



IFTH AVE. UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

323 South 5th Avenue, West Bend WI 53095

MAUNDY THURSDAY ~ March 28, 2024

Alana Dalton, Liturgist
Deanna Gibeau, Accompanist
Rev. Clarissa Martinelli, Senior Pastor

~GATHERING GOD'S PEOPLE~

PRELUDE: "I Lay My Sins on Jesus"
Lani Smith



GREETING:

The Season of Lent is a time of self-reflection, of spiritual examination. While that is a healthy and necessary exercise, we don't examine ourselves in isolation. Instead, we are invited to lay our lives alongside the life of Jesus. It is a sobering exercise to say the least. And yet, what we discover in this examination of his life and ours, is not condemnation or recrimination. Instead, we are overwhelmed, the farther we go on this journey with him, by the depths of love he has for all of us. Lent is a time for getting our spiritual house in order, that is true. But above all, it is an invitation to once again commit to love like Christ loves. I think this is the point of Maundy Thursday: to be able to recognize when we are loving as Christ loves us because we've encountered and practiced that love together in worship.

~MEDITATION FOR GATHERING~

CENTERING MUSIC:

"Jesus Draw Me Close"

Rick Founds

CALL TO WORSHIP: (Responsively)

L: Come, you with dirty feet, aching backs, and weary souls.

P: We come bearing a heavy load of worry, frustration, and isolation.

L: Come, you who are hungry, thirsty, longing to meet the one who will feed you, body, and soul.

P: We come with emptiness in our stomachs and our hearts, desperate to be filled.

L: Come to meet Jesus who kneels to wash our dirt and grime, who feeds us with bread and with love that never ends.

P: We come to receive the balm for our anxiety, the provision for our hunger, the antidote for our loneliness.

L: Come to receive a new commandment: love one another as Christ has loved you.

All: We come to embrace this new commandment so that everyone will know we are disciples of Jesus Christ, God Incarnate who came to live and love among us. Amen.

PRAYER LITANY FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY: (Responsively) (John 13: 1-20)

L: You knew your hour had come. You knew your betrayer. You knew your enemies. You knew that the straw vote would not be in your favor. But you loved unto the end.

P: Thank you for loving us, even unto death. Teach us to love like you love. Teach us to love each other, to love even our enemies, like you loved us.

L: You took on the form of a servant, washing the feet of those whom you discipled. You defined humility and servanthood. You are he who was surely sent from God.

P: Thank you for serving for us. Teach us to be servants without fail; to make humility our constant companion and to seek no glory for ourselves. Remind us when we forget.

L: On that solemn evening, you surrounded yourself with friends and enemies, persons of faith and persons of ill-will.

P: Help us to be able to always emulate you when we are surrounded by our friends and especially when we are surrounded by our enemies.

L: You have established a “new commandment;” help us to live it out in every moment, in every aspect of our lives, in our families, in our churches, in our communities, and throughout the world.

All: On this Holy Day, we gather to remember again the miracle that you performed in our lives. You have brought us into the marvelous light. At great cost to you, you have given us new life and life eternal. Amen.

— written by Nolan Williams, Jr.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

L: Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God and each other:

All: Merciful God, we confess that we have failed to love as you teach us to love. We ignore the needs of our neighbors. We shy away from those who are hurting. We meet the suffering of others with trite answers to distance ourselves from their pain. We neglect creation, taking advantage of the earth’s resources without caring for it in return. We fail to love ourselves as you love us, tending our own pain and distress by numbing our feelings instead of drawing close to you, the source of our well-being. Forgive us, we pray. Free us to joyfully follow you into a life of love and service, building a world in which all creation can flourish.

L: Receive this good news: Jesus who comes to us, washes our feet, and invites us to sit at the table, is the source of our salvation, saving us from our sins and reconciling us to God. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

P: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN:**

“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”

TFWS 2171

~WE PROCLAIM~

***PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – John 13:1–20 (The Message) (Unison)**

L: The Shadow of Betrayal:

Just before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that the time had come to leave this world to go to the Father. Having loved his dear companions, he continued to love them right to the end. It was supertime. By now Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, was firmly in the Devil’s grip, all set for the

betrayal...Jesus got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and put a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with his towel.

When he got to Simon Peter, Peter said, “Master, you wash my feet?” Jesus answered, “You don’t understand now what I’m doing, but it will be clear enough to you later.” Peter persisted, “You’re not going to wash my feet—ever!” Jesus said, “If I don’t wash you, you can’t be part of what I’m doing.” “Master!” said Peter. “Not only my feet, then. Wash my hands! Wash my head!” Jesus said, “If you’ve had a bath in the morning, you only need your feet washed now and you’re clean from head to toe. My concern, you understand, is holiness, not hygiene. So now you’re clean. But not every one of you.” (He knew who was betraying him. That’s why he said, “Not every one of you.”) ...If you understand what I’m telling you,” Jesus said, “act like it—and live a blessed life.”

