

Proposed Alternate Good Friday Liturgy

Proposed changes to 1979 BCP rite in red. Footnotes provided to explain changes or other issues.

On this day the ministers enter in silence.

All then kneel for silent prayer, after which the Celebrant stands and begins the liturgy with the Collect of the Day.

Immediately before the Collect, the Celebrant may say

Blessed be our God.

People For ever and ever. Amen.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Old Testament Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalm 22

Epistle **Philippians 2:5-11 or Ephesians 1:3-10**

The Passion Gospel is announced in the following manner

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

The customary responses before and after the Gospel are omitted.

John 18:1-19:42 **or 19:1-42**

The Passion Gospel supplied for this alternate liturgy may be used. If another translation is used, care to explain the meaning of the term “the Jews” in the passion reading is the duty of the leaders of the service.

The Passion Gospel may be read or chanted by lay persons. Specific roles may be assigned to different persons, the congregation taking the part of the crowd.

The congregation may be seated for the first part of the Passion. At the verse which mentions the arrival at Golgotha (John 19:17) all stand.

The Sermon follows.

A hymn may then be sung.

The Solemn Collects

All standing, the Deacon, or other person appointed, says to the people

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

In the biddings which follow, the indented portions may be adapted by addition or omission, as appropriate, at the discretion of the Celebrant.

The people may be directed to stand or kneel.

The biddings may be read by a Deacon or other person appointed. The Celebrant says the Collects.

Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;

For its unity in witness and service
For all bishops and other ministers
and the people whom they serve
For N., our Bishop, and all the people of this diocese
For all Christians in this community
For those about to be baptized (particularly _____)

That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

Silence

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them;

For N., the President of the United States
For the Congress and the Supreme Court
For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations
For all who serve the common good

That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

Silence

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for the Jewish people who possess an eternal covenant with the Lord, who delivered them from bondage to freedom;

For continued faithfulness to God's covenant with them;
For their flourishing in peace as witnesses to God's sustaining love;
For safety from all malice and harm;
For the fullness of redemption for the sake of God's Name.

That unity and concord may exist between Jews and Christians in obedience to God's will.

Silence

God of Abraham, you planted your people Israel as the root and grafted Gentiles as wild branches into a single olive tree of praise to you: As we come near to the cross, we lament Christian acts of prejudice and violence against your faithful people, of whom Jesus Christ was born. So bless the children of your covenant that we together may attain the fullness of your blessing for the world. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;

For those who are hungry and homeless, destitute and oppressed
For those who are ill or disabled, in body, mind, or spirit
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish
For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair
For those who are sorrowful and bereaved
For those who are persecuted for the sake of Christ
For prisoners, refugees, and captives
For victims of war, genocide, and trafficking, and all those in mortal danger

That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for those who have not embraced God's redemptive love;

For those who have never heard the word of salvation
For those who have lost their faith
For those hardened by sin and indifference
For the contemptuous and the scornful
For those who are persecutors of his disciples
For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others

That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience.

Silence

Merciful God, the source of life and fountain of mercy, let the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ be preached with grace and love; turn the hearts of the followers of Jesus who have harmed others in his name; lead all to repentance and amendment of life; and sustain by your loving grace all who lift their eyes to you. *Amen.*

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The service may be concluded here with the singing of a hymn or anthem, the Lord's Prayer, and the final prayer on page 282.

If desired, a wooden cross may now be brought into the church and placed in the sight of the people.

Appropriate devotions may follow, which may include any or all of the following, or other suitable anthems. If the texts are recited rather than sung, the congregation reads the parts in italics. If the Improperia or Reproaches are used, revised texts that do not implicate the Jewish people are to be used.

Anthem 1

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;

*for by virtue of your cross
joy has come to the whole world.*

May God be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of his countenance, and come to us.

*Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.*

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

*We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross
joy has come to the whole world.*

Anthem 2

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
if we endure, we shall also reign with him.

*We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Anthem 3

O Savior of the world,
who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us:
Save us and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

The hymn "Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle," or some other hymn extolling the glory of the cross, is then sung.

