



# **Roll the stone across the door**

**Good Friday, 2026**  
Knox Church, Ōtautahi Christchurch

## **Good Friday**

*Good Friday is the day on which the Church remembers the crucifixion and death of Jesus. On this day, we recall the people's cruelty to Jesus, and interpret it as human nature's desire to push God away. Accordingly, several aspects of the usual service that assert the presence of God are omitted. There is no opening greeting ("May God be with you") and no benediction at the end. Further, following the Prayer of Confession there is no Assurance of Pardon.*

*The heart of the Good Friday service is the reading of Jesus' Passion. This year the Passion is taken from John's gospel.*

*The service ends when, at the conclusion of the epilogue, the minister leaves the church. Please keep a silence in the church after the service, and when you feel moved to leave, please do so quietly. Feel no pressure to leave the church immediately; the minister will not be waiting at the door. There is no morning tea today.*

*This year at Knox, we have spent Lent exploring the theme of stones placed in the way of Jesus. The stone has been the metaphor for the obstruction and violence directed against Jesus throughout his ministry. Stones were used to stone people to death - something which Jesus famously defused. Jesus used the tombstone to describe the hearts of those who resisted God. Jesus spoke about those who hurt God's people as those who had huge stones around their necks as they sank in the sea. Today, as Jesus dies, a great, immovable stone is rolled across the door of his tomb. The stone signals the end.*

*While Good Friday is a day of sorrow, and a stark occasion in the calendar of the Christian Faith, it does not stand alone. On Easter Day the sequel to Good Friday begins. It is important that you hear the second part of the story of the death of Jesus. Please make an effort to come to the service on Easter Day. If you are out of town on Sunday, you can always view the Easter sermon online: <https://youtu.be/tD5HHG5Zi20>*

**We welcome and thank our choral quartet, Nicola Holt, Jessica Adams, Andrew Milner-White and Chris Adams. Given the solemn nature of today's service, we ask for no applause to be given.**

# The Service

**Introit:** Drop, drop, slow tears  
Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

## The Prayer of Confession

. . . Since it cannot be moved,  
we can only weep, and say

. . . Lord have mercy.

**CHRIST HAVE MERCY.**

Lord have mercy.

## Hymn:

Passion Chorale

*melody from Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)*



1. O sacred head! Sore wounded,  
with grief and shame weighed down!  
O kingly head, surrounded  
with thorns, thine only crown!  
How pale art thou with anguish,  
with sore abuse and scorn!  
How does that face now languish,  
which once was bright as morn.
2. What language shall I borrow  
to praise thee, heavenly 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.
3. Be near me, Lord, when dying;  
O show thy cross to me;  
and, my last need supplying,  
come, Lord, and set me free;

these eyes, new faith receiving,  
from thee shall never move;  
for they who die believing  
die safely through thy love.

*Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676), from Salve caput cruentatum  
attrib. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153)  
tr. James Waddell Alexander (1804-1859) and others, alt.*

**The Passion of Christ:** St. John 18 & 19

**Hymn:**

Love Unknown

John Nicholson Ireland (1879-1962)



1. 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 God should take  
frail flesh, and die?
2. He came from his blest throne  
salvation to bestow:  
but Christ as flesh and bone  
the world refused to know.  
But O my friend!  
my friend indeed,  
who at my need  
his life did spend.
3. Sometimes they threw down palms  
and sweetest praises sang.  
Hosannas and glad psalms  
through streets and markets rang.  
Then "Crucify!"  
is all their breath  
and for his death  
they thirst and cry.

4. Why, what has my Lord done?  
What makes this rage and spite?  
Christ gave new strength to run,  
restored the gift of sight.  
Sweet injuries!  
Yet they at these  
themselves displease,  
and 'gainst him rise.
  
5. I sing my plain belief,  
one song my heart outpours;  
never was pain nor grief,  
never was love like yours.  
This is my friend,  
in whose sweet praise  
I all my days  
could gladly spend.

*Samuel Crossman (1624-1684), alt.*

**A Reading:** Matthew 27: 57-61

**A Reflection:** When is someone dead?

*Generally, sermons are posted on our website shortly after the service at:  
<http://www.knoxchurch.co.nz/sermons.html> Hard copies of the sermons are  
available before and after the service – ask the person at the door. A video  
version of this sermon is available from 10:00am today:  
[https://youtu.be/w0vin1DOV\\_w](https://youtu.be/w0vin1DOV_w)*

**Anthem:** Solus ad victimam  
Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988)

### **Prayers for the World and the Lord's Prayer**

To the minister's words "God of the heavy and horrible stone",  
you are invited to respond "**WE PRAY FOR THE WORLD**".

**... 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.  
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 THE  
GLORY  
ARE YOURS NOW AND FOR EVER.  
AMEN.**

*Without announcement, we stand to sing*

**Hymn:**

Rockingham

Edward Miller (1731-1807)



1. 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.
2. 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?
3. Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were an offering far too small:  
love so amazing, so divine  
demands my soul, my life, my all.

*Isaac Watts (1674-1748)*

**Epilogue:** How heavy is stone?

**No Benediction**