



***Celebrating
176 Years***



April 15, 2022

Melville United Church

300 St. Andrew Street West, Fergus, ON N1M 1N9

Mailing address: PO Box 41, Fergus, ON N1M 2W7

519-843-1781

Team Ministry

Minister of Worship, Pastoral Care & Outreach

Faith Formation & Youth

Ministry of Music Team

Office Administrator

Custodian

Chair of Church Council

Chair of Pastoral Care & Prayer Chain Captain

Office hours

E-Mail

Web Site

Pastoral Care Numbers

Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

Martha Duncan

Suzanne Flewelling, Colleen Weber

Lynda Rivet

Robert Mitchell

Allan Hons

Alison Rainford, Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. T., Th. & F.

secretary@melvilleunited.com

www.melvilleunited.com

709-682-8756, 519-843-3841

Melville United Church
April 15, 2022
Good Friday

Presiding today - Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

Welcome

I greet you in the name of Jesus the Christ, the crucified.

We gather in community today – April 15, 2022 virtually and in person. We will continue to offer both in-person and on-line services with printed copies being distributed to those without internet access who are unable to attend in person. We encourage people to come out to worship in the sanctuary. Double vaccinations, masking and hand sanitizing are all required to ensure the safety of all in attendance, and there is ample space for people to maintain social distancing. For those who are joining us online or by reading, we invite you to have a candle or tea light available.

As we gather on this Good Friday, we might wonder why it is called “good.” There are various theories. One is that it is actually a corruption of the earlier “God’s Friday.” Another is that it is “good” as in “holy,” and in some cultures, Good Friday is known as Holy Friday. A third is that this bleak and sorrowful Friday is “good” because it is the day when Jesus selflessly gave himself over to death that we might know new life in God.

Announcements

- **Organ Concert**

To showcase our extensively refurbished organ, on May 14th. Several area organists have been invited to share their gift of music. There will be a free will offering in support of Ukraine and The Hub.

- **Worship at Melville:**

Easter Sunday service is at 11:00am with coffee/tea to follow

- **Broadview Magazine Subscriptions are now due.** The cost remains the same at \$25.00. Please pay your money to Ralph Rainford as soon as possible. Ralph will make himself available after the worship service on Sunday mornings outside the Chapel. Please promote this wonderful magazine to those who do not subscribe. Thank you for your support.

- **Ukraine Appeal**

The invasion of Ukraine is costing precious lives and creating a humanitarian crisis as people flee to safety. Over a million people, displaced from their homes, are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. Many have lost friends, loved ones, and property; struggle to meet their basic needs; and face an uncertain future. United Church Mission & Service partners are responding to the rapidly unfolding crisis—visit our website at <https://united-church.ca>, scroll down to Ukraine Crisis and click on the Act Now button to find out how you can show your support and make a gift.

- **Round Table on Food Security and Faith**

Held by Zoom on Thursday, April 21st at 7pm, hosted by the United Church’s Antler River Watershed, Horseshoe Falls, Western Ontario Waterways and Shining Waters Regional Councils. Discover various and diverse food justice ministries in our regions, offer your challenges and celebrations in these ministries, hear from Open Food Network. The link to register:

<https://united-church.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAtfu6tgjkjHddcBlyH4XGK4JcRqwQyeMKg>

- **From the Mission and Discipleship Commission:**
 - Young Adults Together retreat for 19+ years in Fingal ON near St. Thomas from Friday April 29th to Sunday May 1st. For more information and registration visit <https://wowrucucc.ca>
 - Camp Menesetung invites you to their “Clean Up Camp” day (pizza lunch provided) in the Goderich area, June 19th 9am-4pm. Check the camp’s website <https://www.campmenesetung.ca/>
 - Please pray for several other projects funded by our Mission & Service dollars throughout the Region
- **Gifts with Vision** These gifts are perfect for those difficult to buy for people. There’s no going out, no standing in line, no wrapping. And you will be helping out those in need near and far. Items address healing and reconciliation, leadership, counter racism, wellness and safe spaces, education, poverty and hunger, the future, Mission & Service. Gifts range from \$5 to \$140. Gifts include food for the north, help build a well, purchasing Covid vaccines for the Global South and East, and much more. You can find the full catalogue at www.giftswithvision.ca.
- We continue to **collect items for the food bank**. A list of the most needed items was sent out, and if you need a printed copy, just let someone on the Social Justice team or Rev. Lynda know, and we will get it to you. In addition to non-perishable food items, the food bank is also looking for personal and feminine hygiene products as well as fresh vegetables, apples and oranges.

