

# SSRA.UK

Sunday Scriptures for Reading Aloud

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Readings for  
Palm Sunday to Easter Day

# 2023

Palm Sunday 2 April  
Maundy Thursday 6 April  
Good Friday 7 April  
Easter Day 9 April

encouraging more confident participation  
in the public reading of scripture by more readers

encouraging a greater appreciation  
of the public reading of scripture by more hearers

compatible with thousands of  
lectionary-based resources  
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The Palm Sunday Passion reading  
is set out for a single voice

The Maundy Thursday theme in Year A  
is The Lamb of God, with 'service to others'  
to follow in Year B, and Bread of Life in Year C

The Good Friday Passion reading  
is divided into three sections, for three readers

Two sets of Easter Day readings are provided:  
if you are staying with SSRA beyond Easter Day,  
you will want the set with Acts 2; if you are reverting to  
other lectionaries, you will want the set with Acts 10

SSRA.uk has readings in this format for every Sunday  
of the three year cycle, dated and available both online  
and in print, taking all the hard work out of finding,  
choosing, printing and distributing the Sunday morning  
scripture readings, while also encouraging more  
confident participation in the public reading of scripture  
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## SUNDAY 2 APRIL

*Palm Sunday*

### **PALM PROCESSION** - *Matthew 21.4-11*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Matthew.

The disciples brought the donkey and the foal to Jesus,  
as Jesus had instructed them,  
and made a saddle from their cloaks,  
fulfilling the words  
of the prophet Zechariah,  
'Your king is coming to you, Jerusalem,  
humble, and riding on a donkey,  
on the foal of a donkey.'

Many in the crowd  
spread their cloaks on the road,  
and others cut branches from the trees  
and spread those on the road.  
The crowds that went in front of him,  
and the crowds that followed behind him,  
shouted out, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!  
Blessed is the one who comes  
in the name of the Lord!'

When they entered Jerusalem,  
the whole city was in turmoil,  
with everyone asking, 'Who is this?'

And the crowds were saying, 'This is  
the prophet Jesus,  
from Nazareth, in Galilee.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

### **MAIN LITURGY**

#### **FIRST READING** - *Isaiah 50.4-7*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord God has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain the weary  
with a word.

Morning by morning  
the Lord God awakens my ear,  
that I may listen and learn.

The Lord God has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious;  
I did not turn away.

I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheeks  
to those who pulled out the beard.

I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me;  
I have not been disgraced.

I have set my face like flint,  
and I know  
that I shall not  
be put to shame.

This is the word of the Lord.

#### **SECOND READING** - *Philippians 2.5-11*

A reading from the letter of Paul  
to the Philippians.

Christ Jesus  
did not regard  
equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a servant.  
Born in human form,  
he humbled himself,  
in faithful obedience, even to death on the cross.

And now, God has highly exalted him,  
and has given him the name  
that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus,  
all shall bow down,  
in heaven, on earth, and under the earth,  
and declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory  
of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord.

#### **PASSION** - *Matthew 26.14 – 27.66*

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Matthew.

Judas Iscariot,  
one of the twelve,  
went to the chief priests, and said,  
'What will you give me  
if I betray him to you?'

They paid him  
thirty pieces of silver.

And from that moment,  
he looked for an opportunity  
to betray Jesus to them.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread,  
the disciples asked Jesus  
where they should  
make preparations  
for the Passover meal.

Jesus said, 'Go into the city  
to a certain man,  
and say to him,  
"The Teacher says, My time is near;  
I will keep the Passover at your house  
with my disciples."'

The disciples did  
as Jesus had directed them,  
and they prepared  
the Passover meal.

When it was evening,  
Jesus took his place at the table  
with the twelve;  
and while they were eating, he said to them,  
'Truly, I tell you:  
one of you will betray me.'  
They were greatly distressed,  
and began to say to him,  
one after another, 'Surely, not I, Lord?'  
Jesus said, 'One of you  
who has shared this meal with me  
will betray me.  
The Son of Man will go  
as it is written.  
As for the one who betrays him,  
it would have been better  
not to have been born.'  
Judas, the betrayer, said,  
'Teacher, is it I?'  
Jesus replied,  
'You have said it.'

