

St John's United Church of Christ
Maundy Thursday

March 28, 2024

7:30p.m.

Prelude "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy" Johann Pachelbel
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Welcome

Rev. Becky Sausser

Call to Worship by *Ministry Matters*

One: A table is set before us. A feast is prepared for us.

All: A meal of bread and wine, of meat and bitter herbs.

One: The Lord calls us to this supper of remembrance.

All: The Lord calls us to serve and to be served.

One: As we break the bread and share the cup,

All: our understanding may fail us.

One: But we will never forget Christ's example.

All: We will never forget the full extent of his love.

Hymn#332 "As We Gather at Your Table"

Prayer of Confession

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Let us come before the Lord of mercy, confessing the places where we are still learning and growing.

Many: Jesus, you loved us in the beginning, and you loved us to the end. Even on the night you were betrayed, you took a towel, and washed our feet. We confess that we are reluctant to think of you doing such a humble task, least of all for us. Like Peter, we protest. We fail to see how love takes the lowly way, how it is worked out in a thousand small acts of kindness, a thousand humiliations. For ourselves we prefer the grand gestures, love that can be seen and applauded, love that first and foremost makes us feel good. You showed a different way. Jesus, Towel-bearer, Foot-washer, Cross-carrier, you have set us an example for our own journeys. We long to follow you, wherever you lead us. Amen.

written by the Rev. Carol Penner

Confession Response Hymn# 218, Verse 3

**For me, kind Jesus, was your incarnation,
Your mortal sorrow, and your life's oblation,
Your death of anguish and your bitter passion,
For my salvation.**

Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1989

1. As we gath-er at your ta-ble,
as we lis-ten to your word,
help us know, O God, your pres-ence;
let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nour-ish us with sa-cred sto-ry
till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this ho-ly ban-quet
how to make Love's vic-tory known.

2. Turn our wor-ship in-to wit-ness
in the sac-ra-ment of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,
bring-ing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion
to for-give as you for-gave;
may we still be-hold your im-age
in the world you died to save.

3. Gra-cious Spir-it, help us sum-mon
oth-er guests to share that feast
where tri-um-phant Love will wel-come
those who had been last and least.
There no more will en-vy bind us
nor will pride our peace de-stroy,
as we join with saints and an-gels
to re-peat the sound-ing joy.

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Matt. 22:1-10; Luke 14:16-24

Assurance of God's Forgiveness

One: On this blessed night when we partake of the sacrament of Holy Communion, we find that Christ's grace has already found us and wrapped us in love and light.

All: "This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all."

1 John 1:5

*Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.



Scripture Reading John 13:1-17, 31b-35 Becky Bronfenbrenner

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table,^[a] took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet,^[b] but is entirely clean. And you^[c] are clean, though not all of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You

call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants^[d] are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him,^[u] God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Song for Grace

***Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.***

Sermon

"Holiest Meal"

Rev. Becky Sausser

Hymn #225 "It Was a Sad and Solemn Night"

Prayers of the People and 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 evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

Prayer Response Hymn #606, Verse 1

Nearer, my God, to you, nearer to you.

I'll bear the cross as Christ calls me to do

And pray each day anew:

**Nearer my God, to you, nearer my God, to you,
nearer to you.**

Choir Anthem

"O Lord, Have Mercy"

Patrick M. Liebergen

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It Was a Sad and Solemn Night

Isaac Watts, 1709; alt.

1. It was a sad and sol-ern night,
when powers of earth and hell a-rose
A-gainst the Child of God's de-light,
whom friends be-trayed to wick-ed foes.

2. Be-fore the mourn-ful scene be-gan,
our Je-sus blessed and broke the bread;
What love through all these ac-tions ran,
what won-drous words of love were said!

3. "This is my bod-y, broke for sin,
re-ceive and eat the liv-ing food";
Then took the cup and blessed the wine,
"This the new cov-enant in my blood."

4. "Share this, my feast, till time shall end,
in mem-ory of your dy-ing friend:
Meet at my ta-ble and re-call
the love which God has shown to all."

