



Good Friday, April 3rd, 2026 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Notes

This Good Friday liturgy focuses on the gospel of John's telling of Jesus' arrest, betrayal and crucifixion in John 18: 1 – 19: 42. It is set into smaller parts with encouragement to use different voices in the telling.

For example, in the first part of John 18:

Narrator: Jesus went out with his disciples to a place where there was a garden. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples.

So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them,

Jesus: 'For whom are you looking?'

Judas and company: 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

...

A good online bible resource is:
<https://bible.oremus.org>

You might choose to have a sand bowl and tapers, or tealight candles and invite people to stay for a while in silence when the service finishes and light a candle for all the very present darkness in our world today.

Gathering & Lighting the Candle

God, shine your light among us.

Today your light is threatened
by the powers of darkness.

God, shine your light among us.

Shine into our darkness,
where fear holds sway.

God, shine your light among us.

Shine for the sake of justice.
Shine on greed, power and hate.

God, shine your light among us.

Shine to light our stumbling ways
Give us courage for today.

The Christ candle is lit.

We light this Christ candle,
and, as the fragile, flickering flame
pushes back the darkness,
we hear the story of Jesus.

God, shine your light among us.

Acknowledging



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

As we gather, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and these waters. *(Please name the Traditional Owners where you are.)* We pay respect to elders past, present and emerging. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.

Call to worship

We gather today to hear the story
of the incarceration, trial, and execution of Jesus.
We gather to hear Jesus declare himself,
submit himself, and pray for himself.
We gather to offer ourselves
to the events of this hour.
Lord hear us, **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Listening - John 18:1-12

Voices: Narrator, Jesus, Judas & company

Singing: From heaven you came, v. 1 & 2 TIS 256

Listening - John 18:13-18

Voices: Narrator, Woman, Peter



Good Friday, April 3rd, 2026

The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Singing: Here hangs a man discarded' v. 5
TIS 356

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Listening - John 18:19-24

Voices: Narrator, Jesus, Police

Singing: Here hangs a man discarded' v. 1
TIS 356

Listening - John 18:25

Voices: Narrator, Crowd, Peter

Singing: Here hangs a man discarded' v. 2
TIS 356

Listening - John 18:26-27

Voices: Narrator, Slave, Peter

Singing: Here hangs a man discarded' v. 3
TIS 356

Listening - John 18:28-32

Voices: Narrator, Pilate, Jews

Singing: Here hangs a man discarded' v. 4
TIS 356

Listening - John 18:33-39

Voices: Narrator, Pilate, Jesus

Listening - John 18:40

Voices: Narrator, Crowd

Singing: Here hangs a man discarded' v. 6
TIS 356

Prayer

Eternal God,
whose love to us is constant and true;
steadfast and unchanging;
giving and giving again;
we praise you for Jesus Christ,
Son of your love,
who in his grace to us,
would not save himself,
but gave himself up for us all.

For the wonder of your love in him,
unconquered, unyielding;
giving himself unreservedly, completely,
for a world gone wrong:
we bow in silence.

For the goodness of a Man who remained true
when the friendship of others turned rotten;
when human justice was founded in wrong;
when human truth was distorted by lies:
we bow in silence.

For the anguish he suffered:
the loss and betrayal of friends;
the all-present sense of evil around him
in accusation, torture and death:
the loneliness and abandonment:
we bow in silence.

God, help us
to know the victory of the cross
as he followed your purposes
and pursued his mission to the very end.
We bow in silence.



Good Friday, April 3rd, 2026

The Fig Tree Worship Resource

You did not allow his voice to be lost in the grave;
nor his glorious light to be quenched by
human darkness and death.
By raising him from the dead
you kindled faith,
filled the future with hope
and flooded human existence
with the power of your love:
stronger than death,
triumphant for ever and ever.
Amen

*Rev. Ron Gordon
(from Dad & Daughter p26 © 2012)*

Listening - John 19:1-7

Voices: Narrator, Crowd, Pilate

Singing: Jesus, remember me TiS 730

Listening - John 19:8-11

Voices: Narrator, Jesus, Pilate

Singing: Jesus, remember me TiS 730

Listening - John 19:12-16

Voices: Narrator, Crowd, Pilate

Singing: When I survey the wondrous cross TiS 342 Verses 1 & 2

Listening - John 19:17-25a

Voices: Narrator, Soldiers

Singing: When I survey the wondrous cross TiS 342 Verse 3

Reflection - Rev. Karen Eller

It feels like our world is becoming more
unhinged and unsafe with every passing day. We

don't have to look far to witness the tentacles of
the powers of death wreaking destruction and
devastation. We may feel overwhelmed by the
plethora of lies and misinformation peddled by
media organisations which have tapped out on
truth and tapped in to follow the almighty dollar
and unfettered power. Pilate mused about truth,
or perhaps was bemused, either way, he took the
expedient path, the route of safety and job
security.

Whenever any of us take the expedient
route of job security or comfort or public standing
in place of a truthful account or action, there are
consequences: for human lives, for the planet, and
for our relationships. It is not enough to pretend
we do not see the injustices in our community, in
our church, or in the marketplace.

It is an abrogation of discipleship to give
up on the pursuit of the truth. It might be tempting
to shrug and say, I don't understand why people
are being racist, homophobic, Islamophobic,
ageist, and so forth, and then let things continue
unchallenged. It might be easier to ignore the
slaughter of Palestinian, or Iranians, or Lebanese
children, or simply give up finding reliable and
reputable news sources to determine what is
really going on in our world.

Good Friday reminds us of the brutal
reality of deadly power in the hands of self-
preservation, self-promotion and rampant greed.
Jesus never relied on force, but instead completely
trusted that God was the One ultimately in charge.

For us today, the way of Jesus, the way of
righteousness (justice), continues to be the way of
truth, not truth in the abstract, cerebral way, but
in the actual words and actions of our everyday
living. May God's compassion rule our every
decision, even if it gets us crucified. Because in the
end, God's way is the way toward fullness of life,
and all are invited!

Listening - John 19:25b-30

Voices: Narrator, Jesus

You may choose to extinguish the Christ Candle.

A silence is kept.



Good Friday, April 3rd, 2026 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

It is finished

it is finished
because death does that
draws a line
interrupts the conversation

conversation sponsored by
book-ended breathing
in for nascent cry
out for when you die

and all the ins and outs of life
are mocking rehearsals
of the first and final one

and yet they hold
candles to darkness
hope to despair
pain, prophesy and passion
within and without words
sweet, sacramental,
borrowed breath

and we who are captured,
caught, between
in and out
wonder how
the eternal living word
could ever possibly say
it is finished
because it was
but it wasn't
and never is

*Rev. Jennie Gordon
(from Dad & Daughter p26 © 2012)*

Listening - John 19:31-42

Voice: Narrator

Singing: When I survey the wondrous cross TiS 342 Verse 4

A silence is kept.

Sending Out

As an option you may wish to re-light the Christ candle (if you extinguished it earlier) and acknowledge that the light of Christ shines even in the darkest of places. Invite people to remain silently in the space and light a candle for all the pain and struggle in our world, communities and hearts.

We leave today with a story without an ending. This time is liminal, it is unresolved. It exposes the pain of the world and leaves us facing all that the powers can do.

So, in this time of in-between, a place of vigil, we offer our prayers of hope and light for the world. And we allow the Scriptures to uphold us until we meet again on the third day.

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