While they were eating,  
Jesus took bread,  
and after giving thanks,  
he broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples,  
saying, 'Take, eat;  
this is my body.'  
Then he took a cup,  
and after giving thanks,  
he gave it to them,  
saying, 'Drink from this cup, all of you;  
for this is my blood  
of the covenant,  
which is poured out for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
And I will not drink  
the fruit of the vine again  
until I drink it with you  
in my Father's kingdom.'

When they had sung a hymn,  
they went out  
to the Mount of Olives.  
And Jesus said to them,  
'You will all fall away  
because of me  
this night.  
As the scripture says,  
"I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep  
will be scattered."  
But after I am raised up,  
I will go ahead of you  
to Galilee.'

Peter said to Jesus,  
'Others may fall away,  
but I will not!'  
Jesus said to Peter, 'This very night,  
before the cock crows,  
you will deny me three times.'  
Peter said, 'Even if I must  
die with you, I will not deny you!'  
And all the disciples  
said the same.

Jesus went, with his disciples,  
to the place called Gethsemane,  
and said to them, 'Sit here,  
while I go over there to pray.'  
He took with him  
Peter, and the brothers James and John,  
and began to be greatly distressed.  
He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieving,  
even to death. Stay here,  
and stay awake with me.'  
And going a little further,  
he fell to the ground,  
and prayed, 'My Father,  
if it is possible,  
take this cup from me;  
yet not my will, but yours, be done.'  
Returning to the disciples,  
he found them sleeping.  
He said to Peter, 'Could you not  
watch with me, even one hour?  
Stay awake, and pray,  
that you may not  
come into the time of trial;  
for the spirit indeed is willing,  
but the flesh is weak.'  
Again he went away, and prayed, 'My Father,  
if this cup cannot pass  
unless I drink it,  
your will be done.'  
And he returned, and again  
found them sleeping,  
for their eyes were heavy.  
So leaving them again,  
he went away,  
and prayed a the third time,  
saying the same words.  
Then he returned to the disciples,  
and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping,  
and taking your rest?  
The hour has come,  
and the Son of Man is betrayed  
into the hands of sinners.  
Let us be going;  
see, my betrayer is at hand.'

While Jesus was still speaking,  
Judas, one of the twelve, arrived.  
With him was a large crowd,  
with swords and clubs,  
from the chief priests,  
and the elders of the people.

Judas, the betrayer,  
had arranged a signal with them,  
saying, 'I will greet him  
with a kiss;  
then you can arrest him.'

So Judas now approached Jesus,  
saying, 'Greetings, Teacher,'  
and kissed him.

Jesus said to Judas, 'My friend, do  
what you are here to do.'

Then they took hold of Jesus,  
and arrested him.

One of the disciples  
drew his sword,  
and struck  
the servant of the high priest,  
cutting off his ear.

But Jesus said, 'Put away your sword;  
for all who live  
by the sword  
will die  
by the sword.

I could appeal to my Father,  
and he would send  
twelve legions  
of angels.

But the scriptures must be fulfilled,  
that it must happen  
in this way.'

Then Jesus turned to the crowd,  
and said,

'Day after day  
I was teaching in the temple,  
and you did not arrest me.

And now you come out  
with swords and clubs  
to arrest me  
like an outlaw.

But all this has taken place  
that the scriptures  
might be fulfilled.'

Then all the disciples  
deserted him, and fled.

Those who had arrested Jesus  
took him to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest,  
where the scribes and the elders had gathered.

Peter followed them at a distance,  
to the courtyard of the high priest,  
where he sat with the guards,  
to see how this would end.

The chief priests, and the whole council,  
were looking for false testimony against Jesus,  
so that they might  
put him to death.

But they found none,  
even though  
many false witnesses came forward.

Finally, two came forward, who claimed  
that Jesus had said  
he could destroy  
the temple of God,  
and rebuild it,  
in three days.

The high priest stood up,  
and demanded of Jesus, 'How do you respond  
to what they are saying?  
Have you no answer?'

Jesus remained silent.

Then the high priest said,  
'I put you under oath  
before the living God.

Tell us now,  
whether you are the Messiah,  
the Son of God.'

Jesus said to him, 'You have said it.