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

SOLO:

“El Shaddai”

Michelle Harrington

SERMON:

“LENT IN PLAIN SIGHT: TOWELS!”

Pastor Clarissa

~ COMMUNION LITURGY FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY~

COMMUNION LITURGY FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY

Pastor: The darkness deepens, and the Lord grows troubled. Can we watch with Him? Can we be the friends at His table who share His bread and wine? Can we be the companions who journey with Him to the end?

All: Come, let us worship, let us watch, and let us give thanks for such great love. Amen.

L: Lord Jesus, we are stunned at Your Passion and Your commitment toward us. You did not run from the darkness, You did not hide from Your accusers, You did not fade into safe obscurity. You stepped with determination into the darkness, willingly giving Yourself to the whip and fist, to wood and nails.

L: We praise You, Gracious Lord,

P: for what, You were prepared to endure to reconcile us with God.

L: We praise You, Gracious Lord,

P: For Your words of forgiveness, and the invitation to paradise.

L: Forgive us for allowing ourselves to become too familiar with you Passion story, as we take Your suffering too lightly, and receive Your grace too cheaply.

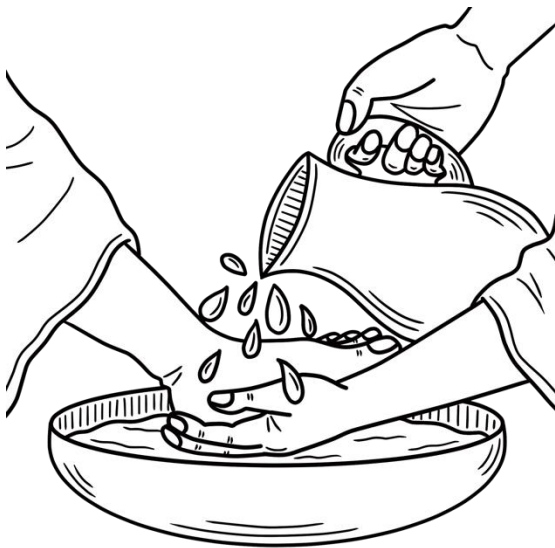
P: As we watch with You, while the darkness encroaches, let us remember what this journey means, and count again the cost of love. Amen.

Pastor: When the time arrived for Jesus to be lifted up; when all had been prepared, and He shared His last meal with His friends, our Lord, took the loaf, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples. When you eat the bread, remember Me. This is my body broken for you.

When the meal was finished, our Lord took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to the disciples. When you drink the wine, remember Me. This is my blood shed for you.

Now, as we gather at this table, we eat bread, the body of Christ; we drink wine, the shed blood of Christ; and we remember the One Who died to bring us life. And we will keep sharing this meal until He returns. We say together the words of the Lord's Prayer:

All: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom the power and the glory, forever. Amen.



In lieu of feet washing, we have handwashing stations. You're invited to go to one of the stations first to wash one another's hands in pairs. Cup water in your own hands and pour it over the other's hands while saying a simple blessing like, "You are a beloved child of God" or "May the love of Christ surround you." Then, the pair will switch roles.

Come forth and receive Holy Communion.

~INVITATION TO SHARING OUR GIFTS, TITHES, & OFFERINGS~

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

All: Holy, loving God: In our remembering this last night Jesus spent at the table with his disciples, we can't seem to let go of the image of him washing his disciples' feet. We hear the mandate: "You also ought to wash one another's feet." Where we can see one of your children who is unloved, forgotten – may we be ready to get a towel and basin. For the ones we don't see, we give our gifts. May your church always be ready to reach out in love. Amen. (John 13:1-17, 31b-35)

***CLOSING HYMN: "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love" UMH 2223**

~SENDING FORTH/BENEDICTION~

Pastor: This is the night that Jesus gave himself up for us and the shadow of Good Friday began to fall. Go from this place carrying the love of Christ in your hearts that your life may be a witness to our Savior who was crucified because the world did not understand the depths of God's love. Amen.

~STRIPPING THE ALTAR~

Stripping the altar is an ancient custom of the Church done on Maundy Thursday. After the Last Supper, less than 24 hours remained in our Lord's earthly life. Events moved rapidly: prayer in Gethsemane, betrayal by Judas, arrest, mock trial, painful beating, the trudge to Golgotha and execution. As His life was stripped from Him, so we strip our altar of the signs of comfort and life to symbolize His suffering and death.

Persons come forth -

***POSTLUDE:**

“A Lenten Psalm”

Wihla Hutson