

First Congregational United Church of Christ
April 6, 2023

Maundy Thursday
Foot Washing and Communion Service



Mural in Zambia

Pastor: Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Musician: Chandler Litterst

Gathering Music

Call to Worship

One: Make a joyful noise to the Holy One, all the lands!

Serve God with gladness! Come into God's presence with singing!

Many: For the Holy One is good; God's steadfast love endures forever, and God's faithfulness to all generations.

Hymn #454 Lord I Want to be a Christian

- 1 Lord, I want to be a Christian
In my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.
- 2 Lord, I want to be more loving
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.
- 3 Lord, I want to be more holy
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.
- 4 Lord, I want to be like Jesus
in my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.

Confession of Sin

One: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Many: If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

One: Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us confess our sins in silence and ask God for the forgiveness we need.

(Time of Silence)

All: Gracious God, we have denied your intentions for us. We have preferred our way to Christ's way. We have served ourselves and things we have made. We have disobeyed your commandment to love others as we love ourselves. Forgive us, and awaken us to faith and to a life of service; through Jesus Christ who came not to be served by to serve, and who served you even to death, to reconcile all things. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

One: Even when we are helpless, at the right time Christ lifts us up..

Many: The love of God for us is shown in this: Nothing can separate us from the love of God through Christ.

Telling the Story

One: It is now the day before the Passover festival. Jesus and his disciples were at supper. So Jesus rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. Then Jesus poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciple's feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.

Jesus came to Simon Peter, who said to him:

Many: Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?

One: Jesus answered Peter:

Many: You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later.

One: Peter declared:

Many: Never at any time will you wash my feet?

One: Jesus answered:

Many: If I do not wash your feet, you will no longer be my disciple.

One: Simon Peter answered:

Many: Lord, do not only wash my feet, then! Wash my hands and head, too!

One: Jesus said:

Many: Anyone who has taken a bath is completely clean and does not have to wash, other than feet.

One: After washing their feet, Jesus put the outer garment back on, returned to his place at the table, and said:

Many: Do you understand way I have just done to you?

You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so, because that is what I am. I, your, Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you.

One: Jesus said:

Many: I am telling you the truth: No the master who is served is greater than slave, and the one who sends the message is no greater than messenger. Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice.

Introduction

One: How happy we will be if we put into practice the truth of humility.

Many: With God's help, may we each practice humility.

Foot Washing

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: O God, we give you thanks for the gift of Jesus Christ, the only one begotten by you before all the worlds. We thank for the splendor of Christ's life of service. We thank you for the symbols of love and humility. We ask that you will strengthen us for the service to which you call us, that we may find in humbling ourselves, in washing, and in all other acts of mercy, the fullness of life that we see in Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit, live in exaltation, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn #498 Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love
Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love,
Show Us How To Serve
The Neighbors We Have From You.

Kneels At the Feet Of His Friends,
Silently Washes Their Feet,
Jesus you acted like a servant to them.
Neighbors Are Rich And Poor,
Varied In Color And Race,
Neighbors Are Near And Far Away.
These Are The Ones We Should Serve,
These Are The Ones We Should Love,
All Are Neighbors To Us And You.
Loving puts us on our knees,
Showing our faith by our deeds,
Serving the neighbors, we have from you

Kneel At The Feet Of Our Friends,
Silently Washing Their Feet,
This Is The Way We Should Live With You

Lighting the Peace Candle and Passing of the Peace

One: The Lord Jesus after he had supped with his disciples and washed their feet, said to them, "I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done."

Many: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.

One: Love one another, as I have loved you. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Many: And also with you.

One: Reconciled by his love, let us offer one another the sign of peace and reconciliation.

Communion Hymn # 425 Let Us Break Bread Together

1 Let us break bread together on our knees.
Let us break bread together on our knees.

Refrain:

When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
My God have mercy on me.

2 Let us drink wine together on our knees.
Let us drink wine together on our knees. [Refrain]

3 Let us praise God together on our knees.

Let us praise God together on our knees. [Refrain]

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks...

Lord's Prayer: Our Father, Mother God, 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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

Breaking the Bread and Pouring the Wine

Communion (We serve gluten-free bread)

Prayer after Communion

We give thank, holy God, for giving us this meal, shared in the Spirit, which sustains us with the food and drink of your life. Grace our lives that we may at the last come to share in the heavenly banquet of your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Stripping of the Church*

Hymn #229 Were You There?

- 1 Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
- 2 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
- 3 Were you there when God wept at Mary's Cry?
Were you there when God wept at Mary's Cry?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when God wept at Mary's Cry?
- 4 Were you there when Christ rose up from the tomb?
Were you there when Christ rose up from the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when Christ rose up from the tomb?

Dismissal With Blessing

One: Go forth in peace to walk the way of his cross and resurrection

Many: We are sent in the name of the Lord.

One: May Jesus Christ, who was put to death for our sins, bless you and keep you.

Many: Amen

One: May Jesus Christ, who was raised to life for our salvation, let light shine upon you.

Many: Amen.

One: May Jesus Christ be your life and peace, now and forever.

All. Thanks be to God.

Postlude – Depart in Silence

**Worship Notes – The Stripping of the Church*

A highly vivid and dramatic way of showing forth the desolation and abandonment of the long night in Gethsemane is through stripping the altar table and removing all textile hangings and candles. This practice dates from the seventh century and began for the utilitarian purpose of cleaning and washing the church in preparation for Easter. But the stark, bare church reflected so clearly the fitting tone of the occasion that the stripping became an evocative ceremony in its own right. The ceremony is probably best done in complete silence. Altar-table cloths and frontals (if any), pulpit and lectern hangings, banners, and candlesticks or other altar table furnishings are simply picked up by designated persons and quietly carried out of the sanctuary. In a matter of minutes, the visual aspect of the room is completely changed, and the church remains bare until Easter Eve, when the process is reversed.