

Good Friday Morning Service
At the Easter Cross
Eastlawn Memorial Cemetery, Provo
April 3, 2026, 9:00a

Characters

Mark, the evangelist	John, the evangelist
Pilate	Claudia Procla (Pilate's wife)
Jesus	Soldiers (2 or more)
Matthew, the evangelist	Luke, the evangelist
Judas	Criminal 1
Jewish leaders (2 or more)	Criminal 2
Jeremiah	Centurion (also one of the soldiers)

Except when noted, translations are by Eric Huntsman. For complete selections, see Celebrating Holy Week through a New Look at the Gospel Texts, a fresh translation for Holy Week and Easter (https://erichuntsman.com/Huntsman_holy_week_scripture_selections_translation.pdf)

Invocation

Mark: Then first thing in the morning, when the chief priests had reached a decision together with the elders, the experts at the law, and the whole Sanhedrin, after they had bound Jesus, they led him away and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him,

Pilate: “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus: “That is what you say.”

Mark: The chief priests then began accusing him of many things. So Pilate asked him again,

Pilate: “Are you not giving any response? Look at how many accusations they are making against you!”

Mark: Yet Jesus gave no further response, which astonished Pilate. (Mark 15:1–5)

Matthew: When Judas, who had handed Jesus over, saw that he was condemned, he returned the thirty silver pieces to the chief priests and elders, because he regretted it, saying,

Judas: “I have sinned by handing over innocent blood!”

Jewish leaders: “What concern is that to us? See to it yourself!”

Matthew: After he had thrown the silver pieces into the temple, he withdrew, and after he had gone out, he hanged himself. Then the chief priests, when they had picked up the silver pieces, said,

Jewish leaders: “Putting these into the temple treasury is not permitted, for they are the reward for a bloody deed.”

Matthew: So they reached the decision to buy the potter’s field with the money to use as a burial place for foreigners. Because of this, that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was that which was said through Jeremiah the prophet fulfilled, when he said,

Jeremiah: “And they took thirty silver pieces, the price set upon him by the children of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter’s field, just as the Lord had directed me.” (Matthew 27:3–10)

John: Then Pilate went back into the governor’s residence, summoned Jesus, and said to him,

Pilate: “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus: “Are you saying this on your own, or did others tell you about me?”

Pilate: “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?”

Jesus: “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my retainers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. Yet in truth my kingdom is not from here.”

Pilate: “So you are a king, then?”

Jesus: “You are saying that I am a king. I was born for this, and for this I came into the world: to bear witness to the truth. Every person who is on the side of truth hears my voice.”

Pilate: “What is truth?”

John: After he had said this, he went back to the Jewish leaders and said to them, “I do not find any grounds for legal complaint against him. (John 18:33–38)

Mark: At each festival Pilate used to release a prisoner, whomever they requested. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with revolutionaries who had committed murder during an uprising. When the crowd had arrived, they began asking that he do what he had always done for them. Pilate answered them, saying,

Pilate: “Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?”

Mark: for he understood that the chief priests had handed Jesus over out of envy. (Mark 15:6–10)

Matthew: When Pilate had taken his place on the tribunal to give judgment, his wife sent a message to him, saying,

Claudia Procla: “Don’t have anything to do with this innocent man, because I have suffered a great deal dreaming about him.” (Matthew 27:19)

Mark: The chief priests, however, incited the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas to them instead. So in response Pilate said to them again,

Pilate: “What, then, do you want me to do with him whom you call the king of the Jews?”

Jewish leaders: “Crucify him!”

Pilate: “Why, what crime has he committed?”

Mark: Yet they cried out even more loudly,

Jewish Leaders: “Crucify him!”

Mark: Then Pilate, because he wanted to offer a favor to the crowd, released Barabbas to them. (Mark 15:6–14).

John: So Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. Then the soldiers, after they had woven a crown out of thorns, put it on his head and dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him and saying,

Soldiers: “Hail, king of the Jews!”

John: and slapping him in the face. Pilate came back out and said to them,

Pilate: “Look, I am bringing him back out to you so that you may know that I have found no grounds for complaint against him.”

John: Jesus came out, wearing the thorny crown and the purple robe. Pilate said to them,

Pilate: “Behold, the man!” (John 19:1–5)

Hymn no. 197 “O Savior, Thou Who Wearest a Crown

John: From that point on, Pilate kept trying to release Jesus, but the Jewish authorities shouted, saying,

Jewish leaders: “If you release him, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who pretends to be a king acts in opposition to Caesar.”

John: When Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the tribunal

platform in a place called “Strewn Stones,” or in Aramaic *Gabbatha*. Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover . . . and he said to the Jewish authorities,

Pilate: “Look at your king!”

Jewish leaders: “Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!”

Pilate: “Should I crucify your king?”

Jewish leaders: “We have no king except for Caesar.”