But I say to you,  
that after all this,  
you will see the Son of Man  
seated  
at the right hand of power,  
and returning  
on the clouds of heaven.'

Then the high priest  
tore his robes,  
and said to the scribes,  
and the elders, 'We need  
no more witnesses.

You have heard  
his blasphemy.  
What is your verdict?'

The scribes and the elders  
answered, 'He must die.'

And they spat  
in his face,  
and struck him.

And some mocked him, saying,  
'If you are a prophet,  
tell us who struck you.'

Peter was sitting outside,  
in the courtyard.  
One of the women who worked there  
approached Peter,  
and said, 'You were with Jesus, from Galilee.'  
But Peter denied it,  
saying, 'I do not know  
what you mean.'  
And he moved  
to the outer courtyard.  
Another woman saw him there, and said,  
'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.'  
Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath,  
saying, 'I do not know the man.'  
After a while, those standing there  
said to Peter, 'Surely you are with him,  
for your accent betrays you.'  
Peter began to curse, and again swore,  
with an oath, 'I do not know the man.'  
At that very moment,  
the cock crowed.  
And Peter remembered  
that Jesus had said to him,  
'Before the cock crows,  
you will deny me three times.'  
And Peter went out,  
and wept bitterly.

When morning came,  
the chief priests,  
and the elders of the people,  
again conspired together,  
against Jesus,  
to bring about his death.  
Then they bound Jesus, led him away,  
and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.

When Judas saw  
that Jesus was condemned,  
he repented,  
and brought back  
the thirty silver coins  
to the chief priests and the elders.  
Judas said, 'I have sinned,  
by betraying innocent blood.'  
The chief priests, and the elders, said,  
'What is that to us? See to it yourself.'  
Judas threw the coins  
into the temple.  
And he went away  
and hanged himself.

The chief priests,  
taking the coins,  
said, 'We cannot put these  
into the treasury,  
as they are blood money.'  
And after discussing this together,  
they used them  
to buy the potter's field,  
as a place to bury foreigners;  
and it is for this reason  
that the field has been called  
The Field of Blood  
to this day.  
And so the words of the prophet  
were fulfilled: 'They took thirty silver coins,  
the price that had been set on him,  
and gave them for the potter's field,  
as the Lord directed.'

Jesus stood before Pilate, the governor;  
and Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you  
the King of the Jews?'  
Jesus replied, 'You have said it.'  
Then the chief priests  
and the elders  
set out their accusations against Jesus.  
But Jesus gave no reply.  
Pilate said to Jesus, 'Do you not hear  
the accusations  
they are making against you?'  
And still, Jesus gave no reply.

And a message was sent to Pilate  
by his wife:  
'Have nothing to do with this innocent man,  
for today I have suffered many things  
in a dream, because of him.'

Now at the festival, it was the custom  
of the governor  
to release to the crowd  
a prisoner, of their choosing.  
Pilate was holding a notorious prisoner,  
called Barabbas.  
Pilate asked the gathered crowd,  
'Who do you want me to release for you?  
Barabbas?  
Or Jesus, called the Messiah?'

Pilate recognised  
that it was out of envy  
that the chief priests and the elders  
had arrested Jesus,  
and had brought Jesus to him.  
And now the chief priests and elders  
persuaded the crowds  
to ask for the release of Barabbas,  
and to have Jesus  
put to death.  
Pilate asked the crowd again, 'Which of these two  
shall I release to you?'

And the crowd demanded Barabbas.  
Pilate asked them, 'What then shall I do  
with Jesus, called the Christ?'

And they cried out, 'Crucify him!'

Pilate asked, 'Why?  
What evil has he done?'

But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify!'

When Pilate saw that he could do nothing,  
and that a riot was beginning,  
he took water,  
and washed his hands before the crowd,  
saying, 'I am innocent  
of this man's blood.'

The people answered, 'His blood be on us  
and on our children!'

Pilate released Barabbas for them,  
and had Jesus flogged;  
then handed Jesus over  
to be crucified.

Pilate's soldiers  
took Jesus to their barracks, where  
the whole company of soldiers  
gathered around him.  
They stripped him,  
and put a scarlet robe on him,  
then twisted some thorns into a crown,  
and put it on his head.  
They put a reed in his right hand,  
then knelt before him, and mocked him,  
saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'

They spat on him,  
and took the reed,  
and struck him on the head.  
And after they had mocked him,  
they stripped him of the robe,  
put his own clothes on him,  
and led him away to crucify him.

As they went out,  
a man from north Africa, named Simon, was there,  
and they made him carry the cross.  
When they came to the place called Golgotha  
(which means the Place of the Skull),  
they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall;  
but when he tasted it,  
he would not drink it.  
And when they had crucified him,  
they divided his clothes between them,  
by casting lots.  
Then they sat and kept watch over him.  
Above his head,  
they put the charge against him,  
which read, 'This is Jesus,  
the King of the Jews.'

Two thieves  
were crucified with him,  
one on his right, and one on his left.  
Those who passed by  
mocked him,  
shaking their heads, and saying,  
'You who would destroy the temple  
and build it in three days:  
save yourself;  
if you are the Son of God,  
come down from the cross.'

The chief priests, the elders,  
and the teachers of the law,  
also mocked him,  
saying, 'He saved others,  
but he cannot save himself!  
If he is the King of Israel,  
let him come down from the cross,  
and we will believe in him.  
He trusts in God;  
he claims to be the Son of God;  
let us see  
whether God  
will deliver him now.'

And those who were crucified with him  
also taunted him.

At midday,  
darkness came over the whole land  
for three hours.

Then Jesus cried with a loud voice,  
'My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?'

Jesus cried out in Aramaic,  
addressing God as 'Eli'.

Some of the bystanders  
thought he was calling  
for Elijah.

One of them brought a sponge,  
filled it with sour wine,  
put it on a stick,  
and held it up for Jesus to drink.

But the others said, 'Wait,  
let us see whether Elijah  
will come to save him.'

Then Jesus  
let out a loud cry  
once again,  
and yielded up his spirit.

And the curtain of the temple  
was torn in two.

The earth shook,  
and rocks split apart.

Tombs  
broke open;  
and the bodies of many godly people who had died  
were awakened.

After his resurrection,  
they came out from their tombs,  
and entered the holy city,  
and appeared to many.

Now when the centurion guarding Jesus,  
and the other soldiers with him,  
saw the earthquake,  
and all that had taken place,  
they said, 'Truly this was  
the Son of God.'

Many women were also there,  
looking on from a distance.

They had followed Jesus from Galilee,  
and had provided for him.

Amongst them were Mary Magdalene,  
Mary the mother of James and Joseph,  
and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening,  
Joseph of Arimathea,  
a disciple of Jesus,  
went to Pilate,  
and asked for the body of Jesus;  
and Pilate ordered  
that it should be given to him.

So Joseph of Arimathea  
took the body of Jesus,  
wrapped it  
in a clean linen cloth,  
and laid it  
in his own new tomb,  
which had been carved out  
from the rock.

He rolled a great stone  
across the entrance to the tomb,  
and went away.

And Mary Magdalene,  
and the other Mary,  
were there,  
sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day,  
the chief priests and the Pharisees  
went to Pilate, and said,  
'Sir, while that impostor was still alive,  
he said that after three days  
he would rise again;  
so order that the tomb  
be made secure  
until the third day;  
or his disciples may come  
and remove the body,  
and tell the people  
he has risen  
from the dead,  
and this last deception  
would be worse  
than the first.'

Pilate said,  
'You have soldiers;  
go, make it secure.'  
So they went with soldiers  
and made the tomb secure.

The Passion of the Lord.

## THURSDAY 6 APRIL

### FIRST READING – *Exodus 12.2-3,5a,6-8,11-14*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

You are to call this month

the first month  
of the year.

On the tenth day

of this month,

each family, each household,

is to take a lamb,  
a year-old male, without blemish.

On the fourteenth day,

each household  
is to slaughter the lamb  
at sunset.

With the blood of the lamb,

you are to mark the door-frame of the house  
where you will eat.

That same night,

you are to roast the lamb  
over a fire,

and eat it

with bitter herbs,  
and bread without yeast.

You are to eat it hurriedly,

with your belt fastened  
and your shoes on your feet.

That night will be the Passover of the Lord -

for I will pass through the land of Egypt that night,  
and I will strike down  
every first-born male  
in the land of Egypt,  
both people and animals.

Against all the gods of Egypt,

I will bring judgement -  
for I am the Lord.

But when I see the blood of the lamb

on the houses where you live,  
I will pass over you,  
and no plague will destroy you,  
even as I strike  
the land of Egypt.

And then,

you are to keep this day  
as a day of remembrance,  
a festival to the Lord for ever,  
through every generation.

This is the word of the Lord.

### SECOND READING – *Revelation 5.5a,6a,7-13*

A reading from the book of Revelation.

Looking like

a lamb that has been slain,  
and is alive again,

the one who is

the Lion of Judah, and the root of David,  
took the scroll

from the one who was seated on the throne.

The four living creatures, and the twenty-four elders,

holding musical instruments,  
and golden bowls of incense

(which are the prayers of the saints),

fell down before the Lamb,

and sang: 'You are worthy,  
for you were slain,

and by your blood

you have restored to God

a people to serve

as a royal priesthood on earth

from every nation, tribe, and language.'

Then I heard thousands of angels,

all around the throne,

with the living creatures, and the elders,

singing in full voice: 'Worthy

is the Lamb that was slain,

to receive

all wisdom and power,

all honour and glory and praise!

Then I heard every creature

in heaven and on earth,

and under the earth, and in the sea,

singing to the one who was seated on the throne,

and to the Lamb, 'Blessing and honour

and glory and power,

be yours for ever and ever!'

This is the word of the Lord.

### GOSPEL – *John 1.23,26b-27,29*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to John.

John the Baptist said,

'I am the voice of the one

crying out in the wilderness,

"Make straight the way of the Lord,"

as the prophet Isaiah has said.

But amongst you

stands one you do not know,

the one who is coming after me.

I am not worthy

even to be his servant.'

The next day,

John saw Jesus coming towards him,

and declared,

'Here is the Lamb of God

who takes away

the sin of the world!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



## **FRIDAY 7 APRIL**

*Good Friday*

### **FIRST READING** – *Isaiah 53.3-5*

He was despised  
and rejected.  
He knew anguish  
and pain.  
We counted him as worthless,  
as struck down  
by God.  
We turned our faces  
from him.  
Yet truly  
he bore our anguish,  
and carried our pain.  
He was wounded  
for our transgressions,  
and crushed  
for our iniquities.  
He bore the punishment  
that makes us whole.  
And by his wounds,  
we are healed.

### **SECOND READING** – *Hebrews 4.14-16; 5.7-9*

We have  
a great high priest, who has  
ascended into heaven,  
Jesus, the Son of God.  
And he is able to sympathise  
with our weakness,  
for he himself  
has been tested,  
in every way, as we are -  
yet without sin.  
So let us trust in him,  
and approach the throne of grace with boldness,  
that we may receive mercy,  
and find grace to help  
in time of need.  
In the time of his earthly life,  
he offered up prayers,  
with loud cries, and tears,  
to the one who was able to rescue him from death.  
Even as a Son,  
he grew in devotion  
through all he learned and endured.  
The Father heard his prayer.  
And now he has become  
the source of eternal salvation  
for all who trust in him.

*Good Friday Passion Readings  
begin on the next page*

## FRIDAY 7 APRIL

### Good Friday Passion Reading Part 1

John 18:1-27

Jesus went  
with his disciples  
to a garden  
on the far side  
of the Kidron valley.  
Judas also knew the place,  
because Jesus  
would often meet there  
with his disciples.  
So Judas led the soldiers and the temple guards there,  
with weapons and torches.  
Jesus, knowing what was happening,  
stepped forward, and asked them, 'Who is it  
that you are looking for?'  
They answered, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'  
Jesus said, 'I am he.'  
And they stepped back  
and fell to the ground.  
Jesus asked them again, 'Who is it  
that you are looking for?'  
And again they said, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'  
Jesus replied, 'I say again, I am he.  
Now let these others go.'  
In this way, he fulfilled the words  
he had earlier spoken in prayer:  
'I have protected those  
you entrusted to me.'  
Simon Peter  
now drew his sword,  
and struck  
the servant  
of the high priest,  
cutting off his right ear.  
Jesus said, 'Put your sword away,  
for I must surely drink  
from the cup  
that the Father  
has given me.'  
Then the soldiers  
and the temple guards  
arrested Jesus,  
and bound him.  
They took him first to Annas,  
the father-in-law  
of Caiaphas,  
the high priest that year.  
Caiaphas was the one who had said  
that it was better  
to have one person die  
for the people.

Simon Peter,  
and another disciple,  
followed Jesus.  
The other disciple  
was known to the high priest,  
and was able to follow Jesus  
all the way  
into the courtyard.  
But Peter was left standing outside the gate,  
until the other disciple  
went out  
and spoke to the woman who was  
guarding the gate.  
The woman said to Peter, 'Are you also  
one of his disciples?'  
Peter said, 'I am not.'  
The servants and temple guards  
had made a charcoal fire  
in the courtyard,  
and they were standing around it  
to keep warm.  
Peter went  
and stood with them.  
Inside, they were questioning Jesus  
about his disciples  
and his teaching.  
Jesus said, 'I have always spoken openly.  
I have taught  
in the synagogue,  
and in the temple,  
where people gather.  
I have said nothing in secret.  
Why ask me,  
when you can ask  
those who heard me?'  
One of the temple guards  
struck Jesus on the face,  
saying, 'That is not  
how you answer  
the high priest.'  
Jesus said, 'If what I have said  
is untrue, then say so;  
but if it is true, why strike me?'  
Annas now sent Jesus, bound,  
to Caiaphas the high priest.  
Simon Peter  
was still standing  
with the temple guards,  
by the charcoal fire,  
in the courtyard.  
Those who were standing there  
asked Peter, 'Are you also  
one of his disciples?'  
Peter again denied it,  
saying, 'I am not.'  
One of the servants of the high priest  
(a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off)  
said to Peter, 'Did I not  
see you with him, in the garden?'  
Again Peter denied it;  
and at that very moment,  
the cock crowed.

## FRIDAY 7 APRIL

### Good Friday Passion Reading Part 2

John 18:28 - 19:16

At first light, they took Jesus  
from the court of  
Caiaphas, the high priest,  
to the headquarters of  
Pilate, the Roman governor.  
But they did not go in,  
as that would have been  
a ritual defilement, preventing them  
from eating the Passover.  
So Pilate went out to them,  
and asked, 'What charges do you bring  
against this man?'  
They answered, 'If he were not  
an offender, we would not have  
brought him to you.'  
Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves,  
and judge him by your own law.'  
They replied, 'It is not lawful for us  
to put anyone to death.'  
Pilate went back inside his headquarters.  
There, he summoned Jesus,  
and asked him, 'Are you  
the king of the Jews?'  
Jesus said, 'Do you ask this for yourself,  
or as something that others have said?'  
Pilate replied, 'I am a Roman, not a Jew.  
Your own people  
and chief priests  
have handed you over to me.  
What have you done?'  
Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not  
of this world,  
or I would surely have guards,  
fighting to protect me.  
My kingdom is not here.'  
Pilate said, 'So you are a king!'  
Jesus said, 'Those are your words.  
I was born, and I came into the world,  
to bear witness to the truth.  
Everyone who seeks the truth  
hears my voice.'  
Pilate said, 'And what is truth?'  
Pilate then returned  
to those who were waiting outside,  
and said, 'I find no case against him.  
But you have a custom  
that I release a prisoner for you  
at Passover.  
Do you want me to release to you  
the king of the Jews?'  
And they shouted, 'Not him,  
but Barabbas!'  
And Barabbas  
was a common criminal.

Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.  
The soldiers made a crown, out of thorns,  
and put it on his head;  
and they dressed him  
in a purple robe.  
They came up to him, saying,  
'Hail, King of the Jews!'  
and struck him on the face.  
Pilate returned to those who were waiting outside,  
and said, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you  
to let you know  
that I find no case against him.'  
Jesus came out,  
wearing the crown of thorns  
and the purple robe.  
Pilate said, 'Behold the man!'  
As soon as the chief priests,  
and the temple guards, saw him,  
they shouted, 'Crucify!'  
Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him.  
I find no case against him.'  
They said, 'By our law, he must die,  
for he claims to be  
the Son of God.'  
When Pilate heard this,  
he was greatly concerned.  
He entered his headquarters again,  
and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?'  
But Jesus gave no answer.  
Pilate said, 'Do you refuse to speak to me?  
Do you not see  
that I have the power to release you,  
or to crucify you?'  
Jesus said, 'You would have had  
no power over me,  
had it not been given to you.  
The one who handed me over to you  
is guilty of a greater sin.'  
On hearing this, Pilate again  
sought to release Jesus,  
but the chief priests  
and the temple guards  
said, 'If you release him, you are no friend  
of the emperor,  
for he sets himself against the emperor,  
by calling himself a king.'  
Pilate took Jesus outside,  
and sat on the judgement seat,  
at the stone pavement.  
It was about midday  
on the day of preparation  
for the Passover.  
Pilate said, 'Here is your king!'  
They cried out, 'Away with him!  
Crucify him!'  
Pilate asked them, 'Shall I  
crucify your king?'  
They answered, 'We have no king  
but the emperor!'  
And Pilate handed Jesus over to them,  
and they led him away  
to be crucified.

## FRIDAY 7 APRIL

### Good Friday Passion Reading Part 3

John 19:17-end

With Jesus carrying his own cross,  
they led him out  
to The Place of the Skull  
(which in Hebrew is Golgotha).  
There they crucified him,  
between two others,  
one on his right, and one on his left.  
Pilate had an inscription  
placed on the cross: 'Jesus of Nazareth,  
the King of the Jews.'  
Many people were able to read this,  
as the place of the crucifixion  
was near the city,  
and the sign was written  
in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.  
The chief priests complained to Pilate,  
insisting that the inscription  
should not be  
'The King of the Jews',  
but  
'This man claimed to be  
the King of the Jews'.  
But Pilate said, 'What I have written,  
I have written.'  
The soldiers who crucified Jesus  
divided his clothes  
between them.  
But his tunic was woven as a single piece,  
so rather than tear it,  
they cast lots for it.  
As it says in the psalm, 'They divided my garments  
amongst themselves,  
and for my clothing, they cast lots.'  
Standing by the cross of Jesus  
were his mother,  
and his mother's sister,  
Mary the wife of Clopas,  
and Mary Magdalene.  
When Jesus saw the beloved disciple  
standing beside his mother,  
Jesus said to his mother, 'Here is your son',  
and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'  
And from that time on,  
the disciple took her into his own home.  
Knowing that everything was now completed,  
and in order to fulfil the scripture,  
Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.'  
From a jar that was standing there,  
they filled a sponge with sour wine,  
fixed it  
on a branch of hyssop,  
and lifted it to his mouth.  
When Jesus had received it,  
he said, 'It is finished,'  
And he bowed his head,  
and gave up his spirit.

The temple authorities  
did not want the crucifixions  
continuing into the sabbath,  
so they asked Pilate to order  
that the legs of the crucified  
be broken,  
and the bodies removed.  
The soldiers came  
and broke the legs  
of the two who had been crucified  
alongside Jesus.  
But when they came to Jesus,  
seeing that he was already dead,  
they did not break his legs,  
but pierced his side with a spear;  
and blood and water  
flowed out.  
This account is given  
by one who  
witnessed these things,  
so that you may know it to be true.  
And so the scriptures were fulfilled:  
'Not one of his bones shall be broken,'  
and, 'They will look upon  
the one they have pierced.'  
After all these things  
had taken place,  
Joseph of Arimathea  
sought and received  
from Pilate  
permission to take away  
the body of Jesus.  
Joseph was a disciple of Jesus,  
but secretly, for fear  
of the religious authorities.  
Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus  
by night,  
brought linen cloths,  
and ointment, with myrrh, and aloe.  
and together  
they anointed and wrapped  
the body of Jesus  
for burial.  
In a garden,  
close to the place of crucifixion,  
there was a new tomb,  
in which no one  
had ever been laid.  
And as the sabbath  
was soon to begin,  
and the tomb was nearby,  
they laid Jesus there.

## SUNDAY 9 APRIL

*Easter Day*

*(with Acts 2 – for SSRA)*

### FIRST READING - Acts 2.22-24,29-32,36

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter said, 'People of Israel,  
you are all witnesses  
to the signs, wonders, and deeds of power,  
that God did amongst us  
through Jesus of Nazareth.

