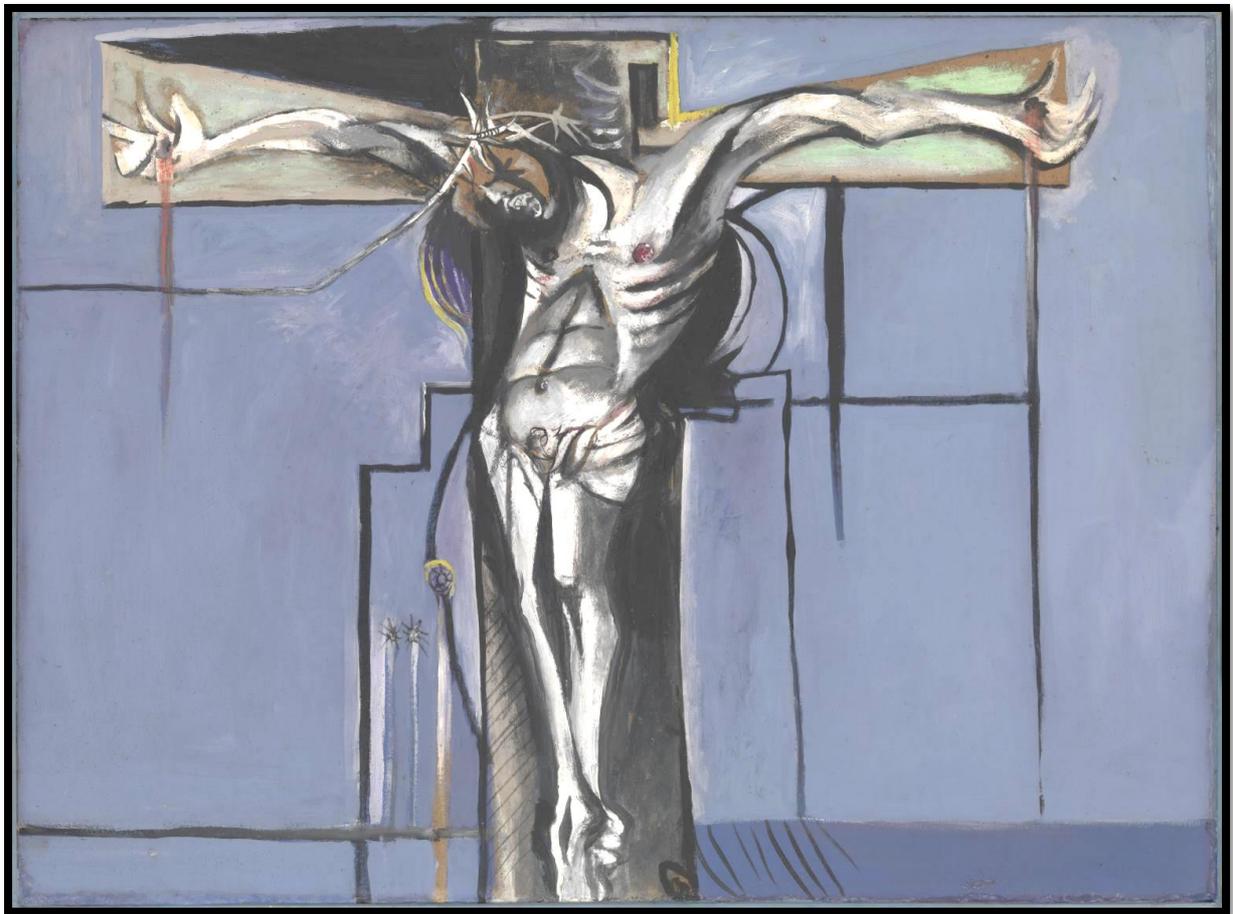


WESTMEAD UNITING CHURCH

2 April 2021

Good Friday

The Passion of St. John



Graham Sutherland, 1946

Introit: 'O sacred head, now wounded' (Piano prelude)

Reading: Isaiah 53:1-3

Who has believed what we have heard?

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;

he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering^[d] and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces^[e]
he was despised, and we held him of no account.

Lament: Then Jesus told his disciples,

“If anyone wishes to become
one of my followers,
let them deny themselves
and take up their cross
and follow me.

**We set out not knowing
where you would lead us.
We liked what we saw.**

We heard you say that
You would be betrayed,
That you would be handed over,
That you would be beaten.

**We did not count the cost
Of following you,**

And now cross-bound Christ,
You are mocked, ridiculed
Abused, put to shame.

Amen

Hymn TiS 341: My song is love unknown
(verses 1-4)

My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me;
Love to the loveless shown,
That they might lovely be.
O who am I,
That for my sake
My Lord should take
Frail flesh and die?

He came from His blest throne
Salvation to bestow;
But men made strange, and none
The longed-for Christ would know:
But O! my Friend,
My Friend indeed,
Who at my need
His life did spend.