5. O Christ your feast we cel-e-brate;
we show your death, we sing your name,
Till you re-turn, and we shall eat
the mar-riage sup-per of the Lamb.

Mark 14:22–25; 1 Cor. 11:23–26

The Invitation

Pastor: On this, the night that we remember and honor the Last Supper of our Lord, let us come to the table together, that we might receive salvation. All are welcome to this table because we are all in desperate need of Jesus Christ. In our emptiness and imperfection, we stand in need of God's mercy. We come now, seeking the presence of our Lord and savior in this time and space, experiencing his grace and love anew. When you receive the elements in the pews, we ask that you wait until everyone has communion and then we will participate in this holy meal together.

Communion Prayer

Pastor: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Pastor: Holy God, we praise and bless you for creation, that you have seen fit to fill our world with love and light. It is through your love that we come to understand our relationship to all living things; and it is through your light that we come to understand one another, and are blessed.

Christ Jesus, we thank you especially that in the fullness of time, you entered the world, born of Mary, to live in our midst, to share in our suffering, and to accept the pain of death at the hands of those whom you loved.

We rejoice that in a perfect victory over the grave, death has lost its power. With the promise of the resurrection, we find our confidence.

We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to gather your church by which your work may be done in the world and through which we share the gift of eternal life. With the faithful in every place and time, we praise you singing:

People (Singing the Sanctus Hymn #795)

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full, are full, of the majesty of Thy Glory.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosannah, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: We remember that on the night that he was betrayed and deserted, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and the fruit of the vine and bless us that we receive them at this table, that we may offer you our faith and praise, that we may be united with Christ and with one another, and that we may continue faithful in all things.

All: In the strength that Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to you, eternal God, and give thanks that you have called us to serve you. Amen.

Pastor: Through the broken bread, we participate in the body of Christ. Through the cup of blessing, we participate in the new life that Christ gives. The gifts of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

(At this time our ushers will bring the bread representing the body of Christ into the congregation. If you prefer to receive individually wrapped elements, there will be wrapped communion cups on this tray that have both the bread and juice.)

Pastor: The body of Christ. (At this time, partake of the bread.)

Pastor: The blood of Christ. (At this time partake of the juice.)

Pastor: Let us join together in prayer.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

All: O God, by coming to your table we receive more gifts than we deserve. We give thanks to Jesus Christ, through whom we receive life and in whom we are bound in covenant. Renew us so we may willingly serve as Christ served. Amen.

Offertory: "Jesus, I Will Ponder Now" Johann Sebastian Bach
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Stripping the Altar

Recessional Hymn#222 "My Song Is Love Unknown"

*Commission and Blessing

*Threefold Amen

*Postlude "Reflection" Friedrich August Reissinger
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Thank you for your presence with us this evening. You are invited to join us tomorrow evening for our Good Friday Tenebrae Service at 7:30pm.

Please join us for our Easter Service this Sunday at 11:00am. Thank you!

My Song Is Love Unknown

Samuel Crossman, 1664; alt.

1. My song is love un-known, my Sav-ior's love to me,
Love to the love-less shown, that they might love-ly be.
O who am I, that for my sake
my God should take frail flesh and die?
My God should take frail flesh and die?

2. God left the rich-est throne sal-va-tion to be-stow;
But Christ as flesh and bone the world re-fused to know.
But, O my Friend, my Friend in-deed,
who at my need did life ex-pend;
who at my need did life ex-pend.

3. Some-times they threw down palms and sweet-est prais-es sang.
Ho-san-nas and glad psalms through streets and mar-kets rang.
Then "Cru-ci-fy!" is all their breath,
for blood and death they thirst and cry;
for blood and death they thirst and cry.

4. What has my Sov-ereign done? What makes this rage and spite?
Christ gave new strength to run, re-stored the gift of sight.
Sweet in-ju-ries! Yet they at these
them-selves dis-please, and 'gainst Christ rise;
them-selves dis-please, and 'gainst Christ rise.