 O sacred head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded
with thorns, thine only crown:
how pale thou art with anguish,
with sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish
which once was bright as morn!

2 What thou, O Christ, hast suffered
was all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression,
but thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve thy place;
look on me with thy favor,
and keep me in thy grace.



~Brier of Thorns by E. Pauline Johnson

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

~attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux, 1153

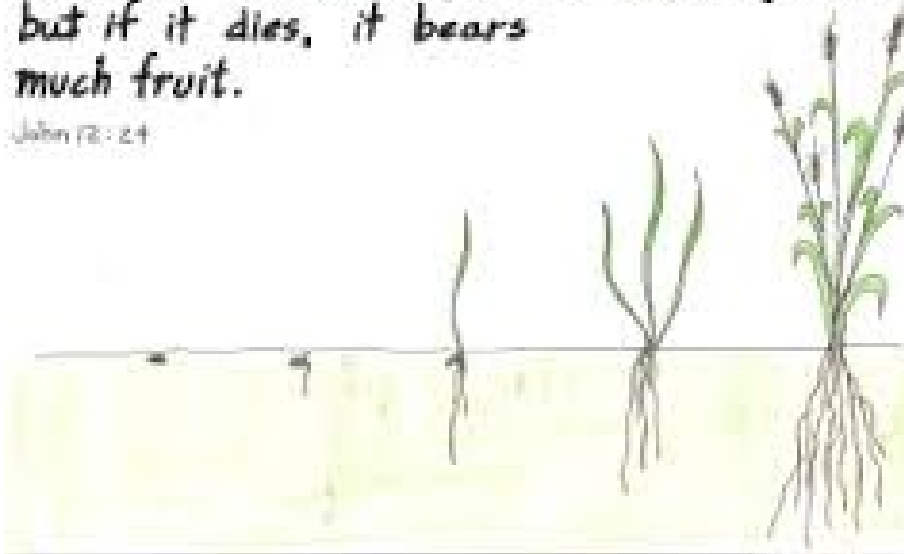
Meditation on the Readings from the Scriptures and the Saints

What follows are passages of scripture and other sacred readings that tell the story of Good Friday. We invite you to read each passage two or three times and write beneath each passage the words or phrases that are called to your attention. Listen to the words or phrases that “shimmer,” beckon, address or unnerves you. Attend to the feeling or image that is connected to the phrase. In what way is this word or phrase connected with what is happening in your life right now: at home, at work, in your leisure time? What might the Holy Spirit be calling you to do or understand with these words?

Reading from the Gospel of John: “Jesus Teaches about His Death”

*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.*

John 12: 24



Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. In truth, in very truth I tell you, a grain of wheat remains a solitary grain unless it falls into the ground and dies; but if it dies, it bears a rich harvest. Those who love their life lose it and those who hate their life

in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; where I am, my servant will be. Whoever serves me will be honored by my Father.

Now my soul is in turmoil, and what am I to say? ‘Father, save me from this hour.’ No, it was for this that I came to this hour. Father, glorify thy name.” A voice sounded from heaven: “I

have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing by said it was thunder, while others said: “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus replied: “This voice spoke for your sake, not mine. Now is the hour of judgment for this world; now shall the prince of this world be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” This he said to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

~John 12: 20-33, NRSV

Snippets from Tradition and Contemporary Writers



If you want to build a ship, don't herd people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.

~Antoine de Saint-Exupery

For what are we, without hope in our hearts, that someday we'll drink from God's blessed waters?"

~Bruce Springsteen

Sometimes grace works like waterwings when you feel you are sinking."

~Anne Lamott

~The Waverley Cemetery on the sea-view Cliff Walk off of Bronte Beach, in Sydney, Australia.

Reading from the prophet Isaiah: "The Suffering Servant"

Behold, my servant shall prosper,
he shall be lifted up, exalted to the heights.
Time was when many were aghast at you, my people;
so now many nations recoil at sight of him,
and kings curl their lips in disgust.
For they see what they had never been told
and things unheard before fill their thoughts.
Who could have believed what we have heard,
and to whom has the power of the Lord been revealed?
He grew up before the Lord like a young plant
whose roots are in parched ground;
he had no beauty, no majesty to draw our eyes,
no grace to make us delight in him;
his form, disfigured, lost all the likeness of a man,
his beauty changed beyond human semblance.

He was despised, he shrank from the sight of men,
 tormented and humbled by suffering;
 we despised him, we held him of no account,
 a thing from which men turn away their eyes.
 Yet on himself he bore our sufferings,
 our torments he endured,
 while we counted him smitten by God,
 struck down by disease and misery;
 but he was pierced for our transgressions,
 tortured for our iniquities;
 the chastisement he bore is health for us
 and by his scourging we are healed.
 We had all strayed like sheep,
 each of us had gone his own way;
 but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all.
 He was afflicted, he submitted to be struck down
 and did not open his mouth;
 he was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
 like a ewe that is dumb before the shearers.



~Suffering Servant by Helen Siegl

Without protection, without justice, he was taken away;
 and who have a thought to his fate,
 how he was cut off from the world of living men,
 stricken to the death for my people's transgression?
 He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
 a burial-place among the refuse of mankind,
 though he had done no violence
 and spoken no word of treachery.
 Yet the Lord took thought for his tortured servant
 and healed him who had made himself a sacrifice for sin;
 so shall he enjoy long life and see his children's children,
 and in his hand the Lord's cause shall prosper.
 After all his pains he shall be bathed in light,
 after his disgrace he shall be fully vindicated;
 so shall he, my servant, vindicate many,
 himself bearing the penalty of their guilt.
 Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
 and he shall share the spoil with the mighty, because he exposed himself to face death
 and was reckoned among transgressors,
 because he bore the sin of many
 and interceded for their transgressions.

~Isaiah 52: 13–53:12 NRSV

Reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me," And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed. "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again he went away from them a second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up and let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

~Matthew 26:36-46, NRSV



Jesus Praying in Garden by Susan Snider

Reading from the Gospel of Mark: "Jesus before Pilate"



As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus and led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they

bring against you.” But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “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.”

~Mark 15: 1-15; NRSV

Second Reading from the Gospel of John: “The Crucifixion of Jesus”



So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgatha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them, Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.....”

“Near the cross where Jesus hung stood his mother, with her sister, Mary wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdala. Jesus saw his mother, with the disciple whom he loved standing beside her. He said to her: ‘Mother, there is your son’; and to the disciple: ‘There is your mother’; and from that moment the disciple took her into his home.

“After that, Jesus, aware that all had now come to its appointed end, said in fulfilment of scripture: ‘I thirst.’ A jar stood there full of

sour wine; so they soaked a sponge with the wine, fixed it on a javelin, and held it up to his lips. Having received the wine, he said: ‘It is accomplished!’ He bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

~John 19: 17-19; 25-30; NRSV



Crucifixion by He Qi

Reading from the Gospel of Mark

“The hour of the crucifixion was nine in the morning, and the inscription giving the charge against him read: ‘The king of the Jews.’ Two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left.

“The passers-by hurled abuse at him: ‘Aha!’ they cried, wagging their head, ‘you would pull the temple down, would you, and build it in three days? Come down from the cross and save yourself!’ So too the chief priests and lawyers jested with one another: ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘but he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down now from the cross. If we see that, we shall believe.’ Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.

“At midday a darkness fell over the whole land, which lasted till three in the afternoon; and at three Jesus cried aloud: ‘*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*’, which means: ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ Some of the bystanders, on hearing this, said: ‘Hark, he is calling Elijah.’ A man ran and soaked a sponge in sour wine and held it to his lips on the end of a cane. ‘Let us see’, he said, ‘if Elijah will come to take him down.’ Then Jesus gave a loud cry and died. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion who was standing opposite him saw how he died, he said: ‘Truly this man was a son of God.’

“A number of women were also were also present, watching from a distance. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome, who had all followed him and waited on him when he was in Galilee, and there were several others who had come up to Jerusalem with him.”

~Mark 15: 25-41

Reading form Twentieth Century
Christian and Victim of the Holocaust:
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Christians and Pagans

Men go to God when they are sore
bestead,
Pray to him for succor, for his peace, for
bread,
For mercy for them sick, sinning, or dead;
All men do so, Christian and unbelieving.

