

## Holy Week: Places on the Way

### Spoken Intro [Edna]

- Go to dark Gethsemane #317 Voices Together

### Private / Intimate spaces

#### Anointing at Bethany

- Mark 14:3-9
- readings
- special music: Vocalise

#### Last Supper in Upper Room

- Mark 14:22-31
- Readings
- Hymn: #491 VT Christ, on the Night He Was Betrayed

#### Gethsemane

- Mark 14:32-42
- Readings
- Hymn: #85 STS Lay down your head

### Public Spaces

#### Gethsemane

- Mark 14:43-51
- Readings
- Special Music: Hertzlich tut mich verlangen (O Sacred Head—bwv 727)

#### Council and Courtyard

- Mark 14:53-72
- Readings
- Special Music: #243 HWB “Before the cock crew” (vv 1-5) solo or

accompanied

#### Plaza

- Mark 15:6-15
- Readings
- Hymn: #320 VT My Song Is Love Unknown (vv 1-4)

#### Golgotha

- Mark 15:21-41
- music
- Readings
- Hymn: #326 How Shallow Former Shadows

### Dead Spaces (Tomb)

- Mark 15:42-47
- Special Music: Aire on a G string (Bach)
- Readings
- Special Music: “Keyboard Concerto in F Minor (Largo)”

Sending Words

Welcome and Introduction: (Edna)

May the grace of God, the love of Christ, and the presence of the Spirit be with you all, as we come together tonight to hear again the story of Good Friday, that tragic day that must come before resurrection is possible.

Patrick Preheim, pastor of Nutana Park Mennonite Church, and I, Edna Froese, member of the congregation, invite you to enter the Passion narrative through the reading of the Gospel of Mark, Chapters 14 & 15, through various other readings of poetry and prose, and through the music provided by James Legge and Kathy Peters. Lynn Driedger will provide vocals and guide us in our congregational hymns. We invite you to stay seated for this service. By the end of the service, the sanctuary will be in darkness. We ask that you remain in quiet contemplation until the foyer lights come on. Then leave quietly as you are ready to do so.

We have titled this service “Places Along the Way.” The script will be posted on the church’s website for you to reread and note the authors of poems and prose excerpts.

**Hymn: Go to dark Gethsemane #317 Voices Together**

**“Go to Dark Gethsemane” #317 VT**

Go to dark Gethsemane,  
ye that feel the tempter’s pow’r.  
Your Redeemer’s conflict see,  
watch with him one bitter hour.  
Turn not from his griefs away.

Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment hall,  
view the Lord of life arraigned.  
Oh, the wormwood and the gall!  
Oh, the pangs his soul sustained!  
Shun not suffering, shame or loss.  
Learn of him to bear the cross.

Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb.  
There, adoring at his feet,  
mark that miracle of time,  
God's own sacrifice complete.  
"It is finished!" hear the cry.  
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.

[candle out]

(Edna) First, the private places: Like many great stories, this world-changing encounter between God Almighty, in the form of the human Jesus, with the very worst that evil can do through unthinking, ungenerous, fearful human beings begins in small places, intimate places. Just a few people who love one another as best they know how, who offer each other a safe place to be and to grow into wholeness. We begin this story in Bethany, just a few miles from Jerusalem.

### *Bethany*

(Patrick)

Mark 14: 3-9

While [Jesus] was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

(Edna)

[poem by Steve Garnass-Holmes]

God does not promise to save you from suffering,  
or to remove you from this life and its jagged edges.  
God shares your space in it, offers blessing in it,  
anointing your nights as well as days.  
The cross is no scheme to get you off a hook somewhere;  
it's the Beloved, with you in your pain.

Let the Beloved pour herself out on your troubles,  
let her pour out a jar of tears for you,  
wipe your aching feet with her hair.  
Let the whole house of you be filled  
with the fragrance of God's blessing.  
Others don't feel your pain but she does,

they will flee but she will be with you.

Lay before her your sorrows and your rage.  
Feel her hands upon you, her hair, her heart.  
You are in the holy of holies.  
The world's derision fades away outside the gate.  
She looks at you with love  
that will stay with you forever.

(Steve Garnass-Holmes)

(Patrick)

The irony is that, despite Jesus' insistence that the whole world will remember this woman, her name remains unknown in the Gospel of Mark. In John's Gospel, this anointing takes place in the house of Lazarus and the woman who anoints Jesus is Mary, likely Mary Magdalene. But in our story tonight, the woman is nameless, standing in for all of us who seek to bless and to be blessed.

