



**St John's**  
Being the Gospel to all People

Sunday  
24-Mar-2024

A very warm welcome is extended to all visitors to St Johns. Morning tea is offered after the service today, so please stay and enjoy.

## Carrying the Cross

### Scripture reading: Mark 15:1-39 (New International Version)

#### Jesus Before Pilate

<sup>15</sup> Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So, they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

<sup>2</sup> "Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate.

"You have said so," Jesus replied.

<sup>3</sup> The chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup> So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

<sup>5</sup> But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

<sup>6</sup> Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. <sup>7</sup> A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. <sup>8</sup> The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

<sup>9</sup> "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, <sup>10</sup> knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. <sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

<sup>12</sup> "What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them.

<sup>13</sup> "Crucify him!" they shouted.

<sup>14</sup> "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

<sup>15</sup> Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified.

#### The Soldiers Mock Jesus

<sup>16</sup> The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. <sup>17</sup> They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

#### The Crucifixion of Jesus

<sup>21</sup> A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. <sup>22</sup> They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). <sup>23</sup> Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. <sup>25</sup> It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup> The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the Jews. <sup>27</sup> They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup> Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, <sup>30</sup> come down from the cross and save yourself!" <sup>31</sup> In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! <sup>32</sup> Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

#### The Death of Jesus

<sup>33</sup> At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>34</sup> And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). <sup>35</sup> When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah." <sup>36</sup> Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said. <sup>37</sup> With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

**Sunday**

**31-Mar-2024**

**Scripture reading: Good Friday John 18:1-19:42,  
Easter Sunday John 20:1-18 (New International Version)**

**THIS WEEK**

**From: 24-Mar-2024**

**To: 31-Mar-2024**

**Prayer points:**

- For peace and restoration of stability in Israel, Ukraine and other regions experiencing unrest;
- For Jane's health;
- For Brenda's health;
- For Felicity's recovery;
- For violence and crime to be subdued in our country.
- For those who have had major surgery and are recovering;
- For support for all those who have lost loved ones, homes and/or livelihoods in the recent natural disasters.



**Pastoral Reflection**

Welcome to our Seventh Sunday in Lent, it is also Palm Sunday, which is the gateway to the beginning of Holy week. I wonder how your Lenten Journey has been. What did you give up for Lent? And what did you take on this Lent? As we edge into the Holy week, how different are you hoping to observe it? What Spiritual Practices will you incorporate in your life to help you enter into the deep mystery of the crucifixion?

The Gospel reading this week is a lengthy one. I think it appropriate, and it is good for us to have the story in entirety. There is a lot going on in this Gospel reading. I will however limit my pastoral reflection on just one of the things that did grab my attention.

It is only one verse and somehow obscure one. I think it is actually very significant thing. In the middle of our reading Mark tells of "A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, [who] was passing by on his way in from the country, [and was] forced [by the Roman soldiers] to carry the cross." Cyrene is a region in North Africa, and Simon probably was in Jerusalem on pilgrimage. Mark describes him as the Father of Alexander and Rufus.

These are not common names in the New Testament; but Paul in Romans 16:13 sends greetings to Rufus who was a member of the Roman church. It seems their father's act of carrying the cross had a lasting effect onto his children. Which is always the case. How we choose to carry our crosses (the ones we choose to pick up and/or the ones that are forced upon us) will have a lasting effect on our children and the next generation. Thus, the implication is that if we refuse to carry our crosses properly, we will be unable to inspire our children or the next generation nor pass on our faith to them. Moreover, we will eventually find ourselves both empty and angry, feeling cheated, and struggling with the temptation of either becoming even more bitter or of give up all together.

**Sunday 24-Mar-2024**

Food Bank  
9.30 am Sunday Service in English (Chinese subtitle)  
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church

**Monday 25-Mar-2024**

N/A

**Tuesday 26-Mar-2024**

10:00am Coffee and Chat

**Wednesday 27-Mar-2024**

7:00 pm AA meeting

**Thursday 28-Mar-2024**

3:10 pm Musiqhub

**Friday 29-Mar-2024**

9:30am Good Friday Service

**Sunday 31-Mar-2024**

9.30 am Sunday Service in English (Chinese subtitle)  
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church



## Good Friday Service

9:30am

**Preacher: Jeff Odhiambo**

**Music: Joan Williamson**

**Prayer Ministry: Judy McDonald**

**Usher: Bob Williamson**



The food bank needs:

rice

jam

peanut butter

tea bags



Our donations make a difference to families who are struggling at the moment.

## Songs for Today

1. Hosanna in the Highest
2. He has made me glad
3. In Christ alone
4. Because he lives



Sunday Services:	English 9:30a.m.	
Office Hours:	Wed/Fri 9am-12pm, Thurs 11am-2pm	
Phone: 09 534 2305	Email: <a href="mailto:office@stjohnsbb.org.nz">office@stjohnsbb.org.nz</a>	
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Minister	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	022 674 0044
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Property Manager	Charles de Vilder	
People's Warden	Ayleen de Vilder	
Minister's Warden	Julie Dickey	
Pastoral Care	Judy McDonald	021 057 6327
Prayer Chain	Judy McDonald	
Direct Credit Offerings AC	03-0166-0135407-025	

**Youth Group:** Contact Jeff [minister@stjohnsbb.org.nz](mailto:minister@stjohnsbb.org.nz)

	Today's Helpers 24-Mar-2024	Next Week's Helpers 31-Mar-2024
Preacher/ Service Leader	Jeff Odhiambo	Jeff Odhiambo
Musician/s	Joan Williamson	Jeanette Li Albert Ip, Winnie Wong
Projector & Sound Desk	Michael Zhao	Michael Zhao
Reader	Natalie Springveldt	Trevor Haigh
Intercessor	Bob Williamson	Joan Haigh
HC set up	N/A	Judy and Mavis
HC Serving team	N/A	Judy McDonald
Prayer ministry	Joan Rutherford	Joan Jones
Sunday School	N/A	N/A
Welcome Desk	With ushering	With ushering
Usher	Mavis Haigh	Trevor Haigh
Counters	Bob Williamson	Nessie Crawford
	Albert Ip	Albert Ip
Morning Tea	Monita Leung	Miranda Haung
	Jojo Lee	Grace Tay