Narrator: Jesus came out, and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place he said to them,

Jesus: Pray that you may not enter into temptation.

Narrator: And he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed,

Jesus: Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours, be done.

Narrator: And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them,

Jesus: Why do you sleep? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation.

Narrator: While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Judas, would you betray the Son of man with a kiss?

Narrator: And when those who were about him saw what would follow, they said,

Reader: Lord, shall we strike with the sword?

Narrator: And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said,

Jesus: No more of this!

Narrator: And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him,

Jesus: Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.
Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house. Peter followed at a distance; and when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a maid, seeing him as he sat in the light and gazing at him, said,

This man also was with him.

But he denied it, saying,

Woman, I do not know him.

And a little later someone else saw him and said,

You also are one of them.

But Peter said,

Man, I am not.

And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying,

Certainly this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

But Peter said,

Man, I do not know what you are saying.

And immediately, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly. Now the men who were holding Jesus mocked him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and asked him,

Prophesy! Who is it that struck you?

And they spoke many other words against him, reviling him. When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led him away to their council, and they said,

If you are the Christ, tell us.

But he said to them,

If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.

And they all said,
Reader Are you the Son of God, then?
Narrator And he said to them,
Jesus You say that I am.
Narrator And they said,
Reader What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.
Narrator Then the whole company of them arose, and brought him before Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying,
Reader We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king.
Narrator And Pilate asked him,
Reader Are you the King of the Jews?
Narrator And he answered him,
Jesus You have said so.
Narrator And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes,
Reader I find no crime in this man.
Narrator But they were urgent, saying,
Reader He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.
Narrator When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. So he questioned him at some length; but he made no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then, arraying him in gorgeous apparel, he sent him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other. Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them,
Reader You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him; neither did Herod, for he sent him back
to us. Behold, nothing deserving death has been done by him; I will therefore chastise him and release him.

Narrator But they all cried out together,

Crowd Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas.

Narrator —a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder. Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus; but they shouted out,

Crowd Crucify, crucify him!

Narrator A third time he said to them,

Reader Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no crime deserving death; I will therefore chastise him and release him.

Narrator But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, whom they asked for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will. And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said,

Jesus Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us’; and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?

Narrator Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.

(Pause here while the congregation stands)

Narrator And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus said,

Jesus Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

Narrator And they cast lots to divide his garments. And the people stood by, watching; but the rulers scoffed at him, saying,
Reader  He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!

Narrator  The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him vinegar, and saying,

Reader  If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!

Narrator  There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.” One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying,

Reader  Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!

Narrator  But the other rebuked him, saying,

Reader  Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.

Narrator  And he said,

Reader  Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Narrator  And he said to him,

Jesus  Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.

Narrator  It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun’s light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said,

Jesus  Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!

Narrator  And having said this he breathed his last.

(All who are able now kneel in a time of silent prayer. The reading pauses during this silence. Rise when the Celebrant does, and continue.)

Narrator  Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, and said,

Reader  Certainly this man was innocent!

Narrator  And all the multitudes who assembled to see the sight, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance and saw these things. Now there was a man named Joseph from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good a righteous man, who had not consented to their purpose and deed, and he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and
wrapped it in a linen shroud, and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb, where no one had ever yet been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and saw the tomb, and how his body was laid; then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.