

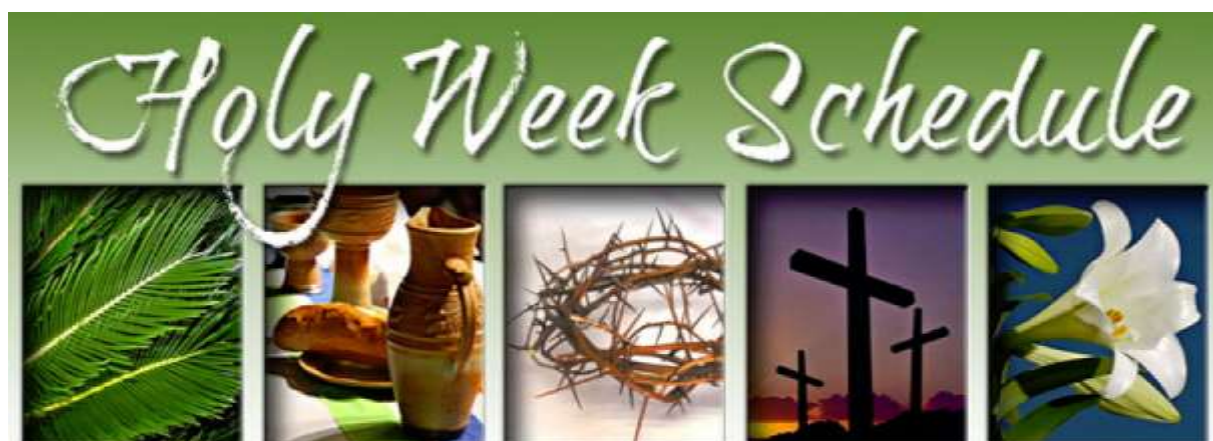


Scottish Episcopal Church Highland Perthshire Linked Charge



PRAYERS AND REFLECTIONS

FOR PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER



For your use at home

PALM SUNDAY

On Palm Sunday we commemorate Jesus Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, as foretold "Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey"

Zechariah 9:9

Opening Prayers

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Have mercy on me, O God:
according to your loving-kindness.

I know my transgressions:
and my sin is ever before me.

Purge me from my sin and I shall be pure: wash me and I shall be clean indeed.

Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me. (*From Psalm 51*)

Collect for Palm Sunday

Assist us mercifully with your help,
Lord God of our salvation:
that we may enter with joy
into the celebration of those mighty acts
whereby you give us life and immortality;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings – Matthew 21.1-11 & Psalm 118.19-29

Pilgrimage – by Malcom Guite (from *Parable and Paradox*, Canterbury Press)

Come dip a scallop shell into the font
For birth and blessings as a child of God.
The living water rises from that fount
Whence all things come, that you may bathe and wade
And find the flow, and learn at last to follow
The course of Love upstream towards your home.
The day is done and all the fields lie fallow,
One thing is needful, one voice calls your name.
Take the true compass now, be compassed round
By clouds of witness, chords of love unbound.
Turn to the Son, begin you pilgrimage,
Take time with him to find your true direction.
He travels with you through this darkened age
And wakes you every day to resurrection.

Reflection

Jesus is beginning the end of his journey to the cross and in Holy Week we give time to joining him on that pilgrimage. It is going to look very different for many of us this year, but it can still be a special time of preparation and celebration. Write down some things that you will do this week to mark this season and prepare for Easter (for example: saying morning or evening prayers; stripping the home of religious elements in place of stripping the altar on Maundy Thursday; fasting on Good Friday; preparing Easter foods and treats; create a “Resurrection Garden” or Easter Tree).

“Take time with him to find your true direction”. Spend some time in prayer asking God and thinking about what journey you might engage with this Holy Week. Do you trust that

Christ will accompany you through the “darkened age”? What keeps you from being able to “find the flow” of His love? Do you hear the voice that “calls your name”, to begin your pilgrimage towards resurrection?

It is traditional to read the narrative of Jesus’ death on Palm Sunday in order to carry it with us throughout the week. Read Matthew 26.14 – 27.66 and consider again how you will be marking the journey.

Hymn

Sing or listen to “All glory, laud, and honour, to thee redeemer King”

Available here: <https://youtu.be/uh4AMZ6CCVw>

Prayer

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory. Amen.