(Patrick)

Blessing for the Anointing (by Jan Richardson)

Some with ointment,  
some with tears.  
Me, today,  
with words  
gathered and treasured,  
carried and poured out  
for you  
wherever you are.

May you welcome this  
as what it is:  
a needful extravagance,  
an offering both lavish

and crucial  
that has let go  
of everything  
to lay itself at your feet  
and tell you  
*I see you.*  
*I bless you.*

And you,  
where can you go  
that you do not need  
this anointing,  
this blessing that drenches  
the one who gives,  
the one who receives?

(Jan Richardson)

**Special music: Vocalize for piano and viola (Rachmaninoff)**

(Edna)

From the intimate family gathering in Bethany where Jesus eats with his friends just two days before Passover, the scene shifts to Jerusalem, where Jesus and his disciples eat the Passover meal in an upper room.

*The Upper Room*

(Patrick)

Mark 14: 22-31

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out

for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written,

‘I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep will be scattered.’

But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” Peter said to him, “Even though all fall away, I will not.” Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” But he said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same.

(Edna)

It would have been a familiar scene, if not a familiar room. Jews had been celebrating the Passover meal for hundreds of years by now, each member of the family knowing the roles and the words.

It should have been celebrated with family, of course, except that Jesus hadn't spent much time with family since he'd taken to the road as an itinerant rabbi. This group of people with him was his family. Not his mother, not his brothers and sisters, however many he had. Now it was his disciples with him, perhaps some of the women who travelled with them, perhaps even children, although none of the Gospels mentions those. But the Passover ritual required children to ask the right questions at the right time, never mind the typical Renaissance paintings of the Last Supper with its entirely male cast.

No, it would have been a busy, if quiet scene of close friends. In this secret, safe room, where a sacred meal was shared, Jesus himself, according to the account in John 13, took on the most menial role of foot-washer. This is intimate,

private space. A scene of trust. This new and chosen family was the family of Jesus now.

Except that the trust wasn't complete, as Jesus well knew. He had seen through Judas, guessed (or known), his tangled motives and chaotic dreams and desperate fears for the future. Jesus loves him anyway. Acknowledges his role in the necessary events. Accepts the betrayal that he knows is coming.

### **Hymn: VT 491 "Christ, on the Night He Was Betrayed"**

Christ, on the night he was betrayed,  
for us a plain example made.  
The Paschal feast had been prepared,  
and with his friends he freely shared.

Before he suffered, he desired  
to show us all what love required.  
The honoured teacher left his seat  
and knelt to wash his servant's feet.

Such gentle kindness did he show  
with towel and basin, stooping low!  
When all were washed he stood to ask  
that they repeat this humble task.

"If I have done this unto you,  
you ought to serve each other, too.  
And if my servants you would be,  
obey my word and follow me."



(Patrick)

### Gethsemane—the intimate

If the Upper Room was a place of intimacy and familiar ritual, a close and private space, Gethsemane was both even more private and utterly open to the gathering darkness. Oh, it was already dark. The sun had set long before Jesus walked with his disciples to the Garden of Prayer. Did they have torches to light their way? or was it so familiar that they needed no light?

(Edna)

Mark 14: 32-42

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me, yet not what I want but what you want." He came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. Look, my betrayer is at hand."

(Patrick)

Our city streets are so ablaze with light we do not need lanterns or flashlights even in back alleys. Not so Gethsemane. The way there was dark and the place itself—garden though it was—breathes out dolor on this night of all nights. It, too, was familiar to Jesus and his disciples, yet different. If it had been a place of prayer and safety before, it was so no longer. Yes, it was still a place of prayer, agonizing, soul-wrenching prayer, the kind of prayer that might just as well be a beating of fists against unfeeling stone. But Jesus already knew the answer, already knew that he had even darker places to go. Never mind that the torches would burn and cast flickering light on terrified faces, the darkness would go deeper still into the human soul.

(Edna) [Poem by Mary Oliver]

The grass never sleeps.  
Or the rose.  
Nor does the lily have a secret eye that shuts until morning.  
Jesus said, wait with me. But the disciples slept.  
The cricket has such splendid fringe on its feet,  
and it sings, have you noticed, with its whole body,  
and heaven knows if it even sleeps.  
Jesus said, wait with me. And maybe the stars did, maybe  
the wind wound itself into a silver tree, and didn't move,  
maybe the lake far away, where once he walked as on a  
blue pavement,  
lay still and waited, wild awake.  
Oh the dear bodies, slumped and eye-shut, that could not  
keep that vigil, how they must have wept,  
so utterly human, knowing this too  
must be a part of the story.