Sometimes they strew His way,
And His sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their King:
Then "Crucify!"
is all their breath,
And for His death
they thirst and cry.

Why, what hath my Lord done?
What makes this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run,
He gave the blind their sight,
Sweet injuries!
Yet they at these
Themselves displease,
and 'gainst Him rise.

'Under cover of dark'

The Trial

Reading 1:

Jesus before the High Priest.

John 18:12-14, 19-24

¹² So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. ¹³ First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. ¹⁴ Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

¹⁹ Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. ²¹ Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." ²² When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" ²³ Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.



Lament: Cross-bound Christ,
Your innocence matters not:

It is washed away
In a string of words
That bear false witness,
Along with a strike to the head,
The plot to preserve the nation
Through the death of one man:

**Forgive us, cross-bound Christ
When we blame others
And violate them in word and deed
For no good reason.**

Lord have mercy

Reading 2: Jesus before Pilate 18:28-38.

²⁸ Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.^[g] It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters,^[h] so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." ³² (This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

³³ Then Pilate entered the headquarters^[i] again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

Lament:

What words can we say,
Cross-bound Christ?
You are handed on
From one authority to another;
The law is stretched;
Justice is denied;
Truth becomes a question mark
Floating in the air.
**Forgive us, cross-bound Christ,
When we fail to stand
By those in need;
When we fail to make a stand
For what is right and true.
Amen.**

Hymn:**'Ride on, ride on the time is right'.**

(Tune; Winchester New, TiS 348; Lyrics John Bell, Graham Maule)

Verses 1-2 only

Ride on, ride on, the time is right:
The roadside crowds scream with delight;
Palm branches mark the pilgrim way
Where beggars squat and children play.

Ride on, ride on, the critics wait,
Intrigue and rumour circulate;
New lies abound in word and jest,
And truth becomes a suspect guest.

Reading 3:**Jesus Sentenced to Death 18:38-19:16**

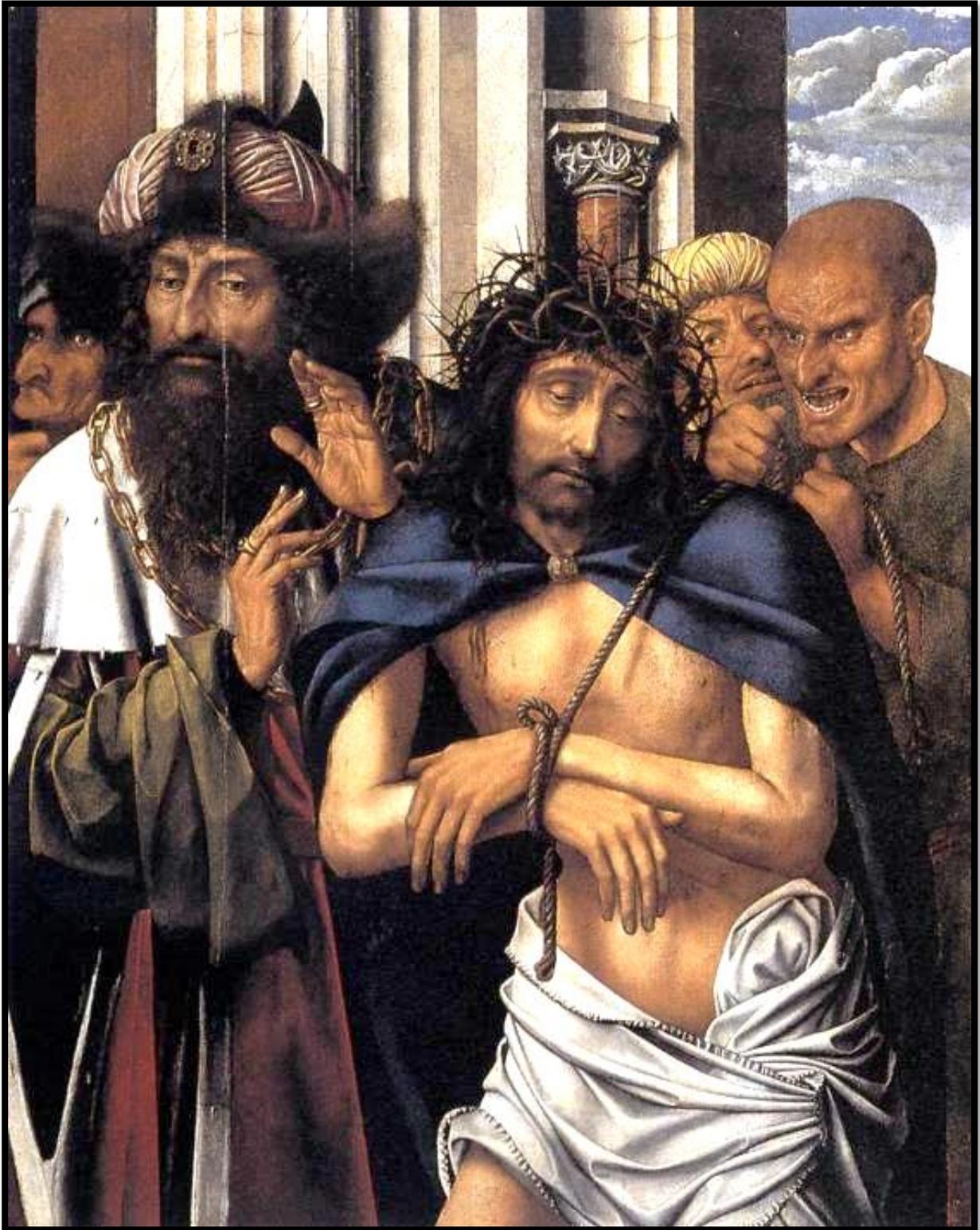
After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. ³⁹ But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ⁴⁰ They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ² And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. ³ They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. ⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

