

From our Churches

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The Shame of the Cross A Good Friday service

Prelude

Opening Words

We sometimes speak of “hiding our face in shame”. But today we, like Jesus, “set our faces toward Jerusalem”. We will see the shame he endured. We will reflect on the shame endured by people in our own communities. We will confess our own guilt and the feelings of shame within ourselves, and yet we will fix our eyes on Jesus, about whom the Scripture says “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” Let’s pray...

Prayer

Song **“Jesus walked this lonesome valley” 80 STS**

Scripture **Luke 22:1-4; 14-16; 39-40**

Song **“Lay down your head” 85 STS**

Scripture **Luke 22:41-53**

Reflection **Violence in our communities**

A crowd with swords and clubs in a garden
A young man with a gun in a school
A video game with blood spurting and figures dying on a TV screen
Jesus spoke of the power of darkness
We know that darkness
We read about it in the newspaper
We see it on our streets
The darkness of bruises on abused children and battered wives
The darkness of blood spilled on fields of war and in homes of civilian bystanders
The darkness of violence that frightens, betrays, hurts, destroys, and leaves no-one untouched
We are ashamed of the violence in our communities

We pray, Lord Jesus: No more.

(Pause)

(Write a similar prayer for your community) We pray, Lord Jesus: Be with those who work with the Hamilton Community Coalition for Bullying Prevention and Intervention. Thank you for turning shame into action. Assist them as they work towards a healthy community for children and youth and towards a community free from bullying. Amen.

Response **“Stay with us O Lord Jesus Christ,
night will soon fall.
Then stay with us O Lord Jesus Christ,
light in our darkness” (Taizé song)**

Scripture **Luke 22:54-62**

Song **“From the depths of sin” 136 HWB**

Scripture **Luke 22:63-65**

Reflection **Poverty in our communities**

They heaped many insults on him
On Jesus who healed their sick
On Mary’s son who gave the gift of wine at a wedding
On Joseph’s boy who liked to learn and talk about Scripture
They mocked him for what they saw, not for who he was
Insults are heaped in our own communities
Tripping up those who dwell in poverty
Slapping the faces of those who struggle to rise from the spiral of economic oppression
Mocking our neighbours for what they look like, not asking who they are
A glance, a sniff, a crossing to the other side of the street
An avoidance of another’s eyes, a closer grasping of a purse
A failure to give, or to only give at arm’s-length, maintaining a safe distance
Insults are heaped until they overwhelm
When some seek to lay blame: “Who is it that struck you?”
We seek to lay a hand of comfort: “It is I who will befriend you.”
We are ashamed of the pain of extreme poverty in our communities
We pray, Lord Jesus: No more.

(Pause)

(Write a similar prayer for your community) We pray, Lord Jesus: Be with those who work with Food Share Hamilton. Thank you for an organization committed to healing some of the pains of poverty with the gift of food. Continue to work through them to alleviate hunger for food and justice. Amen.

Response **Stay with us O Lord Jesus Christ**

Scripture **Luke 22:66-23:7**

Song **“When we are tempted” 81 (vv1-3) SS**

Scripture **Luke 23:8-12**

Reflection **Deceit in our communities**

Enemies become friends
But not out of love
Enemies become friends because it serves them for now
Enemies become friends in the pursuit to keep the people quiet
Rulers form alliances to keep their power secure
Leaders keep secrets that might overturn their ambition
Instead of truth, communication, and authenticity
There is deceit, silence, and hypocrisy
Sweet smiles to cover the stench of injustice
Circular words to lose us on the path to dishonesty
Incomplete stories that hurt the decisions we make and the votes we cast
Collusion and complicity
Lies and silence
Herod's elegant robe did not disguise the bruises and blood on Jesus' body
The whole story of brokenness in our neighbourhoods must be exposed
We are ashamed of the deceit in our communities
We pray, Lord Jesus: No more.

(Pause)

(Write a similar prayer for your community) We pray, Lord Jesus: Be with the members of Conscience Canada as they work to shed light on the amount of military spending in our country. Give them words to expose the deceiving messages of militarism. May their subversive message raise questions about how our leaders ask us to spend our money. Amen.

Response **Stay with us O Lord Jesus Christ**

Scripture **Luke 23:13-25**

Song **"O sacred head, now wounded" 252 HWB**

Scripture **Luke 23:26**

Reflection **Prejudice in our communities**

Simon of Cyrene, in North Africa
A man from far away
A foreigner
A face with a different complexion
A voice with a different accent
Was he chosen because he stood out?
Was he given this job because he couldn't say "no" to the jeering crowd?
Your face is different from mine, how do I see you?
Your voice is different from mine, how do I hear you?
Your culture is different from mine, how do I learn to know you?
Or do I choose not to know you?
Do I stick to my circles that look like me, sound like me, and know what I know?

Do I get nervous when we don't understand each other on the first try?
Do I make assumptions based on what I've heard about "people like you"?
Do I pretend that you don't want to know me anyway?
Do I protect myself so I don't have to carry your cross?
I don't know
But if I'm brave enough to ask, maybe I'll have the chance to walk behind Jesus
We are ashamed of the prejudice in our communities
We pray, Lord Jesus: No more.

(Pause)

(Write a similar prayer for your community) We pray, Lord Jesus: Be with the brothers and sisters at the Hamilton Centre for Newcomer Health. Thank you that they are here to assist those new to Canada including new immigrants, refugees, and those populations who face barriers in accessing culturally-appropriate healthcare services. Amen.

Response **Stay with us O Lord Jesus Christ**

Scripture **Luke 23:27-31**

Song **"By the waters" 148 HWB**

Scripture **Luke 23:32-38**

Reflection **Apathy in our communities**

At the cross, the people stood by, watching.
The people still stand by, watching.
Watching the roots of violence deepen
Watching the cycles of poverty grow
Watching the messages of deceit betray
Watching the results of prejudice destroy
God our father, forgive us, for we do not know what we are doing
We do not always know what to do about violence, poverty, deceit, and prejudice
We do not know if our actions will help
We do not know if our words will be heard
But we know that you hear us
And we know that you call us to follow Jesus, even to the cross
Mothering God, forgive us, for we do not know what we are doing
We are ashamed of the apathy in our communities
We pray, Lord Jesus: No more.

(Pause)

(Write a similar prayer for your community) We pray, Lord Jesus: Walk alongside the many organizations in this neighbourhood, in this city, and in the neighbourhoods and cities in which we each live. Open our eyes to their work, open our ears to their messages, open our hearts and fill them with renewed passion to join what you are doing in the world. Amen.

Response **Stay with us O Lord Jesus Christ**

Scripture **Luke 23:39-43**

Song **“Jesus, remember me” 247 HWB**

Scripture **Luke 22:44-46**

(Pause and extinguish the Christ Candle)

Scripture **Luke 23:47-49**

Song **When I survey the wondrous cross HWB 259**

Silent Reflection

Lord’s Supper

Scripture **Luke 23:50-56**

Benediction

Now to God who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of God’s glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. (Jude 24-25) Go now and wait expectantly for the kingdom of God. Amen.

Leave in silence