I invite you to join us now for a time of worship and contemplation.

Land Acknowledgement *Peter Chynoweth, **Gathering: Lent/Easter 2022**, p.30. Used with permission.*

This land on which we gather is the Traditional land of the

Petun,
Haudenosaunee,
Anishinabewaki,
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation,
Odawa and
Mississauga people

We worship Creator on this land and acknowledge with respect the thousands of years of ceremony and relationship that are etched in footprint, fire, and faithfulness on the soil and rock that surrounds us.

Prelude in Poem “A Little Easter” by Joyce Rupp

the quiet streams of melting snow
have been a source of awakening,
speaking to some deep, inner core
that cries out for definitions in hope.

I take to the street, not the sidewalk,
moving slowly along the watery story:
snowflakes have died under sunshine,
and their bodies trickle quietly along.

the terrible question stops my walking:

why does this death undo my own?
why do flickers of life fill my spirit?

I take to the street, slowly uphill,
listening to the questions within my soul,
listening to the music of the melting.

it's the constancy of the slow-running stream
(all night, all day, the journey continues);
it's the quietness of the movement
(easy to pass by this funeral march of flakes);
it's the sureness with which the water runs
(the tiny stream is yearning to finally fill earth)
thus it is that peace moves in,
destroying death-beats of my spirit,
conquering all the winter in me.

I breathe Easter before its time,
and my question of hope is lifted high,
melted into the season of life.

Call to Worship: *Leslie Clark, Gathering: Lent/Easter/Pentecost 2011, p.58. Used with permission.*

God be with you.

And also with you.

Hymn: O Sacred Head

VU 145

- 1 O sacred head, sore wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down;
now scornfully surrounded
with thorns, thine only crown:
how art thou pale with anguish,
with sore abuse and scorn;
how does that visage languish,
which once was bright as morn!

- 2 Thy grief and bitter passion
were all for sinners' gain;
mine, mine was the transgression,
but thine the cruel pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Saviour,
turn not from me thy face;
but look on me with favour,
and grant to me thy grace.

- 3 What language shall I borrow
 to thank thee, dearest friend,
 for this thy dying sorrow,
 thy pity without end?
O make me thine forever;
 and, should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
 outlive my love to thee.
- 4 Be near when I am dying,
 O show thy cross to me;
 and for my succour flying,
 come, Lord, to set me free.
These eyes, new faith receiving,
 from thee shall not remove,
for all who die believing,
 die safely through thy love.

Opening Prayer (in unison): *Ruthanne McLagan, Gathering: Lent/Easter 2022, p.40, alt. Used with permission.*

Creator, the weight of Good Friday is upon us.

**We share in your grief as the body of your beloved son
is battered, bruised, and buried in the tomb.**

Not long ago, we shared the joy of Christmas, your gift to us in his birth.

Just days ago, we recognized Jesus as our Lord and Saviour as he entered Jerusalem.

Today, we mourn with you, Loving Parent,

for the death of the physical gift, Jesus of Nazareth, who is now Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 22:24-34 *(The Message)*

²⁴⁻²⁶ Within minutes they were bickering over who of them would end up the greatest. But Jesus intervened: "Kings like to throw their weight around and people in authority like to give themselves fancy titles. It's not going to be that way with you. Let the senior among you become like the junior; let the leader act the part of the servant.

²⁷⁻³⁰ "Who would you rather be: the one who eats the dinner or the one who serves the dinner? You'd rather eat and be served, right? But I've taken my place among you as the one who serves. And you've stuck with me through thick and thin. Now I confer on you the royal authority my Father conferred on me so you can eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and be strengthened as you take up responsibilities among the congregations of God's people.

