

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Fort Dodge, IA



Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors.

The people of the United Methodist Church®

March 30, 2018

Good Friday

**Indicates you are invited to stand if you are comfortable doing so*

PRELUDE

"Good Friday Spell"
Patrick Vretblad

Notes on the Service: *Advent is the build-up to a wonderful celebration of new life—the new life of Christ. We typically light candles to symbolize the arrival of light in our midst. But Good Friday is not about bringing the light into the world—it's about putting it out (temporarily). So to capture the dark core of Good Friday, this service is a "reverse Advent." We take the traditional Advent readings tied into lighting the candles of joy, hope, faith, and peace and, instead, extinguish them. Please gather in silence for reflection.*

THE NATIVITY:

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"
Organ

THE CANDLE OF JOY

It's over.

We are without joy.

We are finished.

We are without joy.

There is no point in going on.

We are without joy.

He's been arrested and they will surely kill him.

We are without joy.

We can't keep going.

We are without joy.

He was our leader.
We are without joy.
We were his followers.
We are without joy.
Now it's done.
We are without joy.
We have to hide.
We are without joy.
They will come for us.
We are without joy.
We have nothing left to give.
We are without joy.
It's over.
We are without joy.
It's all over.
We are without joy.
The Candle of Joy is extinguished.

READING

Luke 2:40-50

When they finished everything required by God in the Law, they returned to Galilee and their own town, Nazareth. There the child grew strong in body and wise in spirit. And the grace of God was on him.

Every year Jesus' parents traveled to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up as they always did for the Feast. When it was over and they left for home the child Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents didn't know it. Thinking he was somewhere in the company of pilgrims, they journeyed for a whole day and then began looking for him among relatives and neighbors. When they didn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem looking for him.

The next day they found him in the Temple seated among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. The teachers were

all quite taken with him, impressed with the sharpness of his answers. But his parents were not impressed; they were upset and hurt.

His mother said, "Young man, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been half out of our minds looking for you. He said, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that I had to be here, dealing with the things of my Father?" But they had no idea what he was talking about.

READING

Mark 9:30-32

Leaving there, they went through Galilee. He didn't want anyone to know their whereabouts, for he wanted to teach his disciples. He told them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed to some people who want nothing to do with God. They will murder him. Three days after his murder, he will rise, alive" They didn't know what he was talking about, but were afraid to ask him about it.

READING

Luke 9:42-45

While he was coming, the demon slammed him to the ground and threw him into convulsions. Jesus stepped in, ordered the vile sprite gone, healed the boy, and handed him back to his father. They all shook their heads in wonder, astonished at God's greatness, God's majestic greatness. While they continued to stand around exclaiming over all the things he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples, "Treasure and ponder each of these next words: The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into human hands." They didn't get what he was saying. It was like he was speaking a foreign language and they couldn't make heads of tails of it. But they were embarrassed to ask him what he meant.

READING

Luke 18:31-34

Then Jesus took the Twelve off to the side and said, "Listen carefully. We're on our way up to Jerusalem. Everything written in

the Prophets about the Son of Man will take place. He will be handed over to the Romans, jeered at, made sport of, and spit on. Then, after giving him the third degree, they will kill him. In three days he will rise, alive." But they didn't get it, could make neither heads nor tails of what he was talking about.

SONG

"Grace Greater Than Sin"
UMH #365

THE CANDLE OF HOPE

It was all going so well

The hope is gone.

Then the bottom fell out.

The hope is gone.

Nothing will turn out right.

The hope is gone.

We are stuck forever.

The hope is gone.

This isn't fair.

The hope is gone.

We were supposed to win.

The hope is gone.

He told us we were blessed.

The hope is gone.

It's over now

The hope is gone.

How can we go back to our old lives.

The hope is gone.

We were so close.

The hope is gone.

Then it all went sour.

The hope is gone.

It's back to oppression

The hope is gone.

Maybe he wasn't the Messiah

The Candle of Hope is extinguished.

READING

The rain had cooled things off. The day had been hot and dry, but the brief afternoon rain made the night seem calm and cool. A gentle breeze blew through the open window. Jesus tilted his head back and felt the cool air on his hot skin. He smelled the night. He smelled the sea. He wished he could see the beach once more, but there wasn't time.

He sat in a room with his 12 disciples. The Passover celebration was winding down. A few people were singing in the streets. His followers were lounging on the pillows the servants had set down. He wanted to make this moment last. He wanted to give them something they could keep forever. He saw the bread and cup on the table. He asked his friends to gather around him. They moved in; Peter took the place on his right. Jesus looked at Peter and smiled. He remembered the look on Peter's face when he first stepped out of the boat.

Judas sat at the end of the table. He had barely spoken during the celebration and hadn't smiled once. Jesus met the eyes of each man, these true friends. They had spent the last three years together, and most of them still didn't understand that it was all going to be over soon...or it was all going to be beginning soon. Jesus chuckled to himself at the paradox. The disciples smiled too, but they didn't know why. They were happy to see him smile again. Like Judas, he hadn't smiled much lately.

Jesus picked up one of the loaves of bread and broke it in half. "Take some and eat it. It is my body." Then he picked up the cup,

swirled the dark red liquid, and passed it around. "Everyone drink some. It is my blood."

When each of the disciples had eaten the bread and tasted the wine, Jesus said, "Every time you break the bread and drink from the cup, remember me. Remember all the lessons. Remember all the times we laughed together. Remember the miracles. I am part of you now. I am in God, so God is now part of you. Remember me."

SONG

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"
UMH #298

THE CANDLE OF FAITH

We did all we were told.

We have lost our faith

We left everything behind.

We have lost our faith

We followed him.

