



## **St. Paul United Church of Christ**

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Rev. Becky Senior Pastor

Pastor Dee Associate Pastor

Roland Dicke-Council President

### **Welcome to St. Paul UCC, we are glad you are here!!**

Whether you are worshipping online or in person, Welcome, one and all, to this time of worship. We are blessed to have you with us today.

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the Church-**On July 23, 2020 Governor DeWine mandated mask wearing in public, including houses of worship. Masks are essential to help keep those around us safe. Thank you for cooperating.

### **Worship Leaders**

Ministers

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

Cheyenne Olt

Anna Louise Hoelscher

Terri Mullins

The Congregation

Senior Pastor

Accompanist/Vocalist

**April 1, 2021**

**Maundy Thursday**

WORDS OF GREETING

Holy Week by Ann Weems

*Holy is the week...*

*Holy, consecrated, belonging to God...*

*We move from hosannas to horror with the predicable ease of those who know not what they do.*

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

*Our hosannas sung, our palms waved, let us go with passion into this week.*

*It is a time to curse fig trees that do not yield fruit.*

*It is a time to cleanse our temples of any blasphemy.*

*It is time to greet Jesus as the Lord's Anointed One, to lavishly break our alabaster and pour perfume out for him without counting the cost.*

*It is a time for preparation...*

*The time to give thanks and break bread is upon us.*

*The time to give thanks and drink of the cup is imminent.*

*Eat, drink, remember:*

*On this night of nights, each one must ask, as we dip our bread in the wine, "Is it I?"*

*And on that darkest of days, each of us must stand beneath the tree and watch the dying if we are to be there when the stone is rolled away.*

*The only road to Easter morning is through the unrelenting shadows of that Friday. Only then will the alleluias be sung; only then will the dancing begin.*

## PRELUDE

**LIGHTING OF CANDLES:** As we light the altar and Christ candles, you are invited to light a candle or candles at home in preparation for worship.

## WELCOME

Henri Nouwen in his book *A Spirituality of Waiting* says this: *Passion is a kind of waiting—waiting for what other people are going to do. Jesus went to Jerusalem to announce the good news to the people of that city. And Jesus knew that he was going to put a choice before them: Will you be my disciple, or will you be my executioner? There is no middle ground here. Jesus went to Jerusalem to put people in a situation where they had to say "Yes" or "No." That is the great drama of Jesus' passion: he had to wait upon how people were going to respond. How would they come? To betray him or follow him? In a way, his agony is not simply the agony of approaching death. It is also the agony of having to wait.*

Friends, as we wait and as we choose, let us worship God. Will all who are comfortably able please stand?

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: On this day, Christ, the Lamb of God, gave himself into the hands of those who would slay him.

**People: On this day, Christ gathered his disciples in the upper room.**

Leader: On this day, Jesus took a towel and washed his disciples' feet, commanding us to serve one another in the same manner.

**People: On this day, Christ, our God, gave us this holy feast, that we who eat this bread and drink this cup may proclaim his holy sacrifice.**

Leader: On this day, Jesus calls us to live the resurrected life: healed, whole, and renewed.

**People: We worship with thanksgiving and praise.**

HYMN

*Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love*

verses 1 &4

# 273 Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

*Refrain (Unison)*

D A7  
E

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love,

A A7  
E A D Em  
G A7 D

show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

D Bm Em Em  
G A7

1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,      si - lent - ly wash - es their  
2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor,      var - ied in col - or and  
3 These are the ones we should serve,      these are the ones we should  
4 Lov - ing puts us on our knees,      si - lent - ly wash - ing their

D D  
F# Bm Em  
G A7 D *to Refrain*

feet,      Mas - ter who acts as a slave to them.  
race,      neigh-bors are near us and far a - way.  
love,      all these are neigh-bors to us and you.  
feet,      this is the way we should live with you.

WORDS: Tom Colvin (1925-2000)  
MUSIC: Ghana folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin (1925-2000); arr. Charles H. Webb (1933- )  
Words © 1969, 1997 Hope Publishing Company  
Music © 1969, 1989 Hope Publishing Company

CHEREPONI  
Irregular

## SERVICE OF CONFESSION

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

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

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

## SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

### UNISON CONFESSION OF SIN

**Loving God, you taught us compassion. You took a servant's role and knelt at the feet of your friends. You gave us a meal to remind us of your life-giving love. You called us to love one another, too. Forgive us, Lord, for not practicing the compassion you modeled. Forgive us, Lord, for wanting to be served rather than to serve. Forgive us, Lord, for not loving as you called us to love. Amen.**

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: This is the message we have heard from Christ and proclaim to you: God is light.

**People: If we walk in the light as Christ is in the light, we have communion with one another and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.**

### 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, Amen.**

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Psalm 34

(NRSV)

*I will bless the Lord at all times;*

*his praise shall continually be in my mouth.*

*<sup>2</sup> My soul makes its boast in the Lord;*

- let the humble hear and be glad.*
- <sup>3</sup> *O magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together.*
- <sup>4</sup> *I sought the Lord, and he answered me,  
and delivered me from all my fears.*
- <sup>5</sup> *Look to him, and be radiant;  
so your faces shall never be ashamed.*
- <sup>6</sup> *This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord,  
and was saved from every trouble.*
- <sup>7</sup> *The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.*
- <sup>8</sup> *O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are those who take refuge in him.*
- <sup>9</sup> *O fear the Lord, you his holy ones,  
for those who fear him have no want.*
- <sup>10</sup> *The young lions suffer want and hunger,  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.*
- <sup>11</sup> *Come, O children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*
- <sup>12</sup> *Which of you desires life,  
and covets many days to enjoy good?*
- <sup>13</sup> *Keep your tongue from evil,  
and your lips from speaking deceit.*
- <sup>14</sup> *Depart from evil, and do good;  
seek peace, and pursue it.*
- <sup>15</sup> *The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,  
and his ears are open to their cry.*
- <sup>16</sup> *The face of the Lord is against evildoers,  
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.*
- <sup>17</sup> *When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,  
and rescues them from all their troubles.*
- <sup>18</sup> *The Lord is near to the brokenhearted,  
and saves the crushed in spirit.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the Lord rescues them from them all.*
- <sup>20</sup> *He keeps all their bones;*

