

You Are Welcome Here!



**An "Open and Affirming" Congregation
of the United Church of Christ
in Germantown, MD**

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF SENECA VALLEY

13421 Clopper Road • Germantown MD 20874

301-540-3449 • uccsv@verizon.net

April 1, 2021

Maundy Thursday

7:00pm Zoom

Our Mission

UCC Seneca Valley is an open and affirming, progressive and inclusive spiritual community that is centered in the belief that we are all beloved children of God. We seek to joyfully share Christ's message of hope through creative expression, deepening connections between people, advocating for justice, and serving our community.

Worship Participants

Pastor: Rev. Holly R. Jackson

Liturgist: Jen Fuss

Deacon: Tim Fuss

Readers: Terri Molaski, Shelly Moore, Deb Anderson, Colby Harmon

Director of Music Ministry: Stefan Petrov

Zoom Technical Support: Patrick Jackson

Instructions for Zoom Worship:

To have during worship: 1. Candle to light. 2. A few coins 3. Oil or lotion for anointing 4. Bin with water for hand or foot washing. 5. Bread and drink for communion. Keep your microphone on mute unless told otherwise. Words in bold are meant to be said aloud at home with the Pastor or Liturgist who will say them on the Zoom call. If you are having technical issues please chat message Patrick Jackson for help.

Opening Welcome

Pastor: Tonight we gather together to remember some of the events of the last week of Jesus' life and that meal so long ago when Jesus gathered with his dearest friends and shared his food and also something more. We remember the wilderness we have lived through this past year: physical separation, quarantine, illness, unemployment, deployment of health care workers, fear, uncertainty and grief. We also remember the wilderness to come for Jesus: betrayal, denial by his closest friends, suffering and death. Let us seek God's nourishment, strength and hope to face the wilderness. We invite you to light your candle as we begin our worship. Though we are physically apart, we are one community together in this shared virtual space.

Music

"Abide With Me"
Performed by Dan Swanson

Turning the Tables

Liturgist: Maundy Thursday worship is interactive and sensory based. While we are not all able to gather in the same room, we can still experience the smells, feels, tastes, sights, and sounds of this special night. We begin with the sounds of the clink of coins. Early on during Holy Week Jesus went to visit the Temple. While he was there he witnessed people being taken advantage of and spiritual practices being turned into money making opportunities that made the rich richer and further oppressed the poor and most vulnerable. This angered Jesus to such an extent that he became violent and destructive and chased the opportunists out of the Temple. This is no meek and mild teacher, instead it is the Messiah fighting on behalf of those in need of a champion and protecting the integrity of God's house of worship. Listen to the story from the Gospel of Mark.

Scripture Reading

Mark 11: 15-18

Contemporary Reading

"Poured Out Coins"
from Lent in Plain Sight by Jill J. Duffield

Prayer

Pastor: Holy One, no part of our lives is off limit to you. You require us to be faithful in little and in much, with our money, our time, and our talents. If there are practices in which we engage that make you angry send your Spirit so that we

will see where we fall short and change our ways. Pour out coins, turn over tables, chase far from us whatever offends you and keeps us from living out lives of justice and love. Amen.

Ritual Action

You are invited to hold a group of coins in your hand and consider their worth. Let them clink against one another and imagine that Jesus heard a similar clink of coins as he walked through the Temple. Consider if there are current economic practices that should make us angry and that we are called to overturn. Consider how you can also work for justice and truth that honors Jesus' words and mission.

Music

"Where Jesus Was"

By The Many

Anointing

Liturgist: We remember how Jesus was anointed with expensive nard oil by a woman. We aren't sure of the woman's name, but we know that it was important to Jesus because of how he responded. The anointing is a preview of Jesus' death, a reminder to love with abandon because soon he will be gone from them. This ritual reminds us to ask ourselves, how do we show our love to God or to each other with extravagance and joy? How do we offer up to God our very best in gratitude for what we have been given? The story is found in in all four gospels but tonight we will hear the version from the gospel of Mark.

Scripture Reading

Mark 14:3-9

Contemporary Reading

"Women of the Passion, Part 1:
The Woman at Bethany Anoints Jesus"
By Rachel Held Evans

Prayer

Pastor: Holy One, we have spent the last year all too close to death. We have learned the hard way that there is no guarantee that our loved ones will always be there and that our time together may be very limited. We have watched as our country has lost over 500,000 people to disease and thousands more to depression and isolation. We understand death and loss and grief because we have lived it, intimately. So we walk this path with Jesus deeply aware of his struggle and the struggle of those who loved him. He understood that death

stood at the doorstep, that loss was about to hit his closest friends, that their entire world was about to be upended. Into this painful reality a woman brought beauty. She brought care and comfort and a smell, not of death, but of beauty, of joy, of hope. No matter the oil or lotion that we have with us tonight God – olive oil, essential oil, fragrant lotion, or no oil at all – bless it. Let its smell and feel remind us that life and beauty is possible even in the midst of death. As we touch oil to our foreheads or simply touch our foreheads in memory, may the Holy Spirit hover over us, wash us clean, and fill our senses with abundance.

