

HOLY WEEK 2008

our chapel service was yesterday, and as always I forgot to take any photos.....

we set the communion table as a long "U" shape with people sitting on either side. the table was draped in black cloth with dark blue potpourri leaves and black candles in the centre, wine bottles with [dan's](#) ascension image on the label, and the same image projected at the start. some other bits and pieces - my candlestick, thai last supper wood carving, white vase with black twirly stick things in it. it all looked really good and the pot pourri happened to add a nice fragrance.

the service was basically readings accompanied by music (with the reading or afterwards for reflection), some prayer and the communion liturgy. we read texts from Matthew's Gospel, interspersed the communion liturgy, and had the actual communion at the appropriate point in the story. (To be frank, I didn't have much in the way of time or inspiration to write anything particularly good, so the original bits below are rather ordinary.)

Introit

Ghosts I – 1 from "Ghosts I-IV" by [Nine Inch Nails](#)

Introduction

Music: "Song for Jesse" by Nick Cave & Warren Ellis from "The Assassination Of Jesse James By The Coward Robert Ford"

*A multitude of voices cry
"Hosanna!" "Blessed is the One!"
A donkey whines, disciples call
"Make way! Make way!"*

*Coins clang tumbling to the ground
Tables crashing, feathers flapping
Voices raised in indignation
A fierce rebuke, a temple shaking*

Listen if you have ears!

*A soft sigh of falling tears
"Jerusalem, Jerusalem"
Fragrance splashing round his ears
A woman's praise, and angry men*

*The clink of bloody coins
thirty pieces of silver
The chink of earthen cups
A new covenant. A betrayal*

Listen if you have ears!

*Today we recall the events of the last week of Jesus' life.
With sight and sound, touch and taste, we enter the story again
Through symbol and sacrament, song and senses*

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*we invite it to lay claim upon us
to open our hearts to the possibility of suffering love
to expose our minds to the infinity of unconditional grace
to free our hands to take up the yoke of costly service*

*Today we read texts from the Holy Week narrative
accompanied by music and image
and ask the Spirit to make that which is already true more real in our lives
Today we break bread and share the cup
and ask the risen Christ to continue making us his body on earth
This story, this meal, are both declaration and promise
of God's saving intent – yesterday, today and forever.*

Listen if you have ears!

Call to Worship - one of Roddy Hamilton's with some words added.

Reading - Isaiah 53:2-12 with "Prayer" by Rufus Cappadocia from "Songs for Cello"
This music goes for 9 minutes (!) was accompanied by 22 images of x-rays of the human body from [istock](#).

So the 12 verses were read by Sarah half a verse at a time, with a lot of space in between.

I simply ran the images as a slideshow in iPhoto with the Ken Burns motion effect turned on. It worked really well and several people remarked on this later.

Invitation to the Table - stanzas from "Come to the Feast of Life" from Uniting in Worship 2 disk

Reading - Matthew 21:12-22 (Jesus & the money-changes, Jesus curses the fig tree)
with "Sometimes On A Happy Cloud" by Colleen from "Everyone Alive Wants Answers"

I compiled the readings from the NRSV and the Dramatised Bible. Each text had a cast of characters, including the "Chorus" (everyone else). People received a full order of service when they arrived and were asked to read the parts highlighted, standing when their particular passage was being read. The Chorus spoke a variety of words - some from Jesus, some as disciples, at one stage as Judas.

Prayer of Confession - adapted from "Jesus, Prince of Peace" p83 of "Stages on the Way", [Wild Goose Publications](#).

The Peace

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Reading: Matthew 22:34-40 (the greatest commandment)

Music after reading - "Pepinot" from "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Reading - contemporary paraphrase of Matthew 23:1-36 (below)
with "Sun Against My Eyes" by Colleen from "Les Ondes Silencieuses"

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Narrator: Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You fake teachers! Your lives are roadblocks to God's Kingdom. You keep others out and refuse to enter yourselves.

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You errant evangelists who sweat to make converts and they end up twice as corrupted yourselves !

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You blind leaders who split hairs over people's allegiances and forget that God holds all people to account, including you!

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You hypocrite accountants who measure every tithe and gift to the last cent, and forget to measure the things that matter – justice and mercy and faith.

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You counterfeit clergy who polish the outside of your church while its insides are grimy with greed.

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You pretend professors who build monuments to your hero teachers while your lives are as unbalanced as their own!

Chorus: Woe to you!

Jesus: You're a bunch of snakes! You think you can worm your way out of anything! It's because of people like you that I send messengers again and again. All you do is abuse them and drive them out of town. Let me tell you! You will get what you deserve!

Chorus: Woe to us.

Reading - Matthew 23:37-24:2 (Jesus' lament)

Reflection Music: "La Désillusion" from "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Reading - Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16 (The Betrayal)

with music: "Action Reaction" "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Reading - Matthew 26:17-25 (The Passover)

Reflection Music - "La Nuit" from "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Holy Communion

Music during Communion - "In Mémoriam A Cappella" (Kyrie Eleison) from "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Reading - Matthew 26:30

Reflection Music - "L'évocation" from "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Reading - Matthew 26:31-46 (Gethsemane)

with "Endorphan" by Burial from "Untrue"

Reflection Music - "Les Partitions" from "Les Choristes" Soundtrack

Reading - Matthew 26:47-56 (The Arrest)

with music: "Ghosts I – 3" by Nine Inch Nails from "Ghosts I-IV"

Response

People were given 4 options to respond

- to simply sit and reflect
- to go to a table with magnetic poetry words and make a prayer
- to go to a table with candles and light one as an act of prayer
- to look at some contemporary writing and art expressing the 12 stations of a person with AIDS

During that time Benji & I played "Bad" - Luka Bloom's version of the U2 song. Benji sang & played harmonica and I played guitar. Thanks to Benji it sounded good!

Sending - St Patrick's Prayer

with music: "Falling" by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis from "The Assassination Of Jesse James By The Coward Robert Ford" Soundtrack

So that was it. I can highly recommend all of the music and the albums from which it came! BTW I attached each piece of music to a black slide in Keynote, and simply went from slide to slide. That way I could fade out music if I needed to and just let the current slide sit there until I needed the next one.