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

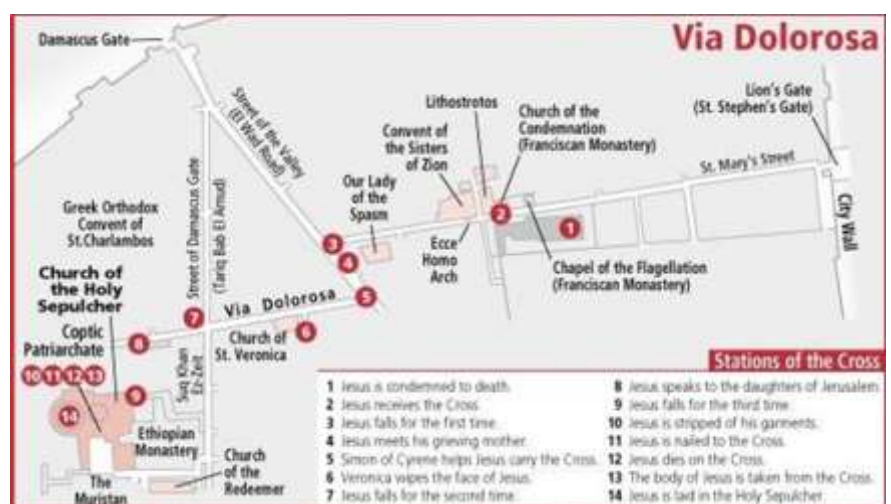
We begin this week to walk the way of the cross with Christ. Some of us have walked this road in Jerusalem, but we can all follow the way this week in our prayers.

Reading - Luke 22: 39-46

“If you want to be my friends, take up your cross and walk with me.”

It is time to consider our journey of faith through life, the cross/es we carry and those who help us to carry it / them

What crosses do you carry? Are they a heavy burden or a light one? In our lifetime we each have a whole assortment of crosses, all distinctly ours. Some are so heavy we will stagger and fall beneath their weight, some so light that they are almost a joke, plywood or plastic. Jesus’ command is inexorable: if you want to walk with me, there are no excuses, no days off, you just have to shoulder the cross and get on with it.



Look aside – others may have crosses so much heavier than ours and they need our help. St. Veronica wiped Jesus' face; Simon of Cyrene carried the cross; whose way can we help to make more bearable?

**Loving Lord,
Walking along the way of the Cross,
Help us to learn what it means for us
To take up our cross
Whatever its size, its shape or its weight.
Support our steps as they stumble and fall
And raise us up by the power of your Spirit.**

TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

You are my hope, O Lord; my trust, O God, from my youth. On you I depend from birth; from my mother's womb you are my strength." (Psalm 71:5)

Reading - John 12.20-27

Consider Jesus aware of his impending death, with soul troubled and yet going forward to utter desolation and destruction

*"Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say?
'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour" John 12:27*

Trusting in the Father even though now and in the darkness of Gethsemane there will be no saving miracle and Jesus will die seemingly abandoned and alone. But he will not falter. Neither should we fail to trust in God, even when God seems silent we need to trust that the God of mighty love stand beside us, that even in our darkness, God stands with us, suffers with us and loves us and waits patiently for us to return that love. In the silence of Holy Week let us like Jesus try to hear the voice of love through the pain, the chaos and the turmoil.



Silent God by Edwina Gateley in 'Psalms of a Laywoman'

This is my prayer—
That, though I may not see,
I be aware
Of the Silent God
Who stands by me.
That, though I may not feel,
I be aware
Of the Mighty Love
Which doggedly follows me.
That, though I may not respond,

I be aware
That God—my Silent, Mighty God,
Waits each day.
Quietly, hopefully, persistently.
Waits each day and through each night
For me.
For me—alone.

Collect

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son
you made an instrument of shameful
death to be for us the means of life.
May our lives be so transformed by his passion
that we may witness to his grace;
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Reading - John 13.21-32

Consider Judas,
a passionate young man who had left everything
to follow the one whom he thought would bring
justice and freedom to an oppressed people.
What might he have felt as Jesus spoke about love,
meekness, and even dying?