³¹⁻³² "Simon, stay on your toes. Satan has tried his best to separate all of you from me, like chaff from wheat. Simon, I've prayed for you in particular that you not give in or give out. When you have come through the time of testing, turn to your companions and give them a fresh start."

³³ Peter said, "Master, I'm ready for anything with you. I'd go to jail for you. I'd *die* for you!"

³⁴ Jesus said, "I'm sorry to have to tell you this, Peter, but before the rooster crows you will have three times denied that you know me."

Call to Reconciliation *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**[®] Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1. Copyright 2012.*

Since we have a great high priest over the house of God—
Jesus Christ our Savior—

Heb. 10:21–23

let us approach God with a true heart
in full assurance of faith,
with our hearts sprinkled clean
from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed with pure water.

**Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering,
for God who has promised is faithful.**

Prayer of Confession *David Sparks, Gathering: Lent/Easter/Pentecost 2011, p.37-8. Used with permission.*

Would we have been among those who brought Jesus to the cross?

Like the disciples we find a reason to avoid getting involved if our lifestyle is in danger.

Would we have been among those who brought Jesus to the cross?

**Like the Jewish leaders we are suspicious of those who force us to abandon the status quo
and consider fresh directions.**

Would we have been among those who brought Jesus to the cross?

**Like Pilate we are among those who know the faithful way,
but are afraid of the consequences of following that way.**

Would we have been among those who brought Jesus to the cross?

**Like the soldiers we really don't want to be involved in the issues;
it isn't our place, our concern.**

Would we have been among those who brought Jesus to the cross?
(time of silent reflection)

Words of Assurance *David Sparks, Gathering: Lent/Easter/Pentecost 2011, p.37-8, alt. Used with permission.*

We find echoes from our own experience in the action and the inaction
Of those who brought Jesus to the cross;
Those who had the power, and those who were his friends.

**We see opportunities to take a different stance
and express a different point of view.**

God calls us to change.

We embrace God's call!

God's pardon and peace are yours.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Ministry of Music: "Come and Mourn with Me Awhile" by Anna Laura Page *sung by the Melville United Choir accompanied by Colleen Weber*

Scripture: Luke 22:39-53 *(The Message)*

³⁹⁻⁴⁰ Leaving there, he went, as he so often did, to Mount Olives. The disciples followed him. When they arrived at the place, he said, "Pray that you don't give in to temptation."

⁴¹⁻⁴⁴ He pulled away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, remove this cup from me. But please, not what I want. What do *you* want?" At once an angel from heaven was

at his side, strengthening him. He prayed on all the harder. Sweat, wrung from him like drops of blood, poured off his face.

⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶ He got up from prayer, went back to the disciples and found them asleep, drugged by grief. He said, "What business do you have sleeping? Get up. Pray so you won't give in to temptation."

⁴⁷⁻⁴⁸ No sooner were the words out of his mouth than a crowd showed up, Judas, the one from the Twelve, in the lead. He came right up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said, "Judas, you would betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"

⁴⁹⁻⁵⁰ When those with him saw what was happening, they said, "Master, shall we fight?" One of them took a swing at the Chief Priest's servant and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹ Jesus said, "Let them be. Even in this." Then, touching the servant's ear, he healed him.

⁵²⁻⁵³ Jesus spoke to those who had come—high priests, Temple police, religion leaders: "What is this, jumping me with swords and clubs as if I were a dangerous criminal? Day after day I've been with you in the Temple and you've not so much as lifted a hand against me. But do it your way—it's a dark night, a dark hour."

Prayer for Courage adapted from "Grant Me Peace Prayer" at ConnectUs <https://connectusfund.org/15-inspiring-prayers-for-courage>

Dear God, we have gone against your will
and continued to live in fear of doing what we are supposed to do.

Like the disciples, the Jewish leaders, Pilate,
all those who were involved in placing Jesus on the cross,
fear cripples us.