We have lost our faith

We have nothing.

We have lost our faith

We've accomplished nothing.

We have lost our faith

The world is still a bad place to raise your kids.

We have lost our faith

People still step on each other to get ahead

We have lost our faith

Meaningless prayers pass into nothingness.

We have lost our faith

The dead are just dead.

We have lost our faith

He promised us the kingdom.

We have lost our faith

They took him away.

We have lost our faith

The trial was a joke.

We have lost our faith

It's over now.

We have lost our faith

It's over now.

We have lost our faith

The Candle of Faith is extinguished.

READING

Micah had been a blacksmith for more than 40 years. His father had taught him, just as his grandfather had taught his father before him. It was an honorable profession. Micah was a large man. From a mass of black hair peered two brown eyes. His wife often told him his eyes were the eyes of a child. She said he'd given his eyes to his son, Thomas.

Thomas had died a long time ago. Micah was the father of three daughters. Everyone in town could remember the way Micah used to carry all three of his daughters at once—one in each arm and Martha, the oldest, would sit on his shoulders. He would run through the market and his daughters would squeal, and he would laugh like thunder. When Thomas was born people wondered how he was going to carry four children through town. They never found out.

Two years after Thomas was born, King Herod ordered all the boys under two to be put to death in hopes of destroying the Messiah. Micah told his wife that Thomas would be safe. He was

more than a month past the cutoff point. It took six of Herod's guards to hold Micah down while a seventh carried Thomas off into the night. Most folks remembered that as the night Micah stopped smiling. He managed a quiet grin now and then, but no one ever heard his thunderous laughter. His daughters were now married, and his wife had died more than a decade ago.

Micah tried as best he could to make ends meet without the king's money, but he often had to smith for the guards in the king's temple. When the captain of the guards asked for nails, Micah never bothered to ask what they were for. He made them. It was a job. He never wanted to know.

Most of the town knew of the carpenter. Micah had known his father, Joseph. When Joseph's boy began preaching, people whispered the word "messiah." "If he is the one all the other boys died for," Micah thought, "then the soldiers missed their target." Micah pulled the bellows handle hard. The steel began to glow along with his anger. He pulled the red metal from the fire and pounded it with his hammer again and again. He pounded until there were no more tears left in him.

SONG

"Were You There"
UMH #288

THE CANDLE OF PEACE

The Prince of Peace has been murdered.

There is no peace.

Angels said he was the one

There is no peace.

They sang to the shepherds that he was here.

There is no peace.

The Prince, the Peace.

There is no peace.

The mighty God.

There is no peace.

The everlasting One.

There is no peace.

He wasn't everlasting.

There is no peace.

They arrested him.

There is no peace.

They nailed him to a tree

There is no peace.

They put him in a hole.

There is no peace.

And that is that.

There is no peace.

Wars are fought in his name.

There is no peace.

The angels were wrong.

There is no peace.

The Candle of Peace is extinguished.

READING LUKE 23:26-46

Then Pilate called in the high priests, rulers, and the others and said, "You brought this man to me as a disturber of the peace. I examined him in front of all of you and found there was nothing to your charge. And neither did Herod, for he has sent him back here with a clean bill of health. It's clear that he's done nothing wrong, let alone anything deserving death. I'm going to warn him to watch his step and let him go."

At that, the crowd went wild: "Kill him! Give us Barabbas!" (Barabbas had been thrown in prison for starting a riot in the city and for murder.) Pilate still wanted to let Jesus go, and so spoke out again.

But they kept shouting back, "Crucify! Crucify him!"

He tried a third time. "But for what crime? I've found nothing in him deserving death. I'm going to warn him to watch his step and let him go."

But they kept at it, a shouting mob, demanding that he be crucified. And finally they shouted him down. Pilate caved in and gave them what they wanted. He released the man thrown in prison for rioting and murder, and gave them Jesus to do whatever they wanted.

As they led him off, they made Simon, a man from Cyrene who happened to be coming in from the countryside, carry the cross behind Jesus. A huge crowd of people followed, along with women weeping and carrying on. At one point Jesus turned to the women and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, don't cry for me. Cry for yourselves and for your children. The time is coming when they'll say, 'Lucky the women who never conceived! Lucky the wombs that never gave birth! Lucky the breasts that never gave milk!' Then they'll start calling to the mountains, 'Fall down on us!' calling to the hills, 'Cover us up!' If people do these things to a live, green tree, can you imagine what they'll do with deadwood?"

Two others, both criminals, were taken along with him for execution.

When they got to the place called Skull Hill, they crucified him, along with the criminals, one on his right, the other on his left.

Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; they don't know what they're doing."

Dividing up his clothes, they threw dice for them. The people stood there staring at Jesus, and the ringleaders made faces, taunting, "He saved others. Let's see him save himself! The Messiah of God—ha! The Chosen—ha!"

The soldiers also came up and poked fun at him, making a game of it. They toasted him with sour wine: "So you're King of the Jews! Save yourself!" Printed over him was a sign: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. One of the criminals hanging alongside cursed him: "Some Messiah you are! Save yourself! Save us!"

But the other one made him shut up: "Have you no fear of God? You're getting the same as him. We deserve this, but not him—he did nothing to deserve this."

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you enter your kingdom."

He said, "Don't worry, I will. Today you will join me in paradise."

By now it was noon. The whole earth became dark, the darkness lasting three hours—a total blackout. The Temple curtain split right down the middle. Jesus called loudly, "Father, I place my life in your hands!" Then he breathed his last.

The Christ Candle is extinguished.

Please remain in silence for reflection.

SONG

"Tis Finished! The Messiah Dies"
UMH #282

Please leave in silence.