



GOOD FRIDAY

**Evangelical Reformed Church
United Church of Christ
April 2, 2021
Noon**

The Nails of the Cross

Gathering

Prelude

Introduction to the Service

(The service this afternoon the "Service of The Nails" is a series of readings, responses, and silent reflection and prayer designed to help us enter more deeply into the meaning of Good Friday. You are invited to hold the nail you received with your bulletin throughout the service.)

***Hymn** *What Wondrous Love Is This*

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***Opening Prayer (in unison)**

Loving God, we thank you for Jesus, who had great courage, risking even death to bring about a world of love and justice. In our worship this day, may we hear and feel your passion, your sorrow, your forgiveness, and your call to follow, to love as Jesus loved. We pray in his name. Amen.

Anthem *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

*- D. Forrest
ERUCC Singers*

THE NAILS OF THE CROSS

The Nail of Pride

Mark 12:38-40

Meditation and Prayer (beginning with silence)

O God - help us consider our own pride and where it leads.

O God - do not let us deceive ourselves.

Our pride hurts us and creates walls between us and others.

O God, we know too that our pride hurts you.

Sung Response

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;

Were you there when they crucified my Lord.

The Nail of Betrayal

Matthew 26:47-56

Sung Response

**Were you there when he walked the road alone?
Were you there when he walked the road alone?
Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when he walked the road alone?**

Meditation and Prayer (beginning with silence)

O God – help us consider how we betray others, how we abandon them in their time of need, how we think of ourselves first.

O God – do not let us deceive ourselves.

Our acts of betrayal hurt us and create walls between us and others.

O God, we know too that our betrayal hurts you.

The Nail of Envy

Matthew 20:20-28

Sung Response

**Were you there when they stripped him of his clothes?
Were you there when they stripped him of his clothes?
Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they stripped him of his clothes?**

Meditation and Prayer (beginning with silence)

O God – help us consider how we envy others, how we desire more than we receive and seek to influence and rule over others.

O God – do not let us deceive ourselves.

Our envy hurts us and creates walls between us and others.

O God, we know too that our envy hurts you.

The Nail of Indecision

Matthew 27:20-24

Sung Response

**Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?
Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?
Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?**

Meditation and Prayer (beginning with silence)

O God – help us consider how we waver, how we seek to avoid responsibility and to blame others for our actions.

O God – do not let us deceive ourselves.

Our indecision hurts us and creates walls between us and others.

O God, we know too that our indecision hurts you.

The Nail of Cruelty

Matthew 27:27-31, 39-42

Sung Response (and chorus)

Were you there when they mocked the son of God?

Were you there when they mocked the son of God?

Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;

Were you there when they mocked the son of God?

Meditation and Prayer (beginning with silence)

O God – help us consider how we are cruel to others, how we malign and slander others and add to the evil that comes upon them.

O God – do not let us deceive ourselves.

Our cruelty hurts us and creates walls between us and others.

O God, we know too that our cruelty hurts you.

The Nail of Hatred

Luke 6:22,32-35

Sung Response

Were you there when the sun refused shine?

Were you there when the sun refused shine?

Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Meditation and Prayer (beginning with silence)

O God – help us consider how we show hate to others, how we fail to care for others and make distinctions among them.

O God – do not let us deceive ourselves.

Our hatred hurts us and creates walls between us and others.

O God, we know too that our hatred hurts you.

THE RESPONSE

(As the music to “Were You There” is played you are invited to come forward and hammer one of the nails into the wooden cross.)

Prayer of Confession

Most merciful God, we confess that often our spirit has not been that of Christ. Where we have failed to love one another as he loves us, where we have pledged loyalty to him with our lips and then betrayed, deserted, or denied him, forgive us, we pray; and by your Spirit make us faithful in every time of trial. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(All offer prayers of confession in silence).

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God’s love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

Closing Prayer (in unison)

Ever-loving God, we hear what you are saying to us. We know that Jesus was not just crucified two thousand years ago, but is crucified again and again, each time we hurt each other and do not follow your way. Save us, and help us, we humbly ask you. Give us courage to be with the pain, sorrow, and deaths of our world. May his passion be our passion. May we choose the loving path, whatever the risks. May we know the miracles of life and joy that come in following Jesus, even unto the cross. Be gracious unto us, and give us your peace as we pray the pray you taught us saying, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours. Now and for ever. Amen.