It causes us anxiety.

Fear and anxiety affect so much of our lives, our relationship with you
and our relationships with others.

God, we pray for your strength and courage,

Like that which Jesus showed in his passion and crucifixion.

Your promise is that you are always here with us
and we should not fear anything,

even if we walk through the shadows of the valley of the death.

Grant us the peace to stop letting fear have the upper hand
and to courageously live the way you want us to live.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn: Were You There

Were you there when the guards came to arrest?

Were you there when the guards came to arrest?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the guards came to arrest?

Scripture: Luke 22:54-62 *(The Message)*

⁵⁴⁻⁵⁶ Arresting Jesus, they marched him off and took him into the house of the Chief Priest. Peter followed, but at a safe distance. In the middle of the courtyard some people had started a fire and were sitting around it, trying to keep warm. One of the serving maids sitting at the fire noticed him, then took a second look and said, "This man was with him!"

⁵⁷ He denied it, "Woman, I don't even know him."

⁵⁸ A short time later, someone else noticed him and said, "You're one of them."

But Peter denied it: “Man, I am not.”

⁵⁹ About an hour later, someone else spoke up, really adamant: “He’s got to have been with him! He’s got ‘Galilean’ written all over him.”

⁶⁰⁻⁶² Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about.” At that very moment, the last word hardly off his lips, a rooster crowed. Just then, the Master turned and looked at Peter. Peter remembered what the Master had said to him: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” He went out and cried and cried and cried.

Prayer for Those in Need of Grace *adapted from Learn Religions: Prayers for Grace*

[https://www.learnreligions.com/prayer-for-gods-grace-](https://www.learnreligions.com/prayer-for-gods-grace-712164#:~:text=Lord%2C%20I%20ask%20that%20you,so%20need%20in%20their%20lives.)

[712164#:~:text=Lord%2C%20I%20ask%20that%20you,so%20need%20in%20their%20lives.](https://www.learnreligions.com/prayer-for-gods-grace-712164#:~:text=Lord%2C%20I%20ask%20that%20you,so%20need%20in%20their%20lives.)

Gracious God,

we know you are merciful,

and that you extend grace and mercy in spite of behaviour,
in spite of sins.

In your goodness God, you come to all those that need you.

Sometimes we commit sin knowing it is sin.

We are human, and we know that is not an excuse,

but you have told us and shown us that your love is unconditional, unending,
despite, and perhaps because of, our human nature.

For all the people and all the times that we trust to our own feeble strength,
rather than admitting, even to ourselves, our weakness,
we pray for your grace.

There are many times when people pull away from you,

when temptations and distractions are too persistent to resist

and when people are broken by harm that comes to body, mind and spirit.

We pray for strength for all in need to get through each day, each challenging situation.

We pray also for ourselves for the strength to be honest, supportive, nurturing and caring,

So that we too can be an instrument of your grace.

We pray this in the name of your beloved son Jesus. Amen.

Hymn: Were You There

Were you there when Peter first denied the Lord?

Were you there when Peter first denied the Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.

Were you there when Peter first denied the Lord?

Scripture: Luke 22:63-71 *(The Message)*

⁶³⁻⁶⁵ The men in charge of Jesus began poking fun at him, slapping him around. They put a blindfold on him and taunted, “Who hit you that time?” They were having a grand time with him.

⁶⁶⁻⁶⁷ When it was morning, the religious leaders of the people and the high priests and scholars all got together and brought him before their High Council. They said, “Are you the Messiah?”

⁶⁷⁻⁶⁹ He answered, “If I said yes, you wouldn’t believe me. If I asked what you meant by your question, you wouldn’t answer me. So here’s what I have to say: From here on the Son of Man takes his place at God’s right hand, the place of power.”

⁷⁰ They all said, “So you admit your claim to be the Son of God?”

“You’re the ones who keep saying it,” he said.

⁷¹ But they had made up their minds, “Why do we need any more evidence? We’ve all heard him as good as say it himself.”

