

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
FRIDAY, APRIL 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

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**Good Friday Service: “The Cross and the Silence”**

*Today is Good Friday.  
A day of darkness, yet filled with light.  
A day of sorrow, yet held by love.  
We gather at the foot of the cross—  
to remember, to mourn, and to hope.  
For even in death, God is not finished.*

**OPENING WORDS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Leader:** We gather in the shadow of the cross,

**People:** Where suffering and love meet.

**Leader:** We remember the broken body and shed blood,

**People:** And we do not turn away.

**Leader:** On this solemn day, we pause in grief,

**People:** To watch, to listen, and to pray

**HYMN:** #144 Were You There Vs. 1-3

1 Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Oh!

Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Oh!

Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)

3 Were you there when the sun refused to shine? (Were you there?)

Were you there when the sun refused to shine? Oh!

Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the sun refused to shine? (Were you there?)

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**All Together:** Merciful God, We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have turned away from your suffering And denied your path of self-giving love. On this day of your agony, Forgive us, hold us, and teach us to walk with you to the cross. Amen.

**ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

**Leader:** Even in the darkest hour, God’s love does not let go.

Even from the cross, Christ spoke forgiveness.

We are held, even here.

Thanks be to God.

**ANTHEM:** Why Should He Love Me So? By Robert Harkness

**SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS**

1. Jesus Is Betrayed – Luke 22:1–6

Luke 22:1–6 (NRSVUE)

<sup>1</sup> Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. <sup>2</sup> The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people. <sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; <sup>4</sup> he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. <sup>5</sup> They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. <sup>6</sup> So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

**Peggy - Reflection:** Betrayal is born in the shadows—quiet agreements, secret arrangements, and hearts turned inward. Judas traded love for silver. But how often do we sell out truth for comfort, or peace for silence?

*Lord, forgive us when we choose safety over faithfulness.*

(Reader will Extinguish one candle)

Silence

## 2. Jesus Prays on the Mount – Luke 22:39–46

Luke 22:39–46 (NRSVUE)

<sup>39</sup> He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him.<sup>40</sup> When he reached the place, he said to them, “Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.”<sup>41</sup> Then he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed,<sup>42</sup> “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done.”<sup>43</sup> Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength.<sup>44</sup> In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.<sup>45</sup> When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief,<sup>46</sup> and he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.”

**Peggy - Reflection:** Even Jesus trembled in the face of suffering. The weight of the cup before Him was almost too much to bear. Yet still—He prayed, “Not my will, but yours be done.” In our Gethsemanes, may we find the courage to trust God’s way, even when it leads through pain. *Lord, teach us to pray when the night is long.*

(Reader will Extinguish one candle)

Silence

## 3. Jesus Is Denied – Luke 22:54–62

Luke 22:54–62 (NRSVUE)

<sup>54</sup> Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house. But Peter was following at a distance.<sup>55</sup> When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them.<sup>56</sup> Then a servant girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, “This man also was with him.”<sup>57</sup> But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.”<sup>58</sup> A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, “You also are one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”<sup>59</sup> Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, “Surely this man also was with him, for he is a Galilean.”<sup>60</sup> But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about!” At that moment, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.<sup>61</sup> The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.”

<sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly.

**Peggy - Reflection:** Peter’s denials came quickly—one, two, three—before the rooster’s cry broke the silence. He wept bitterly, not just for his words, but for the distance he placed between himself and his Lord. We, too, have moments when fear makes us forget who we are. *Lord, in our failure, turn and look upon us with mercy.*

(Reader will Extinguish one candle)

Silence

## 4. Jesus Before Pilate – Luke 23:1–25

Luke 23:1–25 (NRSVUE)

<sup>1</sup> Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate.

<sup>2</sup> They began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.”<sup>3</sup> Then Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He answered, “You say so.”<sup>4</sup> Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no basis for an accusation against this man.”<sup>5</sup> But they were insistent and said, “He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.”<sup>6</sup> When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.<sup>7</sup> And when he learned that he was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.

<sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign.<sup>9</sup> He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer.<sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him.<sup>11</sup> Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him and sent him back to Pilate.<sup>12</sup> That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.<sup>13</sup> Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people,<sup>14</sup> and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people, and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him.