John: So he handed him over to them to be crucified, and they took charge of Jesus. (John 19:12–16)

Mark: They pressed into service a certain man passing by who was coming in from the country, Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. (Mark 15:21)

Luke: A great crowd followed him, including women who beat their breasts and bewailed him. But Jesus, when he turned to them, said,

Jesus: “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not mourn for me, only mourn for yourselves and for your children! For look, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that have not given birth, and the breasts that have not nursed.’ At that time they will begin saying to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us up!’ for if they do these things to a green tree, what will happen to a dry one?” (Luke 23:27–31)

Mark: Then they brought him to the place *Golgotha*, which is translated “The Place of the Skull.” Next they gave him some wine mixed with myrrh, but he would not take it. So they crucified him, and they divided his articles of clothing, casting lots for them to see who would take what. It was at nine o’clock when they crucified him. (Mark 15:22–23)

Hymn no. 194 “There Is a Green Hill Far Away”

Luke: Two other criminals were also led there to be executed with him. When they came to the place that was called “The Skull,” there they crucified him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. Then Jesus said,

Jesus: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Luke: And they cast lots to divide his clothing. The people stood by, watching, but the leaders ridiculed him, saying,

Jewish leaders: “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Anointed of God, the Chosen One!”

Luke: The soldiers also mocked him by coming up to him and offering him cheap wine and

saying,

Soldiers: “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!”

Luke: There was a superscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.” One of the criminals who had been hung there insulted him, saying,

Criminal 1: “You are not the Christ, are you? Save yourself and us!”

Luke: But the other, rebuking him in response, said,

Criminal 2: “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? We have been condemned justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.”

Luke: Then he said,

Criminal 2: “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Luke: “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:32–43)

Mark: Then those who were passing by demeaned him, shaking their heads and saying, “Ha! You who would destroy the temple and build it within three days! Save yourself by coming down from the cross!” In the same way the chief priests and the experts at the law, mocking him among themselves, said,

Jewish leaders: “He saved others. He cannot save himself! Let this Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe.”

Mark: Even those who had been crucified with him started insulting him. (Mark 15:29–32)

John: Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. Likewise, they took his inner tunic, and the tunic was seamless, woven from the top all the way through. Therefore they said to each other,

Soldiers: “Let’s not tear it. Rather, let us cast lots for it to decide whose it shall be.”

John: This was so the scripture could be fulfilled, which says, “They divided my clothing for themselves, and they cast lots for my apparel.” These are the things that the soldiers did. Next to the cross stood the mother of Jesus, the sister of his mother, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother,

Jesus: “Woman, look, your son!”

John: Then he said to the disciple,

Jesus: “Look, your mother!”

John: From that hour the disciple took her into his own household. (John 19:23–27)

Mark: When it was noon, darkness arose over the whole earth and lasted until three o’clock. At three o’clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice,

Jesus: “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani,*”

Mark: which translated is, “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?” (Mark 15:33–34)

John: After this, because Jesus knew that everything had been completed, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, said,

Jesus: “I am thirsty.”

John: A vessel of cheap wine was standing there, so after they put a sponge full of cheap vinegar on a hyssop, they held it to his mouth. (John 19:28–29)

Luke: The darkness over the whole earth lasted until three o’clock. And when the sun ceased shining, the veil of the temple was torn in the middle. Jesus, after he had cried out with a loud voice, said,

Jesus: “Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit” (Luke 23:44–45)

John: And then said,

Jesus: “It is completed!”

John: Then, after bowing his head, he surrendered his spirit.

Hymn no. 184 “Upon the Cross of Calvary”

Mark: Now a centurion who was facing him, when he saw how he had drawn his last breath, said,

Centurion: “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

Mark: There were also women watching at a distance, among whom were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of the younger James and Joses, and Salome. They had followed and served him when he was in Galilee. Indeed, many other women had accompanied him to Jerusalem. (Mark 15:39–41)

John: Then the Jewish leaders, because it was a preparation day, to avoid having the bodies remain on the cross during the Sabbath—for the day was an especially important Sabbath—

asked Pilate that their legs be broken and their bodies removed. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But after they came to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out. The one who saw this has borne witness, and his witness is trustworthy. He knows that he speaks the truth so that you, too, may continue to have faith. These things happened so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “No bone of his shall be broken.” And another scripture reads, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.” (John 19:31–37)

Matthew: When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who also was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. (Matthew 27:57–58, NRSVue)

John: Nicodemus, who was the one who first came to Jesus by night, came too, bringing a compound of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it with linen cloths together with spices as was the custom for the Jews to bury. There was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden, there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. So they laid Jesus there on account of the preparation day of the Jews, because the tomb was close by. (John 19:39–42)

Matthew: [They] then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. 61 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb. (Matthew 27:59–61, NRSVue)

Hymn no. 187: “God Loved Us, So He Sent His Son”

Benediction