The service may be concluded here with the Lord's Prayer and the final prayer below.

In the absence of a bishop or priest, all that precedes may be led by a deacon or lay reader.

In places where Holy Communion is to be administered from the reserved Sacrament, the following order is observed

A Confession of Sin

The Lord's Prayer

The Communion

The service concludes with the following prayer. No blessing or dismissal is added.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

NOTES

p.1 The two options for the reading from the epistles are designed to provide alternative perspectives on the meaning of the death of Jesus Christ. The traditional reading from the Letter to the Hebrews frames the death of Jesus as the final sacrifice offered to God. Jesus Christ becomes both the sacrifice and the high priest offering the sacrifice. The first alternative reading from the Letter to the Philippians explains the death of Jesus Christ on the cross as the culmination of his self-emptying life in this world, despite his equality with God. His death becomes the vehicle for his exaltation and his definitive revelation as Lord. The second alternative reading from the Letter to the Ephesians situates the death of Jesus Christ within a larger arc of salvation history. God the Father chose Jesus Christ before creation to be for humans the means by which they attain redemption as children of God. This happens through the death of Jesus Christ, which secures the forgiveness of sins.

p.1 For the reading of the Passion from the Gospel of John, this liturgy provides an option for shortening the reading to John 19:1-42. This reading leaves out parts of the narrative that have historically been used to charge all Jewish people as guilty for the death of Jesus.

p.1 A translation of the Passion from the Gospel of John is provided that chooses to not uniformly render the Greek *hoi Iudaioi* as “the Jews.” Traditionally, the repetition of “the Jews” has given rise to anti-Jewish language and violence, marking Good Friday as a historically dangerous time for Jewish communities living in Christian contexts. The provided translation offers other options for this word, especially “the Judeans.” This word highlights the regional tensions between Jesus of Nazareth from the Galilee and Judean leadership centered in Jerusalem. Two approved translations of the Bible for use in the Episcopal Church, the Contemporary English Version and the Common English Bible, provide other translations besides “the Jews” for this reading. If a translation is used that retains “the Jews” is used, those responsible for this service ought to find a way to contextualize this interpretive choice.

p.3 This alternate rite introduces a new collect for the Jewish people. Historically, the church prayed on Good Friday that Jews, who had been blamed for the death of Jesus, would convert from their blindness and hardness of heart. While such a prayer has never been in the Episcopal Church’s Book of Common Prayer, it is a legacy to which we are accountable, given that it at

times inspired violence against Jews. In our own time, Christian churches have begun to repair their relationship with the Jewish people, including offering prayers on Good Friday that affirm God's relationship with the Jewish people. Notably, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Church of England have such prayers. This solemn collect grounds God's redemptive work as beginning with the Jewish people from whom Jesus Christ was born. This collect states that God's covenant with the Jewish people has never been broken and prays for their continued flourishing and safety as witnesses to God. This collect concludes with an acknowledgment of Christian harm done to the Jewish people and envisions a new life where Jews and Christians walk together in the life of God for the sake of the world.

p.3 The collect for those who suffer has been revised with person first language, an approach that ensures that those who experience various conditions are not defined by those exclusively. Additionally, some new categories that have emerged within the collective consciousness of the church over the past several decades have been added. A specific petition for persecuted Christians has been added as a reminder that globally many still suffer for Christ's sake.

p.4 The final Solemn Collect retains the original petitions but its bidding and conclusion have been revised from the current rite. This collect does not frame the possibility of redemption solely within an acceptance of the gospel but as a question of how people respond to the work of the Triune God. The human failings named in this petition are measured in terms of loving responses to God in the world, whether within or outside the church. The final prayer especially names the importance for Christians to make amends for sins committed even as it hopes that all people may turn to God.

p.4 Given the heavily anti-Jewish theological content of the Improperia or Reproaches, this rubric cautions their use. They are not found within the approved Good Friday liturgy and this should be a factor for those considering its use.