Which emotions might he have experienced as Jesus
looked him in the eye, handed him the piece of bread, and said, “What you do, do quickly”?
And as he arrived in the garden with a pocket full of silver, a band of soldiers behind him,
and leant in to give Jesus the fateful kiss – how do you imagine he felt in that moment?
Through all his anger, pain, fear, sorrow, regret, shame, and self-loathing – how do you
think Jesus felt about him?



Caravaggio's 'The Taking of Christ'

*“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers,
nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing,
shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” –
Romans 8.38-39*

Collect for Holy Wednesday

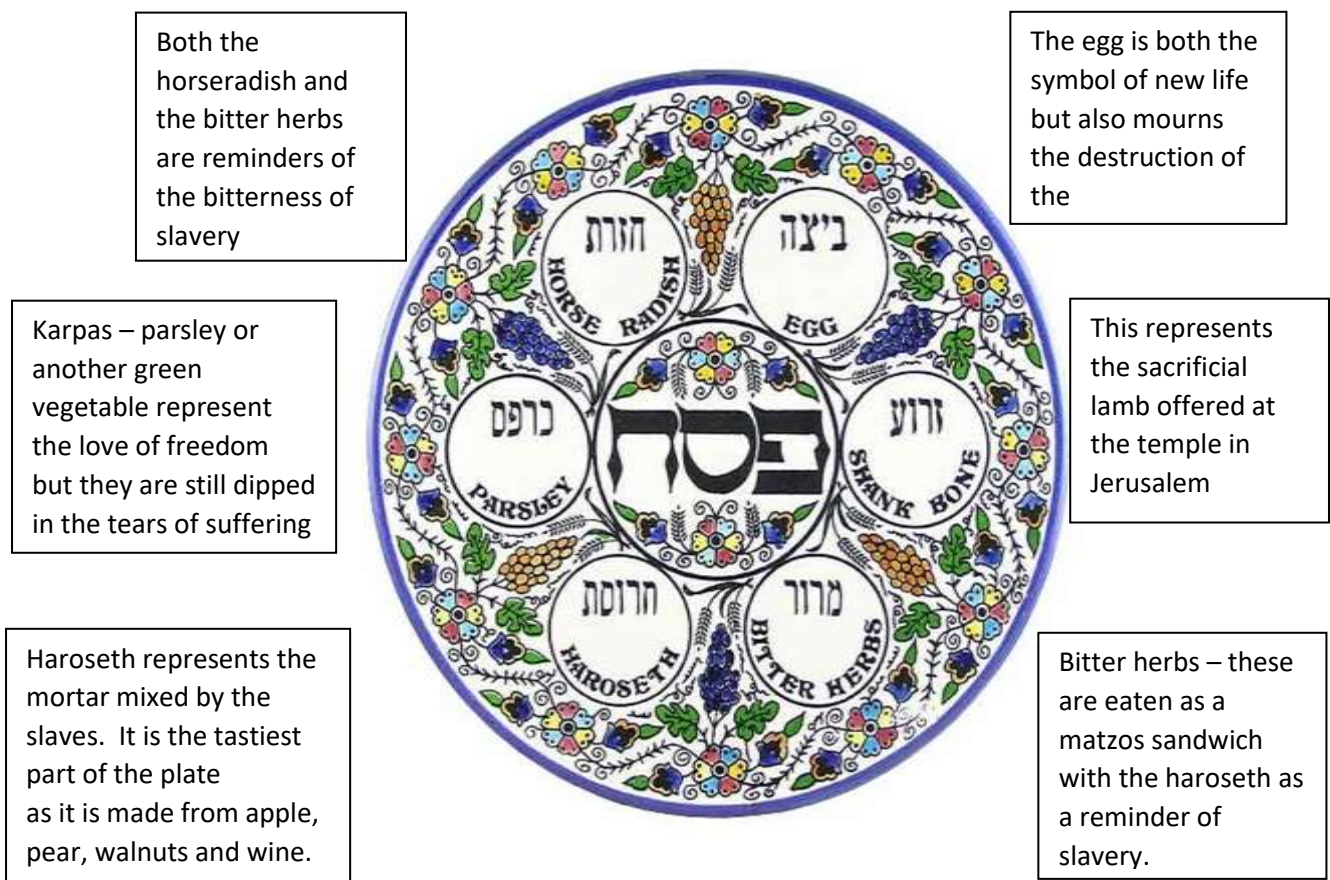
O Lord God,
whose blessed Son, our Saviour,

gave his back to the smiters,
and did not hide his face from shame:
give us grace to endure the sufferings of this present time,
and confidence in the glory that shall be revealed;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples in the upper room. You can read the account in John 13:1-17, 31b-35. We had planned to celebrate a Passover this year together but perhaps you might like to follow this guide for yourself before eating your evening meal. Lamb would be a traditional choice.