(Mary Oliver)

## Hymn: #85 STS “Lay down your head”

Lay down your head, Lord Jesus Christ, fast falls the night.  
Close follow those who crave your end, blinded by sight.  
God give you rest, strength for your task, light for our way.  
Lay down your head and, by your side, we'll sleep and stay.

All that you've done and all you've said, suffered, and shared,  
proves you're the one for whom the world waits unprepared.  
Had you conformed, had you condoned, had you complied,  
none would be heard pricing your head, nursing their pride.

What lies ahead we fear to guess, you fail to fear:  
Hopes seem to fade, heav'n seems far, hell seems so near.  
Here, with our faith stretched to the full, put to the test,  
You calmly talk, then kneel to pray, then take your rest.

Lay down your head, Lord Jesus Christ, fast falls the night.  
Close follow those who crave your end, blinded by sight.  
God give your rest, strength for your task, light for our way.  
Lay down your head and, by your side, we'll sleep and stay.

[candle out]

(Patrick)

### Gethsemane—the Public

Mark 14: 43-50

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived, and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a rebel? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.” All of them deserted him and fled.

(Edna)

With the arrival of the soldiers, the machinations of the court and courtyard, temple and temple police intrude into the private place of prayer. Safety is no more. With a single kiss, friendship is traded in for betrayal. From here on, Jesus' every word (the few he spoke), his every move is in the public eye. The crowd of observers grows, the clash of opinions becomes clamorous. Chief priest, Herod, Pilate: the institutional forces of religion and ethnicity and politics combine to put on trial the one who created the universe and everything and everyone in it.

And out in the courtyard, the same impulses play out around the crackling fire, which scarcely warms the broken of Peter. All the dreams of empire, in the disciples and among the Jews at large, collide with the actual intent of empire which is power, has always been power, will always be power.

**Music: Hertzlich tut mich verlangen (O Sacred Head Now Wounded)**

(Patrick)

**Council and Courtyard: Mark 14: 53-72**

They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest, and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, saying, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said, "I am, and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'"

(Edna)

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision? All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him and beat him.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the female servants of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the female servant, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean, and you talk like one." But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

**Special Music: "Before the cock crew twice" HWB 243 (vv 1-5)**

(Patrick)

Plaza

Mark 15: 6-15

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" They shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Why, what

evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified.

**Music: VT 320 "My Song Is Love Unknown" (vv 1-4)**

My song is love unknown,  
my Savior's love for me:  
love to the loveless shown  
that they might lovely be.  
But who am I, that for my sake  
my Lord should take frail flesh and die?

He came from heaven's throne  
salvation to bestow.  
But they refused, and none  
the longed-for Christ would know.  
This is my friend, my friend indeed,  
who at my need his life did spend.

Sometimes they crowd his way  
and his sweet praises sing,  
resounding all the day  
hosannas to their king.  
Then "crucify" is all their breath,  
and for his death they thirst and cry.

With angry shouts they have  
my Savior done away.  
A murderer they save,  
the Source of Life they slay!  
Yet willingly he bears the shame  
that through his name all might be free.

(Patrick)

Mark 15: 21-41

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

(Edna)

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two rebels, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is called for Elijah!" And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

**Solo music – James Legge**

(Patrick)

There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome, who followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him, and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

### VT #326 “How Shallow Former Shadows”

How shallow former shadows seem beside this great reverse,  
as darkness swallows up the light of all the universe.  
Creation shivers at the shock, the temple rends its veil.  
A pallid stillness stifles time, and nature’s motions fail.

This is no midday fantasy, no flight of fevered brain.  
With vengeance awful, grim, and real, chaos is come again.  
The hands that formed us from the soil are nailed upon the cross.  
The Word that gave us life and breath expires in utter loss.

Yet deep within this darkness lives a Love so fierce and free,  
that arcs all voids and—risk supreme!—embraces agony.  
Its perfect testament is etched in iron, blood, and wood.  
With awe we glimpse its true import and dare to call it good.

[Candle out]

(Patrick)

### Golgatha

*Golgatha*: the throat of the thoughtful believer gags, and the tongue finds it hard even to say the name of this place. Gulgatha is a site beyond the walls, but at the crossroads. [. . .] Gulgatha was a place of executions. We push it from our memory, the way we try to forget the electric chair and Death Row. But against our will, Gulgatha presses itself on our mind.