Prayer for Justice *David Sparks, Gathering: Lent/Easter/Pentecost 2011, p.38, alt. Used with permission.*

Crucified,

Because they have been driven from their home

And have ended up in a refugee camp.

Crucified,

Because they are not afraid to speak out against

Racist remarks in a local community group.

Crucified,

Because they choose to write letters to support political prisoners rather than go to a party.

Crucified...

(time of silent reflection)

You are one with the crucified, Loving God;

We will be too.

Crucified,

Because they are old, powerless, and cannot speak up for themselves.

Crucified,

Because they are young, powerless, and no one will listen to them.

Crucified,

Because they are sick, depressed, and cannot explain themselves to the doctor.

(time of silent reflection)

You are one with the crucified, Loving God;

We will be too.

Crucified,

Because their love of a loved one leaves them despairing and their friends do not understand

Crucified,

Because they have heard God’s call to follow Jesus, but they can find no encouragement.

Crucified,

Because they speak up for local outreach and mission and get no response.

Crucified,

(time of silent reflection)

You are one with the crucified, Loving God;

We will be too.

Crucified,

Because we want to follow a new life's direction and those close to us can only speak of problems.

Crucified,

Because we speak out against a local issue and are told to keep our opinions to ourselves.

Crucified,

Because we try to bring resolution to a conflict in the family circle and are advised to mind our own business.

(time of silent reflection)

**You are one with the crucified, Loving God;
You will be with us as well.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: Were You There

Were you there when they decreed that he should die?
Were you there when they decreed that he should die?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they decreed that he should die?

Scripture: Luke 23:1-25 *(The Message)*

¹⁻² Then they all took Jesus to Pilate and began to bring up charges against him. They said, "We found this man undermining our law and order, forbidding taxes to be paid to Caesar, setting himself up as Messiah-King."

³ Pilate asked him, "Is this true that you're 'King of the Jews'?"
"Those are your words, not mine," Jesus replied.

⁴ Pilate told the high priests and the accompanying crowd, "I find nothing wrong here. He seems harmless enough to me."

⁵ But they were vehement. "He's stirring up unrest among the people with his teaching, disturbing the peace everywhere, starting in Galilee and now all through Judea. He's a dangerous man, endangering the peace."

⁶⁻⁷ When Pilate heard that, he asked, "So, he's a Galilean?" Realizing that he properly came under Herod's jurisdiction, he passed the buck to Herod, who just happened to be in Jerusalem for a few days.

⁸⁻¹⁰ Herod was delighted when Jesus showed up. He had wanted for a long time to see him, he'd

heard so much about him. He hoped to see him do something spectacular. He peppered him with questions. Jesus didn't answer—not one word. But the high priests and religion scholars were right there, saying their piece, strident and shrill in their accusations.

¹¹⁻¹² Mightily offended, Herod turned on Jesus. His soldiers joined in, taunting and jeering. Then they dressed him up in an elaborate king costume and sent him back to Pilate. That day Herod and Pilate became thick as thieves. Always before they had kept their distance.

¹³⁻¹⁶ Then Pilate called in the high priests, rulers, and the others and said, “You brought this man to me as a disturber of the peace. I examined him in front of all of you and found there was nothing to your charge. And neither did Herod, for he has sent him back here with a clean bill of health. It's clear that he's done nothing wrong, let alone anything deserving death. I'm going to warn him to watch his step and let him go.”

¹⁸⁻²⁰ At that, the crowd went wild: “Kill him! Give us Barabbas!” (Barabbas had been thrown in prison for starting a riot in the city and for murder.) Pilate still wanted to let Jesus go, and so spoke out again.

²¹ But they kept shouting back, “Crucify! Crucify him!”

²² He tried a third time. “But for what crime? I've found nothing in him deserving death. I'm going to warn him to watch his step and let him go.”

²³⁻²⁵ But they kept at it, a shouting mob, demanding that he be crucified. And finally they shouted him down. Pilate caved in and gave them what they wanted. He released the man thrown in prison for rioting and murder, and gave them Jesus to do whatever they wanted.