Men go to God when he is sore bestead,
Find him poor and scorned, without
shelter or bread,
Whelmed under weight of the wicked, the weak, the dead;
Christians stand by God in his hour of grieving.

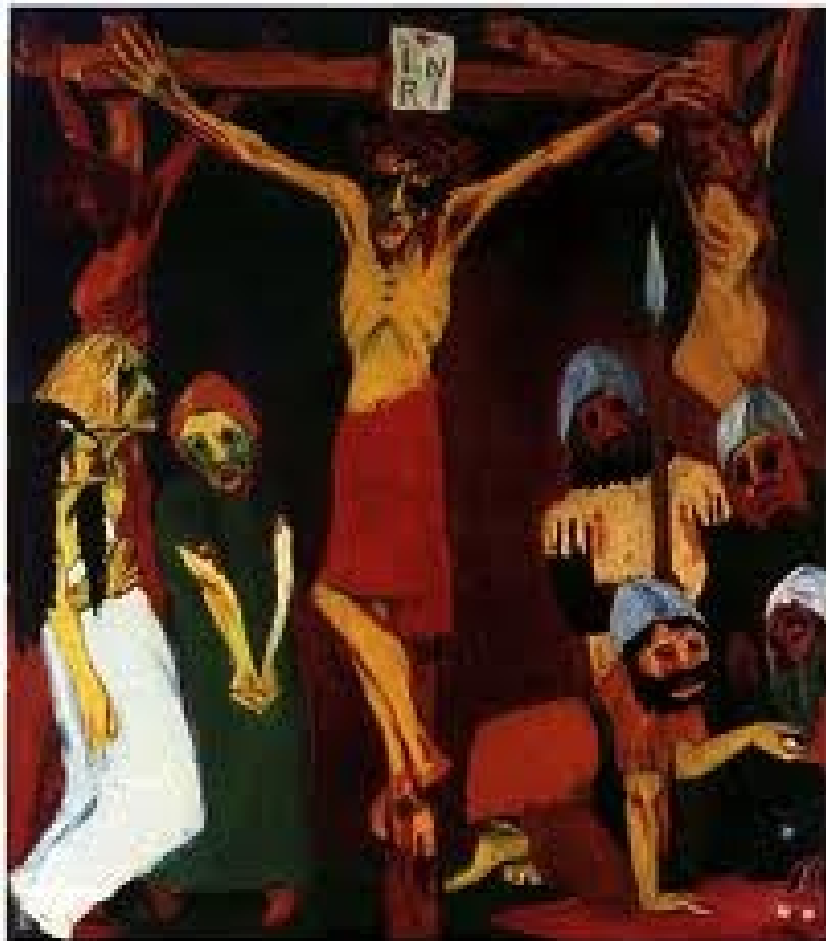
God goes to every man when sore bestead,
Feeds body and spirit with his bread;
For Christians, pagans alike he hangs dead,
And both alike forgiving.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Closing Hymn for Meditation

What Wondrous Love Is This?
(Chalice Hymnal #200)

1 What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!



~Dali's Crucifixion

2 When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down;
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul!

3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb I will sing!
To God and to the Lamb, who is the great "I AM,"
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing!

4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on!
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
and through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
and through eternity I'll sing on!

Benediction

Go forth now with the strong name of Jesus Christ to sustain you. Go forth in the knowledge that his love will not be murdered, not by the most treacherous of hearts or by the deepest despair. Go forth in preparation for the joy of the Resurrection. Go forth in peace. Amen.



~Lenten Midweek Sermon Art from Laura Gentry;
see: <http://pastorgentry.blogspot.com/>

Stay Connected by Visiting:

Our Facebook Page: http://bit.ly/FB_FCCTacoma

Our Twitter Page: <https://twitter.com/fcctacoma>

Our Web Page: <https://www.fcctacoma.org>

Join our weekly e-mail distribution: http://bit.ly/Weekly_Email_Subscription

Church Office

253-752-7734

Senior Pastor

Barbara Blaisdell

Email: barbara@fcctacoma.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Web Site

www.fcctacoma.org

Communications Assist. to the Senior Pastor

Cassandra Tripp

Email: cassie@fcctacoma.org

Minister of Music

Benjamin Smith

Email: ben@fcctacoma.org