Here “they” executed Jesus. “They”—it is always “they”—denied love, spit against justice, were violent against the gentle, pitted vileness against perfection, and gave hate an apparent victory over love.

Who are “they”? Peter, who denied? . . . Crowds who spit? Taunters who were violent? Passersby who were vile?

This is the hour to take away the question marks, the day to stop pointing fingers at others. Non-Jews long blamed Jews, and rivers of blood issued from their despicable charges. Moderns blame ancient romans, for whom no one speaks today. The accusing finger that points, we note, is curved; it turns back on the one who accuses. “We” made Golgatha necessary.

Golgatha is the symbolic site for every act in which we banish Christ from our life. Yet Golgotha, the “place of a skull,” also signals that the victory of hate over love was only apparent, only temporary. Here and now God refuses to let the divine love be denied by our denials, to let the divine reach be ignored or repudiated. We will know that love today.

(Martin Marty and Micah Marty, *Places Along the Way: Meditations on the Journey of Faith* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994), p. 99-100.)

### **Special Music: Bach’s “Air on the G String”**

(Edna) (Poem by Luci Shaw)

Triad: Skull Hill

I. Weight lifter

Three nails focus  
the force of  
the gravity  
holding the whole  
Pattern in place.  
And in that  
trinity of pain  
he knows (knowing)  
his own body load,

adds to it  
the corpus  
of our failure  
and thus computes  
the sum, the burden of  
his Father's heavy holiness.

II. Forgive them Father

Who was he? What  
were his component  
parts? Body  
certainly, sectioned  
before our eyes.  
Mind—three words  
from him  
carried more portent  
than all  
our rabbinic rhetoric.  
Spirit? But that  
he had already  
given back.  
Did we dissect him, then,  
take samples of  
his blood?  
We did, but were  
no wiser for it.

III. Shake down

His own relief  
relinquished,  
from the storm  
at the heart  
of the world, God's  
grandest thunder  
firms and confirms  
his glory,  
shakes and shifts  
the ground from under

the false prince,  
settles  
the center cross  
deeper in its place  
established since  
the genesis of time  
and space.  
*God. Lightning*

has already  
opened the graves,  
torn the hanging  
barrier to the holy,  
focused our sight  
(*ecco homo*) on his  
most lasting light.

(Luci Shaw)

[Candle out]

(Patrick)

## Dead Spaces

Mark 15: 42-47

When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead, and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then Joseph bought a linen cloth and, taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.

(Edna)

In the tomb Christ is planted at last like a sacred seed.  
The agony is over. Safe, finally, from thorns and nails and spears.  
God is very still and a great vacuum builds at the heart of things.  
The guards of this world are lulled into drowsiness beside the stone.  
A profound ignorance fills this last moment before sunrise.

(Margie McCreless Roe)

(Patrick)

Song of the Winding Sheet (by Jan Richardson)

We never  
would have wished it  
to come to this,  
yet we call  
these moments holy  
as we hold you.

Holy the tending,  
holy the winding,  
holy the leaving  
as in the living.

Holy the silence,  
holy the stillness,  
holy the turning  
and returning to the earth.

Blessed is the One  
who came  
in the name,  
blessed is the One  
who laid  
himself down,

blessed is the One  
emptied for us,

blessed is the One  
wearing the shroud.

Holy the waiting,  
holy the grieving,  
holy the shadows  
and gathering night.

Holy the darkness,  
holy the hours  
holy the hope  
turning toward light.

(Jan Richardson)

(Edna)

Words from Thomas Merton:

It is in this darkness, when there is nothing left in us that can please or comfort our own minds, when we seem to be useless and worthy of all contempt, when we seem to have failed, when we seem to be destroyed and devoured, it is then that the deep and secret selfishness that is too close to us for us to identify is stripped away from our souls. It is in this darkness that we find liberty. It is in this abandonment that we are made strong. This is the night which makes us and makes us pure.

(Thomas Merton)

**Music: Keyboard Concerto in F minor (II Largo)**

**[Patrick]**

Everlasting God, in your tender love for the human race, and creation itself, you sent Jesus to take upon him our nature, and to suffer, and to die upon a cross, giving us the example of his great humility. Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his living and dying, and also share in his resurrection. Amen (*Book of Common Prayer*; collect for Palm Sunday)

**[Christ Candle Extinguished]**  
**[Reading Lights Out]**  
**[Exit]**