Prayer for Those in Leadership *adapted from Connect Us: 6 Good Prayers for Leadership Guidance*
<https://connectusfund.org/6-good-prayers-for-leadership-guidance>

Empowering God,
there are so many people who take on positions of leadership,
in communities, regions, nations, policy, business, institutions, academia, the church.
We pray that you will give every leader strength
so they do not grow weary in their leadership role.
Sometimes the tasks may seem overwhelming and exhausting.
We pray that every leader know that they do not lead alone,
that they do not need to rely on themselves,
but have your presence and power with them to guide them in all they do.
As leaders lead in the many various ways,
we pray that they will not do it selfishly, for personal ambition or vain conceit,
but that they will look to the interests of others and especially those they lead.
We pray that leaders realize that leading is really a task that requires them to serve.
We pray that you would instill the humility for leaders to lead by service.
We ask all this in the name of Jesus, your high priest who humbly leads people to you. Amen.

Hymn: Were You There

Were you there when they shouted “Crucify”?

Were you there when they shouted “Crucify”?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they shouted “Crucify”?

Scripture: Luke 23:26-43 *(The Message)*

²⁶⁻³¹ As they led him off, they made Simon, a man from Cyrene who happened to be coming in from the countryside, carry the cross behind Jesus. A huge crowd of people followed, along with women weeping and carrying on. At one point Jesus turned to the women and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t cry for me. Cry for yourselves and for your children. The time is coming when they’ll say, ‘Lucky the women who never conceived! Lucky the wombs that never gave birth! Lucky the breasts that never gave milk!’ Then they’ll start calling to the mountains, ‘Fall down on us!’ calling to the hills, ‘Cover us up!’ If people do these things to a live, green tree, can you imagine what they’ll do with deadwood?”

³² Two others, both criminals, were taken along with him for execution.

³³ When they got to the place called Skull Hill, they crucified him, along with the criminals, one on his right, the other on his left.

³⁴⁻³⁵ Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them; they don’t know what they’re doing.” Dividing up his clothes, they threw dice for them. The people stood there staring at Jesus, and the ringleaders made faces, taunting, “He saved others. Let’s see him save himself! The Messiah of God—ha! The Chosen—ha!”

³⁶⁻³⁷ The soldiers also came up and poked fun at him, making a game of it. They toasted him with sour wine: “So you’re King of the Jews! Save yourself!”

³⁸ Printed over him was a sign: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁹ One of the criminals hanging alongside cursed him: “Some Messiah you are! Save yourself! Save us!”

⁴⁰⁻⁴¹ But the other one made him shut up: “Have you no fear of God? You’re getting the same as him. We deserve this, but not him—he did nothing to deserve this.”

⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you enter your kingdom.”

⁴³ He said, “Don’t worry, I will. Today you will join me in paradise.”

Prayer for Those in Grief *adapted from Crosswalk.com: 5 Beautiful Prayers for a Friend Who Is Grieving*
<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/prayer/beautiful-prayers-for-a-friend-who-is-grieving.html>

Loving and compassionate God,
This day we lift up those in grief.

We think of those who are mourning the loss of a loved one.
Thank you for your promise to walk with and even carry each one
as they travel through the shadows of grief.
Protect their hearts and minds,
that even when emotions in and around them run high,
the peace you give to those grieving would overflow onto those nearby.

We think of those who have suffered a job loss.
We pray, O God, that you would meet them in the difficult,
even scary place in which they find themselves,
for you are their shelter in the storm.
Help them release any feelings of shock, anger or confusion.
As you know each one's needs, we pray that each would turn to you to supply everything they lack,
and to grow in trust as they see your response.
Grant emotional support, through quiet time with you and through family and friends.
Help people who have lost employment understand
that their identity does not come from a job, that work does not define them.
Reassure them that they are each valuable to you, and deeply loved,
just as they are at this moment.

We think of those whose marriage is ending.
Every breakdown of relationship is a painful situation that affects so many people.
We pray that you would cover and provide for those whose marriage is ending,
and also family and friends who are impacted by this change as well.
As the spouses separate, be the balm that their hearts need now.
When they feel regretful or angry, bring your soothing touch.
As they mourn, keep them from despair.
If loneliness becomes too great, break its grip.
Please help each to know the care and kindness of others, and to care for themselves.
Reassure them that even though their marriage has ended, they never have to fear being separated
from you.

We think of those whose nests have become empty.
There can be much richness in families, and often a strong bond between parents and children.
Parents may have invested themselves in their children's lives, raising and caring for them,
and now must watch as their children step out on their own.
The pain of separation may be intense.
We pray that you would help parents navigate all the emotions that arise
as their children move into lives of their own.
Help them not to fall into sadness but look back with fondness on that period of their lives.
As a new season of life begins, reassure parents that even as their roles shift,
their position as parent will never change,
and they will continue to be needed in the lives of their children.

We think of those whose dreams have been delayed or lost.
Thank you that we are each beautifully and wonderfully made,
with abilities and talents that you call us to us.
But sometimes we make plans that, for whatever reason don't work out as we'd imagined.
Scripture tells us that your ways are not our ways, and that we see in a mirror only dimly,
so help those disappointed with the turns their lives have taken
to turn to you and lean on you as confidant and comforter.
Help them to let go of their dream for the moment.
Help them to discern your will and vision for their life.
Help them, and us all, to bring glory to you by the use of our gifts,
and teach us patience as we wait for your timing.
Provide supportive friends and wise counsellors to guard each one's steps.

Loving God, for all who are grieving we pray for your peace.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Hymn: Were You There

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?

Scripture: Luke 23:44-56 *(The Message)*

⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶ By now it was noon. The whole earth became dark, the darkness lasting three hours—a total blackout. The Temple curtain split right down the middle. Jesus called loudly, “Father, I place my life in your hands!” Then he breathed his last.

* * *

⁴⁷ When the captain there saw what happened, he honored God: “This man was innocent! A good man, and innocent!”

⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹ All who had come around as spectators to watch the show, when they saw what actually happened, were overcome with grief and headed home. Those who knew Jesus well, along with the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a respectful distance and kept vigil.

⁵⁰⁻⁵⁴ There was a man by the name of Joseph, a member of the Jewish High Council, a man of good heart and good character. He had not gone along with the plans and actions of the council. His hometown was the Jewish village of Arimathea. He lived in alert expectation of the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Taking him down, he wrapped him in a linen shroud and placed him in a tomb chiseled into the rock, a tomb never yet used. It was the day before Sabbath, the Sabbath just about to begin.

⁵⁵⁻⁵⁶ The women who had been companions of Jesus from Galilee followed along. They saw the tomb where Jesus' body was placed. Then they went back to prepare burial spices and perfumes. They rested quietly on the Sabbath, as commanded.

Prayer for Hope Sharon Tedford, *Engage Worship: 'It was my sin' worship idea*

<https://engageworship.org/ideas/was-sin-worship-idea>

Our Saviour Jesus,
As we look on the symbol before us,
we are reminded that you put yourself in the place that we deserve to be.
You chose to be broken and wounded, beaten and spat upon, rejected and ridiculed.
Today, as we see our names covering the cross,
help us to remember that you diverted what was heading our way.
You accepted the outcome that was due to us.
You did so freely and out of overwhelming love.
You assumed our role in the story of death.
You took our place in the portrait of mortality.
You became our substitute in the race that would only end in ruin.
And in doing so you faced death head on.
You stood in the darkness;
Your body buckled under the weight of wrong,
you experienced the collapse of life
and the apparent demise of God's plan.
We pray to live in gratitude for your sacrifice for us. Amen.

Hymn: Hymn: Were You There

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Jesus said, "It is finished." *John 19:30*

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Hold us fast, God our Savior,
as the curtain of night is torn,
and this dark day approaches.
Hold us fast, God our Savior,
as our faith and hope are tested
and we await the rising sun. Amen.

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Holy God,
enthroned on the praises of your people,
we cry to you by day
and call on you by night.
Do not be far from us,
for trouble is near
and there is no one else to help. Amen.