⁶When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.” ⁷The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.”

⁸Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. ⁹He entered his headquarters^[a] again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?” ¹¹Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” ¹²From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.”

¹³When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat^[b] on the judge’s bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew^[c]Gabbatha. ¹⁴Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” ¹⁵They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but the emperor.” ¹⁶Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.



Lament:

Your innocence matters not,
Cross-bound Christ: It is washed away
In a string of words
And some public deeds:

No blood on Pilate's hands:
He has sanitized himself
From the virus of accusation.

The crowd's cries are too strong.
Their mood has been managed.
You are condemned.

**Have mercy upon us
For those times we wash our hands
Of the problems before us
And leave others to suffer.**

Lord have mercy

Hymn TiS 339: 'O sacred head sore wounded'.

O sacred head so wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down;
O kingly head surrounded
with thorns your only crown;
death's shadows rise before you,
the glow of life decays;
yet host of heaven adore you
and tremble as they gaze.

What language shall I borrow
to praise you, heavenly friend,
for this your dying sorrow,
your mercy without end?
Such agony and dying!
Such love the sinner is free!
O Christ, all Grace supplying,
turn now your face on me.

In this your bitter passion,
good Shepherd, think of me,
look on me with compassion,
unworthy though I be:
beneath your cross abiding
for ever would I rest,
in your dear love confiding,
and with your presence blessed.

Lord, be my consolation,
My shield when death is near;
remind me of your Passion,
be with me when I fear.
My eyes shall then be hold you,
upon your cross shall dwell,
my heart by faith enfold you;
and who dies thus, dies well

The Crucifixion

‘St John’s Passion’

Reading 4: The Crucifixion of Jesus John 19:17-27

So they took Jesus; ¹⁷ and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew^[d] is called Golgotha. ¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. ¹⁹ Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth,^[e] the King of the Jews.” ²⁰ Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew,^[f] in Latin, and in Greek. ²¹ Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” ²² Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” ²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. ²⁴ So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.” This was to fulfil what the scripture says,

“They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.”

²⁵ And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Lament:

Forgive us, God of Jesus Christ,
For those times:
We strip the other of their dignity;
We mock them;
We spit on their name;
We crucify them with our words and deeds.

Forgive us, God of Jesus Christ,
For those times:
We forget who you are;
We take your name in vain;
We disfigure you, Amen.

Lord have mercy

'At the foot of the cross'

We place our concerns, our fears, our hopes at the foot of the cross.

Reading 5:

'It is finished'

John 19:-28-37

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. ³⁰ When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

³¹ Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. ³⁵ (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows^[a] that he tells the truth.) ³⁶ These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." ³⁷ And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

Hymn TiS 342: ‘When I survey the wondrous cross’

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.

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.

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?

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.

Prayer: In your hour of death,
 cross-bound Christ,

We pray:

For those whose lives are drawing to a close;

For those who wait with them;

For those who mourn;

Lord have mercy

Amen.

Reading 6: The Burial of Jesus John 19:38-42

³⁸ After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. ³⁹ Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴² And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.



Hymn TiS 345: 'Were you there, when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
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 when they nailed Him to the tree?

Were you there when they pierced in the side?
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

'Behold the man!' From David Gascoyne's poem, 'Ecce homo'.

Whose is this horrifying face,
This putrid flesh, discoloured, flayed,
Fed on by flies, scorched by the sun?
Whose are these hollow red-filmed eyes
And thorn-spiked head and spear-stuck side?
Behold the Man: He is Man's Son.
Forget the legend, tear the decent veil
That cowardice or interest devised
To make their mortal enemy a friend,
To hide the bitter truth all His wounds tell,
Lest the great scandal be no more disguised:
He is in agony till the world's end,
And we must never sleep during that time!
He is suspended on the cross-tree now
And we are onlookers at the crime,
Callous contemporaries of the slow
Torture of God. Here is the hill
Made ghastly by His spattered blood.

Postlude: O sacred head, now wounded (piano)

We leave in silence