Passover was and is very important to the Jews as it celebrates their escape from Egypt: Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14. Each element of the Seder plate recalls part of the story. In the centre of the plate would be a dish of salt water to recall the tears of the Jews as they suffered in Egypt – some of the other items are dipped into the water as they are eaten. The boiled egg would be the first course of the following meal – dipped in the salt water.



Blessed are You, Our God, Ruler of the world, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Each part of the seder is accompanied by glasses of wine, four cups during the celebration and one cup is set aside for Elijah to join the meal. It is all served with the unleavened bread – matzos. Each part of the seder is introduced by the youngest member of the family asking questions about the story and its significance.

In breaking the bread and passing the cup of wine Jesus was following the pattern of some of the Passover celebration although it has obviously become more complex as time has passed. He also followed the custom of ritual cleansing before the meal by washing the disciples' feet.

Prayer

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY



Ludvig_Karsten_Nedtagelsen_1925

Good Friday faces us with the death of Jesus on the cross. We come to be near him in his suffering. We come also to lament the world's sin and the fragmentation of our lives.

Lamentation is an ancient form of prayer, of crying out to God in the midst of senselessness, violence and confusion. The Bible is full of lamentations. Jesus' own lament, "Why have you abandoned me?", echoes especially in our hearts especially at this time.

Preparation

You will need a nail/s and if you wish a piece of music that expresses the feeling of lament for you.

Opening Prayer

This is a night of grieving. In our sorrow, we ask the Spirit to give us hope as we pray:

Holy Spirit, gather our hurts and losses and all the world's grief into the arms of Christ, extended to embrace us. Help us to believe that living or dying we belong to God. Amen.

Reading 1. Isaiah 52: 13-53: 12 *(followed by silence)*

Prayer: Gracious God, at the cross, the lament of all human history rises from the soul of Jesus. We believe that in him you yourself grieve, until promised morning comes.

Praise to you in shadow and light, in gladness and grief, in every breath, and at the last breath. Amen.

Reading 2. Mark 15: 25-37 *(followed by silence)*

Reading 3. Mark 15: 42-47 *(followed by silence)*

Prayer: Silent God, the suffering of the innocent is a terrible mystery. We wonder if there is hope for our world – any hope at all, even in you. Answer us, O God, and by the tears of Jesus keep our hearts safe and our hope alive as we lament our losses, speak our anger, grieve our disappointments and release our pain. Amen.

A Time for Reflection: A Time for Lamentation *Using the poem, the picture and the nail/s, use the time to reflect on the meaning of the cross for the world, its need, pain and sorrow. Read the poem, study the picture, hold the nail/s, when you are ready make your lamentations and prayers for the world & its pain*



Pieta by RS Thomas

Always the same hills
Crowd the horizon,
Remote witness
Of the still scene.
And in the foreground
The tall Cross,
Sombre, untenanted,
Aches for the Body
That is the back in the cradle
Of a maid's arms

Reading Romans 8:18-39 *(followed by silence)*

Prayer: Spirit of Life, thank you for the healing power of the cross.
Thank you for not abandoning us in our sins.
Thank you for praying in us when, in grief and anger, we do not know what to say.
Thank you for joining us forever to Christ, who bears our pain and the world's great sorrow.
Thank you for the life that is to come.
Hasten the day when lament will be no more.
Do not leave us when the light wanes and the road disappears,
but bring us through all our nights to the clear shining of Easter.
We ask this, trusting you, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Ending

Go now in peace. Bear the weight of the cross
and the hope of resurrection to all who yearn for life. **Amen.**

HOLY SATURDAY

You may not be able to come tonight to celebrate the LITURGY OF THE LIGHT, follow this simple reflection and these prayers adapted from the Easter Vigil, light a candle and contemplate the death and resurrection of Jesus, celebrate the light of Christ, rising and dispelling the darkness of our hearts and minds. (You need a Candle and a piece of music to play as you pray)

Reflection As we await the dawn of Easter, let us remember there is no Easter Sunday without Holy Saturday. It is through



the blackness of Holy Saturday that we must see the joy of the women at the tomb, the joy and courage of the disciples.