* Hymn *Ah, Holy Jesus*

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* **Benediction**

Worship Notes:

This service was adapted from a Good Friday Worship Service written by Richard Fairchild in 1993.

John 19:17; Rev. 5:13

19th century, United States; alt.
First published in Mercer's Cluster, 1836

1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul! O my soul! What
2 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to
3 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and

won-drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is
God and to the Lamb, I will sing; To God and to the
when from death I'm free, I'll sing on! And when from death I'm

this! that Christ should come in bliss to bear the heav-y cross for my
Lamb who is the great I Am, while mil-lions join the theme, I will
free, I'll sing and joy-ful be, and through e-ter-ni-ty I'll sing

soul, for my soul, to bear the heav-y cross for my soul!
sing, I will sing; while mil-lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, I'll sing on, and through e-ter-ni-ty I'll sing on!

Ah, Holy Jesus

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Johann Heermann, 1630

Paraphr. by Robert Bridges, 1899; alt.

Isa. 53:3-5; John 1:11; 18:15-17

1 Ah, ho - ly Je - sus, how have you of - fend - ed, that mor-tal
2 Who was the guilt - y? Who brought this up - on you? It is my
3 For me, kind Je - sus, was your in-car - na - tion, your mor-tal
4 There-fore, kind Je - sus, since I can-not pay you, I do a -

judg - ment has on you de - scend - ed? By foes de - rid - ed,
trea - son, Je - sus, that has slain you. And I, dear Je - sus,
sor - row, and your life's ob - la - tion, Your death of an - guish
dore you, and will ev - er pray you, Think on your pit - y

by your own re - ject - ed, O most af - flict - ed!
I it was de - nied you; I cru - ci - fied you.
and your bit - ter pas - sion, for my sal - va - tion.
and your love un - swerv - ing, not my de - serv - ing.

The Season of Easter

After the first Easter morning, nothing for the followers of Jesus was ever the same again. Up until that point, Jesus might have said and done some perplexing things but nothing that couldn't be understood in his role as a teacher and miracle-working prophet. Others had come preaching peace and love. Others had come working miracles. Others had travelled as itinerant preachers. Others had died at the cruel hands of the Romans. But on Easter morning all of that changed. Now Jesus was present with his followers in a new and radical way. Each time he was present in those early days, his followers didn't always recognize him at first. He was the same Jesus and yet he was somehow different and he promised to be present with them from then on in a different way than walking alongside them on the dusty roads of Palestine.

Jesus' great prayer, in the gospel of John, prepares disciples for a new and radical presence, which will transform their relationships with each other so much that they become like the relationship between Jesus and God; united in oneness.

And this is the community to which we are called by God in this Easter season, a community of oneness in our faith in Christ in which love is our highest aspiration. A community where for the sake of our life together we are willing to see things as they really are, not as we might like them to be, or might fervently wish they were, or as we think they should be, but actually as they are. In the loving care of community we can have the courage to look, clear-eyed at ourselves, knowing that we are loved by God – as we are, not as we wish we could project ourselves to be. We can speak and act truthfully when we see injustice and unfairness in our families, our communities, and beyond.

Love comes to life and calls us to live truthfully, hopefully, and deeply in God's abundant creation

- How do you recognize Jesus, or the presence of the risen Christ, in the world around you?
- How is love leading the way in your life?
- What is your vision of community in Christ?

Easter Sunday, April 4

Women were the last at the cross; now they are first at Jesus' tomb. The news of the Resurrection fills them with "terror and amazement." The astonishing news of the Resurrection, Mark 16: 1-8, transformed Jesus' followers into courageous preachers of the good news of Jesus Christ. The Risen Christ moved through closed doors in order to get close to his disciples.

We will share communion this morning. Please have bread or crackers, juice, water or wine prepared to share in communion together. Add some fresh flowers to your worship center in celebration of the gift of new life.

What is your own Easter experience like?

Join us for Easter Services on Sunday, April 4 at 8:30 a.m. in historic Trinity Chapel or 10:30 a.m. in our main Sanctuary.