



April 2, 2021

Good Friday

Good Friday is the day that hope died. Good Friday is the day that humanity went along with the crowd, took the easy path and finished the betrayal that had begun the night before. Jesus' supporters abandoned him to die alone. As Christians, we understand that even if we were not in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago, we continue the betrayal. On Easter, we will celebrate Christ's resurrection, his forgiveness and return to us, his promise that there is more to life than this world. But for today, we acknowledge how flawed we are and how much we need his grace.

Taking part in the Good Friday prayer vigil allows us to individually and collectively reflect on the events that in some ways happened long ago and in some ways are happening now. It is also time to reconnect with the accounts of the events leading to Christ's death. Sometimes in reading them again, we find new connections with them that have arisen as we have grown another year older and wiser.

Feel free to pray and reflect as the Spirit moves you. This time is sacred and it is blessed by your presence and your willingness to step into it.

But if you would like some guidance, you might consider praying for those on the following list. You may also want to read the Biblical accounts of Holy Week. If you can, hold off on reading the Easter stories. There will be a time for that most joyful news to come back into the world, but today is a day to join the faithful across the centuries as we realize what it is like to face a future without the hope and promise Christ offers.

The sick and afflicted and all who love them, those with chronic and terminal illnesses, including dementia, those living in nursing homes, those suffering from mental illness, those facing a long, slow recovery, those caught in addiction, those contemplating suicide

Those helping ease the suffering of the sick and afflicted, anywhere in the world

The pets and wild creatures who keep us company on our journeys through life

First responders who arrive early to emergencies and the families and friends who support them

Families, children and marriages of those in our congregation and all over the world, including families with financial difficulties, families caring for other family members, students in college and young adults with their first jobs, those who are struggling with marital conflicts, families in crisis

The two children we sponsor through Compassion International, Wisnadine in Haiti and Quebin in Mexico

Those whose homes are in transition, those with people moving in or out, those without homes, those far from their homes, especially those seeking refuge from violence

Those serving in the military and their families

Those in elected office in our town, our state, our country and throughout the world, that they may serve faithfully and wisely

Those searching for new jobs or new meaning in existing jobs

The parts of our country and our world torn by strife, caused by violence, war, terrorism, accident or natural disaster

Those in conflict, those seeking forgiveness

Those in prison

The strangers whose lives have touched our hearts

Those people finding new ways to address old problems, of race relations, of climate change, of income inequality, of unequal education, of religious intolerance.

Those caught in the pandemic of Covid-19. Those without safe places to retreat to. Those whose homes are full of violence. Those staying away from their homes and their families for fear of infecting them. Those whose health treatments have had to be deferred. Those who have lost their job or lost hours. Those who are searching for a vaccine. Those who are working longer and longer hours at grocery stores, pharmacies, delivery hubs. Those determined to keep essential utilities operational, like electricity, water, internet and telephones. Those who are doing their best and fear it may not be enough.

Those who answer Your call as faithful disciples, who take up the challenge of the Cross and follow You.

Consider reading:

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem	Matthew 21:1-7
The Judgement of Nations	Matthew 25:31-46
John's account of the Betrayal and Death of Jesus	John 18-19
Matthew's account of the Betrayal and Death of Jesus	Matthew 26-27
Luke's account of the Betrayal and Death of Jesus	Luke 22-23
Mark's account of the Betrayal and Death of Jesus	Mark 14-15
Isaiah prophesizes the Messiah	Isaiah 53:1-9
Jesus Prays for His Disciples	John 17

During your private devotions, please consider praying for:

Those who have lost loved ones this past year, including the friends and families of:

- Rev. Tom Atherton
- Earl Bosquet
- Ron Dean, a long-time member of this church, who passed away in Oregon
- Tasha Feller
- Peter Fleming, Lisa Haight's long time friend
- June Hoff, Donna's mom
- Terry House, Bill's brother
- Dave Larkin
- Julie K. McNamara, Beverly Zimmerman's daughter
- Ann Shattuck
- Barbara Thaxter
- Pat Tiner
- Dennis, Donna's cousin
- Don, Marjorie's brother-in-law
- Ellie, Linda's aunt
- Kenny, Amy's uncle
- Those who have died alone
- Those dead and injured in the explosion in Beirut
- Those killed in natural disasters which seem to be piling one on top of another, fires out West, floods in China and on the Nile, hurricanes and typhoons and the damage they leave behind
- The 540,000 who have died of Covid-19 in the United States and the 2.7 million who have died world wide.
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers