

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth

Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Rev. Gerry Gallant

The King on the Cross

Second Sunday After Epiphany

John 19:16(b)-30

### Welcome

### Announcements

### Call to Worship

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

**We lift our eyes to the One who was lifted up for us.**

From eternity He was with God, and in time He was given for us.

**He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.**

The righteous One suffered for the unrighteous.

**That we might be brought to God.**

Come, let us worship the crucified and risen King.

**To Him be glory, honor, and praise forever. Amen.**

### Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Holy and righteous God,

We come before You with reverent hearts, giving thanks for Your unsearchable wisdom and unfailing love. You are holy in all Your ways and perfect in all Your works. From before the foundation of the world, You purposed to redeem a people for Yourself, not by our merit, but by Your mercy.

We thank You for Jesus Christ, Your only begotten Son, who willingly took upon Himself our flesh and walked in perfect obedience. We praise You that in Your great love You did not spare Him, but gave Him up for us all. In the suffering of Christ, we behold both the depth of our sin and the greater depth of Your grace.

Receive our worship this day, not because we are worthy, but because You are. Fix our eyes upon Your glory, quiet our hearts before Your majesty, and draw us near through the finished work of Your Son. May all that we do be shaped by gratitude, humility, and awe.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Call to Confession**

As we do each week

Let us come before the Lord with humble hearts, confessing our sins, trusting in His mercy.

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed.**

**We have pursued our own ways instead of walking in the path of Christ.**

**We have hardened our hearts to Your Word, neglected the needs of others, and failed to proclaim Your truth with courage.**

**Lord Jesus, we acknowledge that our sins crucified You in spirit.**

**We turn from our self-centeredness, our pride, and our fear.**

**Cleanse us by Your blood, renew us by Your Spirit,**

**and grant us faith to trust fully in the sufficiency of Your sacrifice.**

**Forgive us, O God, and restore us to the joy of Your salvation,**

**that we may walk in newness of life, for Your glory alone.**

**Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Hear the good news: Christ Himself bore the punishment that we deserved.

By His wounds, we are healed; by His death, we are forgiven.

As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name**

**Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven**

**Give us this day our daily bread**

**And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one**

**For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,**

**Forever and ever, Amen.**

**Hymn #291: “Thou Whose Almighty Word”**

Thou whose almighty word  
 chaos and darkness heard  
 and took their flight,  
 hear us, we humbly pray,  
 and where the gospel day  
 sheds not its glorious ray  
 Let There Be Light!

Saviour who came to bring  
 on thy redeeming wing  
 healing and sight,  
 health to the sick in mind,  
 sight to the inly blind,  
 now to all humankind  
 Let There Be Light!

Blessed and holy Three,  
 glorious Trinity,  
 Wisdom, Love, Might,  
 boundless as ocean's tide  
 rolling in fullest pride,  
 through the world, far and wide,  
 Let There Be Light!

**Responsive Reading****Psalm 22:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
 Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

<sup>2</sup> **O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,  
 and by night, but I find no rest.**

<sup>3</sup> Yet you are holy,  
 enthroned on the praises of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> **In you our fathers trusted;  
 they trusted, and you delivered them.**

<sup>5</sup> To you they cried and were rescued;  
 in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

<sup>6</sup> **But I am a worm and not a man,**

scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

<sup>7</sup> All who see me mock me;  
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;  
<sup>8</sup> **“He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;  
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”**

<sup>9</sup> Yet you are he who took me from the womb;  
you made me trust you at my mother’s breasts.  
<sup>10</sup> **On you was I cast from my birth,  
and from my mother’s womb you have been my God.**  
<sup>11</sup> **Be not far from me,  
for trouble is near,  
and there is none to help.**

**Anthem (Music Ministry): “Holy, Holy, Holy”**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Scripture**

**John 19:16(b)-30**

So they took Jesus, <sup>17</sup> and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” <sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. <sup>21</sup> So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’ ” <sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, <sup>24</sup> so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things, <sup>25</sup> but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

<sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

### Sermon

Before we enter into John’s account of the crucifixion, let’s take a moment to look back at last week’s Scripture and the lessons we learned.

‘We started by remembering the danger of losing sight of the big picture as we moved verse by verse through John’s Gospel.

John’s purpose from the very start of his Gospel is clear: Jesus is the living God, not merely a prophet or teacher, but the Creator and sustainer of all that exists standing before Pilate, sovereign even in His suffering.

We saw Pilate’s repeated declarations of Jesus’s innocence, yet his failure to act upon that truth, instead we saw him compromise with the world because of his fear of losing status, power and influence.

We saw the soldiers’ mockery, the crown of thorns, and the irony that everything they mocked was true: Jesus is King.

We saw how all in the courtyard were enslaved by fear, envy, cruelty, or manipulation, except for Jesus, who alone stood free, bound physically but spiritually obedient.

And the challenge was set before us: will we behold the Man and worship, or push Him away to preserve our comfort in this world?

Now, as we turn to John 19:17–30, we come to the very center of the Gospel, the crucifixion itself.

Here, the fullness of God’s love and justice meet in the suffering of Christ. John’s narrative is deliberate, and it is rich with meaning that deepens our understanding.

John writes,

#### **John 19:16-18**

**So they took Jesus, 17 and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. 18 There they**

**crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.**

According to Roman custom Jesus was forced to carry the cross from his place of sentencing to the place of his crucifixion. Before they put the man on the cross they put the cross on the man, forcing him to carry it in a public procession intended to draw the crowd's attention to the condemned man, his crime and his fate.

Roman crucifixion was reserved for the worst criminals and the lowest class of people. It was designed to make a public spectacle of the person who was condemned to die, it was slow, excruciatingly painful and humiliating. It was considered so degrading that polite Romans would not even talk about it publicly.

The Roman statesman Cicero said of crucifixion: "It is a crime to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an act of wickedness; to execute him is almost murder: What shall I say of crucifying him? An act so abominable it is impossible to find any word adequately to express." The Roman historian Tacitus called crucifixion "A torture fit only for slaves."

So, Jesus bore his cross to the place of his crucifixion. The Greek verb that John uses for "bearing" (*bastazōn*) conveys not just carrying a physical burden, but bearing up under the weight of something significant Jesus is not just carrying the weight of the cross upon his shoulders he is bearing the weight of our sin and our shame on his soul. Jesus is not just carrying wood; He is carrying the curse of humanity.

This is substitution: Christ carries the curse and shame that belong to us. Jesus is crucified in the middle between two known criminals, he took the place of Barabbas, a man who was a sinner, a man who deserved the punishment that Jesus was already in the midst of enduring. Even here before the first nail is driven into his flesh, our Lord and Savior is bearing the punishment we deserve in our place, in the same way he was for Barabbas.

The word for "crucified" (*estaurōsan*) is used with stark simplicity. The people of Jesus's day did not need to know all of the gruesome details involved in seeing someone dying upon the cross because they had witnessed it with their own eyes.

They knew that a man was stretched out against the wood, a nail driven through the feet of his crossed over legs, just below the heel. They knew that his arms were drawn out along the beams and a nail was driven through the wrist. Their body held in an extremely uncomfortable position meant to increase the agony and suffering of the one upon the cross. They knew of the 'sedile', a small horn like seat that allowed the person on the cross to have a few moments of peace from the nails ripping through their flesh,

until they began to tire and died of shock, blood loss, exhaustion, dehydration, heart-attacks from stress or a congestive heart failure that lead to a cardiac rupture, the heart literally ripping itself apart. And if the person on the cross was not dying quickly enough, those at the base of the cross could always use a large hammer to break their legs, removing that small bit of relief they could find, ensuring a quicker death.

However, for us the cross is not just a Roman instrument of torture and death.

It is also the place where Christ becomes a curse for us

**Galatians 3:13-14**

**13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us— for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— 14 so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.**

The Greek makes clear that Jesus is the central figure, in the ESV we see it translated as Jesus between them, but the Greek should translate to something like “in the midst” (en mesō).

Jesus is not just geographically located in the middle, he is also there theologically, as the center of God’s redemptive plan. He is the axis of redemption, the mediator between God and humanity, between the saved and the lost.

Jesus is at the center of the three crosses, he is at the center of our salvation, he is at the center of our relationship with God, and in this very moment he is at the center of all of God’s work.

**John 19:19-22**

**19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’ ” 22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”**

According to Roman customs a criminal’s crime had to be written out, and carried by him to the cross, where it would be placed above his head so everyone would know why that person had been crucified.

Pilate's inscription for Jesus read 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.', and it is written in three languages making the message universal. The Greek word used for 'King' (basileus) is a title of authority and fulfillment of prophecy.

The religious leaders objected to the sign, yet Pilate refuses to change it.

Pilate meant to make a mockery of Jesus as he hung upon the cross. Yet, he is making a stark declaration of truth, Jesus is the one true eternal King. The One King over all nations and all peoples. Even in death, Jesus was identified with humble Nazareth and recognized as King.

Despite himself, Pilate honored the King of Truth with this true description of who He was, in both humility and glory. God's sovereignty reigned and His plan proceeded.

**John 19:23-24**

**23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things,**

The soldiers 'divided His garments' and 'cast lots' for His tunic.

Again, this is something that the people of Jesus's day would be familiar with, and we are not. Roman soldiers over saw crucifixions, both to ensure that order was maintained and to ensure that the condemned died in a timely manner.

And according to Roman law, a man was to be crucified completely naked, to add to his shame and degradation. So, they took the clothing that Jesus had and divided it among themselves.

This fulfilled the prophecy written in the book of Psalms.

**Psalm 22:16-18**

**16 For dogs encompass me;  
a company of evildoers encircles me;  
they have pierced my hands and feet—  
17 I can count all my bones—**

**they stare and gloat over me;  
18 they divide my garments among them,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.**

John Calvin wrote, 'Christ's poverty is our riches. He was stripped that we might be clothed in righteousness.'

Christ's humiliation for our exaltation. Jesus retained no material possessions; even His last bit of clothing was taken away in his death. He became completely poor for us, so that we might become rich in Him.

Also, take note of John's focus on His seamless tunic, it is meant to remind us of His role as our great High Priest, as that was the garment of the High Priests in the book of Exodus.

The soldiers' actions, although callous and cruel, fulfilled Scripture even as they played games for his possessions at the foot of the cross

**John 19:24-27**

**25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.**

Also at the foot of the cross stood Mary, his mother. She witnessed His shame, His suffering, His humiliation, His pain and His death. Simeon foretold this when she brought Jesus to the temple as a child.

**Luke 2:34-35**

**34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."**

Seeing her suffering Jesus then entrusts His mother to the beloved disciple.

Again the Greek word for 'behold' used by Christ (ide) is an imperative, it is that same word that Pilate used when he had said, 'Behold the man and Behold your King', it is an

urgent command to see, to look deeply, to recognize and understand that a new relationship is being formed here at the foot of the cross.

Matthew Henry writes, “Christ, in His dying moments, provides for His mother, teaching us to honor our parents, even in our greatest extremity.”

At the foot of the cross on Calvary, Jesus creates a new family, His church, a family of faithful believers that is united not by their own blood, but by the blood of Jesus Christ and their faith in Him as Lord and Savior.

John and Mary obeyed this solemn command, and from that hour, the Scripture tells us that John took Mary into his home

**John 19:28-30**

**28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.**

The Greek word for ‘accomplished’ (tetelesmenon) is from the same root as Jesus’ final cry, ‘It is finished!’ (tetelestai).

This word, was used for both financial receipts and for legal documents, it means ‘paid in full,’ ‘completed,’ or ‘fulfilled.’

When Jesus says, ‘I thirst’, He fulfills Scripture and signals that the work he has come to do is done.

Spurgeon wrote

**Thirst is a common misery, and Christ, in thirsting, identifies Himself with the poorest and most humble. Appetite was the door of sin, and in that point, our Lord was put to pain. With ‘I thirst,’ the evil is destroyed and receives its expiation. – Charles Spurgeon**

Christ’s suffering is both substitutionary and sympathetic—He suffers for us and with us.

When Jesus receives the sour wine, He declares, ‘It is finished!’.

The perfect tense in Greek indicates a completed action with ongoing results.

His final words are the seal of our redemption. Nothing remains to be added; the work is complete.

People of God know this, that Christ's work is sufficient, final, and effective.

All was finished, every promise, prophecy, sacrifice, and ceremony. God's justice and wrath was satisfied in Christ obedience and sacrifice in our place, and through it the defeat of Satan, sin, and death was completed. This is why our assurance of salvation rests not in our work in this world, but in His death upon the cross.

From the gates of Eden, the blood of sacrifice had begun to flow, but from this moment, not another drop need be shed.

'He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.'

The Greek for 'gave up' means to hand over, to entrust. Jesus' death is not taken from Him; He gives it willingly.

Christ died with composure and peace, showing that He was Lord over both life and death. His death is a sovereign act, He lays down His life of His own accord. This is the voluntary, loving sacrifice that secures our salvation.

So people of God, recognize that John 19:17–30 is not just history, it is at the very center of our faith.

It is here that Christ bears our curse, fulfills prophecy, creates a new family, identifies with our suffering, secures our redemption, and lays down His life in sovereign love.

Every words that John chose is meant to deepens our understanding: every verb, every tense, every phrase points to the sufficiency, finality, and glory of Christ's work. At the cross, judgment is executed, mercy is released, and history is redirected. The question that remains is not whether the work is finished, but whether we will rest in it.

As a Christian I know that Jesus finished His work for me on that cross and that means that now I need to do my work for Him and persevere until I finish the work that he has called me to do, not to save myself, that was completed on the cross of Calvary. I need to do my work for him because he died willingly, a death of shame, degradation, suffering, and torture, bearing my sins upon his soul to save me.

Our Faith does not add to the cross. Instead, our Faith simply receives it.

And all who do so are invited into the peace purchased by blood, sealed by obedience, and proclaimed by the victorious cry of the Son of God as we walk humbly and obediently as the Salt and Light of His Word in this dark and broken world.

Let us pray,

Almighty and Eternal God,  
 We give You thanks for the unspeakable gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ,  
 who bore our sins, endured the cross, and triumphed over death for our salvation.  
 Grant that we may never forget the depth of His suffering,  
 nor take for granted the perfection of His obedience.  
 Strengthen our faith, that we may rest wholly in His finished work,  
 and not in our own deeds, knowing that by His wounds we are healed.  
 Purify our hearts, O Lord, and renew in us a spirit of humility,  
 that we may follow Christ with steadfast devotion,  
 living not for ourselves, but for Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.  
 Keep us faithful in prayer, constant in love,  
 and bold in witness,  
 so that all who see our lives may behold the grace of our Lord.  
 And now, Father, to You, through Jesus Christ Your Son,  
 and in the power of Your Holy Spirit,  
 be glory, honor, and praise forever.  
**Amen.**

### **Invitation to Offering**

### **Offering Prayer**

### **Closing Hymn #313: "Oh Worship the King"**

Oh worship the King, all glorious above;  
 oh gratefully sing God's power and God's love,  
 our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,  
 pavilioned in splendour and girded with praise.

Oh tell of God's might, oh sing of God's grace,  
 whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;  
 whose chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,  
 and dark is God's path on the wings of the storm.

O measureless Might, unchangeable Love,  
 while angels delight to hymn thee above,  
 thy ransomed creation, in glory ablaze,  
 in true adoration shall sing to thy praise.

### **Pastoral Prayer**

Gracious and faithful God,  
 We thank You for meeting us in Your Word and for directing our hearts once again to the cross of Jesus Christ. We stand in awe of the mystery of Your redeeming love, that You would accomplish our salvation through the suffering of Your Son.

Seal these truths upon our hearts by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Guard us from forgetting what You have done, and keep us from trusting in anything other than Your grace. Teach us to live as a redeemed people—humble, grateful, and obedient—bearing witness to the hope that has been secured for us.

As we go from this place, strengthen us to walk faithfully in a world that resists Your truth. Make us bold in love, patient in suffering, and steadfast in hope. May our lives reflect the glory of Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

We entrust ourselves to You, confident that You who began a good work in us will bring it to completion.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit as the One True living God, now and forevermore.

**Amen.**

### **Benediction**

May the God of peace,  
 who in perfect love gave His Son for our redemption,  
 grant you rest in the finished work of Christ.

May you go in the assurance that your sins are forgiven,  
 your debt is paid,  
 and your salvation is secure in Him alone.

And may the blessing of God Almighty—  
 the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—  
 be upon you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**