You had him crucified,  
by the hands of those  
outside the law.

But God raised him up,  
setting him free  
from death, which could not  
hold him  
in its power.

All this was in fulfilment  
of a plan  
that God formed  
long ago.

King David died, and was buried,  
and his tomb is with us to this day.

But as a prophet, King David knew  
that God would put  
one of his descendants  
on his throne.

When King David wrote  
that he would not  
be abandoned to death,

he was writing of that descendant,  
the Messiah,  
and the resurrection  
of the Messiah.

And now, we are all witnesses  
that God has raised up  
this Jesus  
from the dead.

So let it be known, to all Israel,  
that God has made this Jesus -  
the one you crucified -  
to be both Messiah and Lord.'

This is the word of the Lord.

### SECOND READING - Colossians 3.1-4

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Now that you have been raised up with Christ,  
seek the things that are above.

Set your minds  
on the things of heaven,  
not on the things of earth.

For you have died,  
and your new life, in the risen Christ,  
is secure, in the presence of God.

And when Christ, who is your life, appears,  
you also  
will appear with him  
in glory.

This is the word of the Lord.

### GOSPEL - John 20.1-18

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to John.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark,  
Mary Magdalene came to the tomb  
and saw that the stone  
had been removed.

She hurried back to Simon Peter,  
and the disciple Jesus loved, and said,  
'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,  
and we do not know  
where they have laid him.'

Peter and the other disciple  
set off running  
towards the tomb.

The other disciple outran Peter,  
reaching the tomb first.

Bending down to look in,  
he could see the linen wrappings, lying there,  
but did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came, following him,  
and went into the tomb.

He saw the linen wrappings,  
and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head  
rolled up separately, in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple  
also went in,  
and saw, and believed;

(for until this point,  
they had not understood the scripture,  
that he must rise from the dead).

When these two disciples returned to their homes,  
Mary stayed, weeping, outside the tomb.

As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;  
and she saw two angels, in white robes,  
sitting one at the head, and one at the feet,  
of where the body of Jesus had been.

The angels said to Mary, 'Why are you weeping?'

Mary said, 'They have taken away my Lord,  
and I do not know where they have laid him.'

When she had said this, she turned around,  
and saw Jesus standing there,  
but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus asked her, 'Why are you weeping?  
Who is it that you are looking for?'

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him,  
'Sir, if you have carried him away,  
tell me where you have laid him,  
and I will take him away.'

Jesus said to her, 'Mary!'

Mary turned, and said to him, 'Teacher!'

Jesus said, 'Do not hold on to me,  
for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

But go, and tell my brothers  
that I am ascending  
to my Father and your Father,  
to my God and your God.

Mary Magdalene went  
and said to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord';  
and she told them the words  
the Lord had spoken to her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

## SUNDAY 9 APRIL

*Easter Day*

*(with Acts 10 – for other lectionaries)*

### FIRST READING – Acts 10.34-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

And Peter addressed them, saying,

Now I truly understand

that God shows no partiality,

but welcomes those,

from every nation, who honour God,

and do what is right.

Now the gospel of peace has been revealed

to the people of Israel

in Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

The message has spread through all Judea.

It began in Galilee,

with the preaching of John the Baptist.

Then Jesus of Nazareth was anointed, by God,

with the Holy Spirit, and with power.

He went about doing good, and healing

all who were oppressed by the devil,

for God was with him.

We ourselves are witnesses to all that he did,

in Judea and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death on a cross.

But God raised him up, on the third day,

and allowed him to appear,

not to all the people,

but to us, chosen by God as witnesses.

And indeed we ate and drank with him,

after he rose from the dead.

He commissioned us to continue

the proclamation of the gospel, and to testify

that he is the one, ordained by God,

to be judge of the living and the dead.

All the prophets declare

that everyone who believes in him

receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

This is the word of the Lord.

### SECOND READING - Colossians 3.1-4

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Now that you have been raised up with Christ,

seek the things that are above.

Set your minds

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not on the things of earth.

For you have died,

and your new life, in the risen Christ,

is secure, in the presence of God.

And when Christ, who is your life, appears,

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to my God and your God.

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