Easter is about life in the fullest sense. Not theological life or philosophical life, but the life of a man who was dead and then not dead anymore.

The 'Holy Saturday people' of this world are looking for 'Easter people'. The essence of Christianity is not in doctrine or confessions, important as they are. The first Christians, the first 'Easter people', had a simple message: 'Jesus was dead. Now he is alive. We've seen him.'

This is what we have to offer the 'Holy Saturday people'. Nothing is impossible anymore. No system is so evil, so oppressive, so entrenched that we cannot overthrow it. If Jesus is not dead then nothing is impossible. We await no revolution; Easter was the revolution.

I said to my mind, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love
For love would be love of the wrong thing; yet there is faith
But the faith and the hope and the love are all in the waiting.
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought:
So the darkness shall be light, and the stillness the dancing.
~T. S. Eliot, from "East Coker" The Four Quartets

Prayers from The Liturgy of the Light

On this most holy night,
in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,
the church celebrates the Paschal Mystery
through which we share in Christ's victory over death
and in his eternal life and reign with God our Father.
As we await the dawn of Easter, let us greet the light of Christ's new day. (*Light your candle with the words*)

Almighty God, may this fire be a sign to me of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead; may I be renewed in faith, hope, and love, and shine as a light in the world

to your glory. Amen. *(Sit in silent prayer or with music until you are ready to end your personal Vigil)*

EASTER DAY

***Christ is risen Alleluia Alleluia,
He is risen indeed. Alleluia Alleluia***

*Where doubt and darkness once had been, they
saw Him and their hearts believed.
But blessed are those who have not seen, and
yet, sing Alleluia*



Collect

Lord of life and power, through the mighty resurrection of your Son you have overcome the old order of sin and death and have made all things new in him. May we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, reign with him in glory, who with you and the Holy Spirit is alive, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Eucharistic Prayer IV New Life, The Lord, The Spirit (From Easter day to Pentecost)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, Author of all being.

Your power sustains, your love restores, our broken world.

You are unceasingly at work, from chaos bringing order
and filling emptiness with life.

Christ, raised from the dead, proclaims the dawn of hope.

He lives in us that we may walk in light.

Your Spirit is fire in us, your breath is power
to purge our sin and warm our hearts to love.

As children of your redeeming purpose, freed by him who burst from the tomb
and opened the gate of life, we offer you our praise, with angels and
archangels and the whole company of heaven, singing the hymn of your

unending glory:

Holy, holy, holy Lord

God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Praise and thanksgiving be to you, Lord of all,

for by the Cross, eternal life is ours

and death is swallowed up in victory.

In the first light of Easter glory broke from the tomb

and changed the women's sorrow into joy.

From the Garden the mystery dawned

that he whom they had loved and lost

is with us now in every place for ever.

Making himself known in the breaking of the bread,

speaking peace to the fearful disciples,

welcoming weary fishermen on the shore,

your son Jesus Christ renewed the promise of his presence

and of new birth in the Spirit

who sets the seal of freedom on your sons and daughters.

Before he was given up to suffering and death,

recalling the night of Israel's release,

the night in which slaves walked free,

at supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks.

He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying:

"Take, eat.

This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup,

he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying:

"Drink this, all of you.

This is my Blood of the new covenant;

it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven.

Do this in remembrance of me."

We now obey your Son's command

We recall his blessed passion and death,

his glorious resurrection and ascension;

and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.

Made one with him, we offer you these gifts

and with them ourselves a single, holy living sacrifice.

Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us

and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;
may we grow together in unity and love
until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage
in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all our brothers and sisters
living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you,
Lord of all ages,
world without end. **Amen**



WITH LOVE AND BLESSINGS TO YOU ALL

May The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you and those you love now and always. Amen

EASTER 2025

From Liz & Lesley