<sup>15</sup> Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death.<sup>16</sup> I will therefore have him flogged and release him.”<sup>17</sup> Now he was obliged to release one prisoner for them at the festival.<sup>18</sup> Then they all shouted out together, “Away with this

fellow! Release Barabbas for us!”<sup>19</sup> (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city and for murder.)<sup>20</sup> Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again,<sup>21</sup> but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!”<sup>22</sup> A third time he said to them, “Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.”<sup>23</sup> But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed.<sup>24</sup> So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted.<sup>25</sup> He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

**Peggy - Reflection:** The crowd chose Barabbas. Violence over peace. Power over love. The voice of justice was drowned in the roar of “Crucify!” It still happens today. We see the innocent condemned, the voiceless ignored, the Savior rejected.

*Lord, when we remain silent in the face of injustice, forgive us.*

(Reader will Extinguish one candle)

Silence

5. The Crucifixion – Luke 23:32–49

Luke 23:32–49 (NRSVUE)

<sup>32</sup> Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.<sup>33</sup> When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.<sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots to divide his clothing.<sup>35</sup> And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!”<sup>36</sup> The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine,<sup>37</sup> and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”<sup>38</sup> There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”<sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?”<sup>41</sup> And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.”<sup>42</sup> Then he said, “Jesus,

remember me when you come into your kingdom.”<sup>43</sup> He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”<sup>44</sup> It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon,<sup>45</sup> while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

<sup>46</sup> Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Having said this, he breathed his last.<sup>47</sup> When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, “Certainly this man was innocent.”<sup>48</sup> And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts.<sup>49</sup> But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

**Peggy - Reflection:** Here is the Son of God, hanging between two thieves. He speaks forgiveness. He welcomes a criminal into paradise. He entrusts His spirit to the Father. This is not the end of a tragic story. This is love—laid bare, poured out, victorious even in death.

*Lord Jesus, by Your wounds, we are healed. By Your death, we are made whole.*

(Reader will Extinguish the last candle.) Silence

**HYMN OF REFLECTION:** #149 “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

1 When I survey the wondrous cross  
on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss,  
and pour contempt on all my pride.

2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
save in the death of Christ, my God:  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small:  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.

### LITANY OF THE CROSS WITH CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**Leader:** We stand beneath the cross,

**People:** Shadowed by sacrifice, surrounded by grace.

**Leader:** We see the Innocent One condemned,

**People:** Betrayed by a kiss, abandoned by friends, pierced by injustice.

**All:** *Sung - Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

**Leader:** We see the guilty ones—ourselves—set free,

**People:** Redeemed by love we did not earn, forgiven by mercy we cannot comprehend.

**Leader:** We feel the weight of love,

**People:** Pressed into wounded shoulders, crowned with thorns, poured out in blood.

**All:** *Sung- Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

**Leader:** We remember the silence of the sky,

**People:** The trembling of the earth, the tearing of the veil.

**Leader:** And still—we call this Friday “Good,”

**People:** For through the pain, God’s purpose prevailed.

**All:** *Sung - Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

**Leader:** Death does not have the final word,

**People:** Love does. Resurrection does. Christ does.

**Leader:** We stand at the cross in awe, in sorrow, in hope—

**People:** And we wait for the dawn.

**All:** *Sung -Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

**ANTHEM:** The Mystery by Jean Shafferman & Anna Page

**TIME OF SILENCE**

### LET US PRAY...

Merciful God,

We have stood at the foot of the cross,  
gazing on love poured out for the world.

Hold us in the shadow of that love.

Give us the courage to carry it with us—  
into silence, into sorrow, into hope.

As we wait for the dawn of resurrection,

keep us faithful, keep us near,

and remember us, O Lord,

when you come into your kingdom. **Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN:** #144 Were you There? Vs. 4

4. Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

### CLOSING WORDS

"It is finished.

The tomb is sealed.

The sky is dark.

But God is not done.

Go now, in stillness.

Go now, in hope waiting to rise.

Sunday is coming."

... Silence

You may leave the sanctuary in silence as you feel ready to.

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**You are invited to join us in the C.E. Wing after the  
service for Hot Cross Buns & fellowship.**