

St. Andrew's United Church
188 Wellington Street
Miramichi, N.B. E1N 1M4
773-9932

<http://www.standrewsunitedmiramichi.org>

Minister: Rev. Charlene Maguire MacKnight
Organist & Choir Director: Joanne Wiseman
Greeters: Barb Doucet & Dorothy Wilson

Good Friday Service

March 30, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

**indicates stand as you are able*

Musical Prelude

*Call to Worship:

L: The suffering servant, despised and rejected.

All: We remember Jesus, despised by those for whom he was the voice of conscience, rejected even by his friends.

L: The suffering servant, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

All: We remember Jesus, who empathized with those the world treated harshly and who gave hope to the bereaved.

L: The suffering servant, wounded for our transgressions.

All: We remember Jesus, who paid the ultimate price, for us, and for the salvation of all.

Opening Prayer: *(seated)*

O Gracious and Loving God, by your Spirit create within us now the stillness that we need. When we see the shadows that gathered around your Son, may we have the courage to look within ourselves and see where we have helped to cast those shadows. When we catch images of the warmth and brightness of your love, may we know that, in spite of our weakness, this love shines for us all. These things we ask so that this time of reflection may truly be a time of growing closer, deeper in our bonds with you. In the name of your Son, our Saviour, we pray. Amen

*Hymn: SofG, #5, The Old Rugged Cross (vs. 1,2)

**On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
the emblem of suffering and shame;
and I love that old cross where the dearest and best
for a world of lost sinners was slain.**

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
and exchange it some day for a crown.*

**Oh, that old rugged cross, so despised by the world
has a wondrous attraction for me;
for the dear Lamb of God left his glory above
to bear it to dark Calvary. *Chorus***

Scripture: Matthew 26:47-56 – *Joan MacKnight Savoy*
 Matthew 26:56-67a - *Barbara Doucet*

Dramatic Presentation: "We Were There"

Introduction

Hymn: #134, Shadows Gather, Deep and Cold (*cong. seated*)

Voice 1 - Judas: Merle Milson

Judas battles between what faith he has and his doubt.

Hymn: #145, O Sacred Head (vs. 1&2 – *cong. seated*)

Litany Prayer: *led by Patricia Boucher*

Surely not I, Lord? Surely not us? Surely not.

Surely I am not the one who will betray you. Surely we are not the ones.

It's someone else who denies knowing you, someone else who uses you for their own gain,

someone else who wants to control you.

Surely not us.

For the times when we protest too much...

For the times we point fingers to cover up our own wrong...

For the times we think of ourselves more highly than we ought...

Forgive us.

For the times we have betrayed you with our words—

speaking thoughtlessly, hurting someone to get a laugh,

denying that your call extends to the parts of our lives we would rather keep to ourselves...

Forgive us.

For the times we have betrayed you with our actions—

living as if you are confined to the sanctuary, acting as if we have been given domination over, rather than stewardship of, your creation,

walking away from those in need, literally and politically...

forgive us.

For the times we have betrayed you with our hearts—

putting you far down our priority lists, loving our ideas about you more than we love you,

longing for our way to be the one you choose...

forgive us.

Surely not I, Lord? You have said so.

The truth rings in our ears...and it hurts, O God, to admit it: it is us.

We follow other gods, we are a poor reflection of your glory;

we use our wealth, status, and power in ways contrary to your will;

we imprison you in our understanding of your word;

we refuse to create justice or to love mercy, and walking humbly with you would mean letting go of our way.

The truth hurts us, Lord, even as we hear you say: you have said so.

And yet we believe — we believe that you have the power to transform us and through us to transform the world.

We believe that your grace is enough.

We believe that we have received more love than we can imagine.

We believe that you are the Way, the Life, and the Truth — the truth that sets us free.

Amen.

Video Music: What Wondrous Love Is This (vs.1)

Voice 2 – Mary Magdalene: Holly Daley

Mary is in the crowd that is standing before Pilate.

Prayer:

It is hard to believe what we have heard, O God. How could a ministry of love be so blatantly rejected? Who would despise the teacher and healer who reached out to common people with acceptance and affirmation? Support and sustain us now as we recall the horror of Jesus' final hours. May the anguish we observe point us beyond death to catch glimpses of the light you seek to reveal to us. Lead us through the crushing pain and agony to challenge the violence that is ever more prevalent among us. Help us to live according to your will for unity and peace. Amen.

Hymn: #133, Go to Dark Gethsemane (vs 1&2 – *cong. seated*)

Voice 3 – Pilate: Don Walls

Something about Jesus nags at Pilate like a sore tooth.

Choir Anthem

Scripture: Matthew 27:27-31; 45-50 – *Shirley Morrison*

Voice 4 - Mary, the Mother of Jesus: Rev. Charlene

Mary, Jesus' mother, is numb with grief and emotional exhaustion.

Hymn: #144, Were You There (vs. 1,2,5 – *cong. seated*)

Voice 5 – Peter: Gary Blackmore

His guilt and impetuous nature cause him to tell the story of his denial

Time for Silent Reflection

Extinguishing of the Christ Candle: *Ron & Ruth Kierstead*

One: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Two: These words pierce the silence of this day; our own hearts cringe under their weight. If Jesus lost faith, what hope is there for us?

One: This day is hard to face, even harder to understand, and yet here we are. We do our best to face the suffering of Christ, even if we don’t understand it. We do our best not to deny his struggle or allow time to diminish its meaning to us.

Two: It is with great humility, then, that we lay at the foot of this cross the confessions of our hearts. Let us pray:

All: Holy God, you are so far beyond our understanding and yet so close to our hearts. How is it that you would love us so deeply, so faithfully, when we so often fail you. It is impossible for us to understand. On this sacred day when we are called to face the death of Jesus, our hearts, like wax, melt in our breast. We are sorry for the ways we turn from you, God. We are sorry for the many things we put ahead of you. We convince ourselves that this day is just a story, holding no real meaning, and yet in this space we feel his pain, his confusion, his doubt. As the smoke rises from this last candle, help us remember the love he called us to and the light he longed to share with this world.

(Silent confession as Christ candle is extinguished & cross is draped).

Two: The shadows are all around us and yet your love, O God, remains forever bright.

All: Shower us with forgiveness and move always in our hearts that even when we are broken, we may know the healing Christ offers; that even when we feel alone, we may know the community the Spirit calls us to; that even when we are bound by our guilt and anger, we may know the freedom the Creator blesses us with. Thanks be to God this day and always. Amen.

Good Friday Prayers of the People – led by Helen Jones

All sing: VU 148 – *all remain seated*

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Holy God, we open ourselves to your truth, but at times we are pained by the reality of the world. On this day called “good,” we search for what is good within the suffering that was endured by Jesus.

Remind us that whatever we face, we are not alone. Help us to see beyond moments of pain and anxiety to opportunities for new life and new purpose in the days ahead.

And so we sing:

All sing: VU 148 - *Jesus, remember me ...*

God of eternal light, you bring the glory of the morning dawn out of the shadows of the night, and we are encouraged.

Each one of us has faced a troubled night of the soul, and yet we return to hear anew words that can uplift and enliven us. In the shadows of this day and in the suffering experienced by Jesus, let us not lose sight of your goodness that shines in the shadows, a goodness which will never be extinguished.

And so we sing:

All sing: VU 148 - *Jesus, remember me ...*

God of Holy Presence, we live with anticipation as we open ourselves to you in our journey of life. We realize that we cannot move ahead on our own, and yet we are at times uncertain of the direction to take, or the ways that you are leading us.

This day we hear, anew, how uncertainty surrounded the disciples as Jesus travelled the journey to the cross. As his disciples, may we face our fears, and conquer our uncertainties, as we accept the light of God that shines upon each moment of our lives. As we remember God’s presence, may God remember us in all that lies ahead.

And so we sing:

All sing: VU 148 - *Jesus, remember me ...*

Offering

***Offertory Prayer**

In the name of the One who gave life itself for us, we present to you, O God, our offerings. May these gifts inspire further good works, following the example of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

***Sending forth:**

Jesus, we wait here by your tomb carrying our grief;

the grief of the betrayer,

the grief of the denier,

the grief of the crucifiers.

We carry the grief of the lost, the heartbroken, the bereft.

Upon you was laid the grief of us all.

It is finished.

God of endings, God of darkness,

God of the tomb, God of dark days and great loss, be with us now as we wait with Jesus. Amen.

*Hymn: #135, Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Depart in Silence

Tape Distribution: April 1 – Dave & Brenda Hicks

Duty Unit: April – Lesley Daigle Unit

Greeters: April 1 – Pat Boucher & Merle Milson/April 8 - Plen & Carol Dickson

Sound System: April 1 – Brian Savoy

Power Point: April 1st – Mary Reynolds

Offering Collections: April 1 – Barb Doucet, Mavis Williamson, Margaret Moran Glidden, Helen Jones

Offering Counters:

April 1 – Lib Hachey, Marjorie MacPhee, Don Bowman

Announcements:

This Week:

Sunday, April 1st – *Easter Sacrament of Communion*

Upcoming:

Sunday, April 8th: *Covenanting with Church Council and Transfer of Memberships* – We will recognize all new members elected to Church Council Teams and covenant with the Church Council (executive group) as they begin their 2018 term.

Also, following the morning service, you are invited to bring cold pot luck (salads, cold meats, sandwiches/rolls, dips, desserts, etc.) for a ***Lunch Reception to Welcome Newcomers*** to our congregation.

Saturday, April 28th – 6:30 to 8:00 pm – The Pastoral Care & Outreach Team are hosting a **Games Night for all ages**. There will be a variety of card and board games. Snacks will be provided. Come, and bring a friend!

CGIT former members/leaders are meeting for lunch on Tuesday, April 3rd at 11:30 at Pizza Pro in Douglastown.

Miramichi Valley High Drama Club presents “Dinner At Eight” April 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th. At the MVHS Theatre, Admission is \$10 a person and can be purchased at the door or by calling 627-4083.

Hospice Miramichi is holding a Grief Support Group from April 4th till May 9th from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the Hospice Building, 14 Howard Street. For more information or to register please call 773-7607.