Ritual Action

You are invited to take oil or fragrant lotion, or just your finger and trace a cross on your own forehead or the foreheads of those around you saying, “You are loved and to love you shall return.”

Music

“Jesus, Remember Me”

UCCSV Choir

Washing

Liturgist: In Jesus’ time the roads were dusty and dirty. It was a servants’ job to wash the feet of those who had recently walked them. In our time we used to think of hand washing as an important but routine ritual. Now washing one’s hands has taken on new meaning. We study the proper way to wash them. We sing or talk or pray for 20 seconds to make sure we have scrubbed enough. Our hands become chapped from overwashing. What new meanings can we find now in Jesus washing the feet of his disciples? How can we wash our hands with care and love and imagine Jesus washing them for us, even as we wash them for ourselves or one another? Listen to the story from the gospel of John.

Scripture Reading

John 13:3-17

Contemporary Reading

“A 20 Second Prayer During Hand Washing”
by Rabbi Joseph Meszler

Pastor: Water has always been a sign of creation, life, birth and rebirth. We remember the water of baptism, a symbol of our dying and rising in Christ. Tonight, at Christ’s invitation, we share this water of service and love. With this water let us bless one another and wash each other’s hands or feet.

Ritual Action

Wash your hands or feet or others' hands or feet and then dry them. Depending on your home/family context, this ritual may be somber or joyful, serious and gentle or playful. There is no wrong way to do this. God meets us where we are. If you are alone imagine Jesus is washing your hands. How would he handle them? What might he say as he washed them? How can you put yourself in Jesus' tender care? You might offer the following words to yourself or others, "May this water renew and restore your spirit. May you dwell in God's tender care."

Music

"Gnossienne No.2"

Eric Satie

Eating and Drinking

Pastor: Tonight, we remember the last night Jesus spent with his disciples celebrating the Passover meal.

Pastor: This table is for all who are hungry. If you are hungry, come.

People: Where compassion and love are, there is God.

Pastor: The love of Christ has gathered us as one. Let us love one another.

People: Where compassion and love are, there is God.

Pastor: When we are gathered in spirit, even distance cannot separate us. Christ is present in our midst.

People: Where compassion and love are, there is God.

Scripture

Matthew 26:17-29

Pastor: As we just heard on the night in which he would give himself up for justice, Jesus said goodbye to his disciples and friends. But first, he gathered them in a room as we gather virtually today.

He took bread and he broke it. *(Hold up your bread to the screen)*

After giving thanks, he said, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

(Hold up your cup to the screen) In the same way after supper, he took the cup and said "This is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Holy One, in this season of brokenness, sickness and death, we are walking through Holy Week and it is all too real. You know this path of pain, Jesus, and so we are thankful that you walk it with us.

You are shedding tears with us.

Your heart is breaking with us.

You are welcoming beyond this life as each one says goodbye.

You hear all the whispers of prayers as they come each night.

You are healing the sick, calming the medical staff, equipping the leaders, and strengthening the resolve of the scientists. You are active, alive and holy now just as you were active alive and holy at that Passover meal long ago.

Bless all the breads we have brought and all the cups in all of our rooms.

Make them for us your holy meal.

Connect us together as one body, around your table, around this virtual room, and around the world. Amen.

Ritual Action

(Serve Communion elements to yourself or to those in the room with you with words such as “The Bread of Life” and “The Cup of Blessing”)

Closing Prayer

Pastor: Challenged by the clink of coins and questions of justice. Comforted and revived by scent and the presence of the Spirit. Shaped and formed by water and Word. Sustained and nourished by the gift of Love. Together, we move forward as God’s people. As we journey with Jesus to the cross, we open our hearts. As we look to the cross, we feel the wilderness closing in around us. But we trust in God, who promises to fill the void of shadow with light and the emptiness of death with life. Let us leave this time with trembling hearts, to receive and sow the seeds of God’s beloved community. Go in peace. Amen. You may now extinguish your candle while we listen and watch this visual benediction.

Benediction

“Come and Take and Eat”

Portions of this worship service are an adaptation from work by Thandiwe A. Dale-Ferguson and can be found at <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/page/1/>. The Communion liturgy is an adaptation from work by Rev. Amber Henry Neuroth.