*not one of them will be broken.*

*<sup>21</sup> Evil brings death to the wicked,  
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.*

*<sup>22</sup> The Lord redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.*

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Luke 22:1-27 (NRSV)

*Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. <sup>2</sup> The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.*

*<sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; <sup>4</sup> he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. <sup>5</sup> They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. <sup>6</sup> So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.*

*<sup>7</sup> Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." <sup>9</sup> They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" <sup>10</sup> "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters <sup>11</sup> and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' <sup>12</sup> He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there." <sup>13</sup> So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.*

*<sup>14</sup> When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. <sup>15</sup> He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; <sup>16</sup> for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." <sup>17</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; <sup>18</sup> for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." <sup>19</sup> Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." <sup>20</sup> And he did the same with*



*the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. <sup>21</sup> But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. <sup>22</sup> For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" <sup>23</sup> Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.*

*<sup>24</sup> A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. <sup>25</sup> But he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. <sup>26</sup> But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. <sup>27</sup> For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.*

## RESPONSE:

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

**People: God is still speaking. Thanks be to God!**

## MEDITATION

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

*The cup of sorrow, inconceivable as it seems, is also the cup of joy. Only when we discover this in our own life can we consider drinking it.*

--Henri Nouwen

Becca Stevens was an Episcopal priest working at Vanderbilt University in Nashville when her life took a radical turn in 1997. She looked around and realized that there were women, hundreds and thousands of women, who were living as sexual slaves in her own city and throughout the United States. Many were prostitutes who had no way out of their life that included physical harm, addiction, mental and physical abuse and financial instability.

The result of Rev. Stevens' epiphany became the Magdalene Program and its social enterprise, Thistle Farms. The Magdalene Program is a residential program outside of Nashville for women who have left prison or have walked away from their former lives, ready for a new lease on life. The Magdalene program offers safe living space for

these women for up to two years while they finish their education, get job training, and work to be drug and alcohol-free.

The Magdalene program offers a welcome to women who have previously lived on the streets—offering them safety, security, hope and grace.

When you get right down to it, that is exactly what Maundy Thursday is all about—Christ inviting us to his table of grace. And, like the women of the Magdalene Community, we are a ragtag group ourselves. We sin. We betray loved ones. We harm others by what we say and what we leave unsaid. We support systems of oppression. We harbor grudges and refuse to forgive.

Yet, despite it all, we are invited to Christ's table. We are nourished by his body and his blood—his very life poured out for us. Christ does not check our ID cards at the door. He does not double check the book of life to make sure we have been good people this week. He merely invites us to come in and dine on the lavish meal of his love and grace.

On this holy night, Christ nourishes us with love. In our New Testament lesson, we hear the familiar story of Jesus' Passover meal with his disciples—a meal we now call The Last Supper. In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, we hear this story of Jesus instituting what is now the Sacrament of Holy Communion. In the Gospel of John, the Last Supper is recorded not in terms of bread and wine, but in Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and his commandment for his closest ones to do the same to one another.

Tonight, we will share in the Lord's Supper, we will eat of the bread and drink of the cup of Christ. What's more, because we come to this place as broken people in need of healing, you will have the opportunity to have your hands symbolically washed with prayers for healing. Then, if you would like, you are invited to light candles for healing—healing for yourself and loved ones.

Now my guess is that for many of you, this might be difficult. We are not used to thinking of ourselves in need of healing and we rarely ever actually ask for prayers for ourselves. We somehow think we are being selfish when we express our vulnerabilities and our needs.

But here is the deal, on this holy night, Christ makes himself vulnerable to us—he offers his body, his blood and his service that we

might be nourished, healed, and renewed. On this very night of his betrayal, Christ does not run nor hide. Instead he gives us a shining example of Christian service.

Likewise, the Magdalene Community is based on Christian service and discipleship to some of society's most vulnerable members. Within the community, the women find healing and hope. They are nourished by good food and education. They are given the tools to help other women who have been in their situations.

In the same way, we are fed by Christ in order that we might feed others. Our feet are washed by Jesus in order that we might wash the feet of our sisters and brothers. Christ offers us healing and hope and new life—on this holy night and always. In turn, we offer our lives for the healing of the nations and the healing of injuries and harm in our own homes and neighborhoods—especially this particular Holy Week when coronavirus has taken so many lives and has altered the lives of many others.

So how do we begin to serve others? We begin by making ourselves vulnerable—by allowing Christ to wash us clean and being unafraid to ask for healing. Not just tonight, but always.

As Christ so lived, let us go and do the same. Amen.

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION AND HEALING (adapted from Litanies and Other Prayers For the Revised Common Lectionary, Year B by Phyllis Cole and Everett Tilson)

Pastor: Tonight we are reminded of the power and peril of friendship. Tonight is a night of love and betrayal—of promises made and promises broken. Tonight we gather around this table to share in Christ's love for us—as well as to face our own betrayals and brokenness.

**People: Like the disciples, tonight we stand in need of prayer, in need of forgiveness, in need of healing, in need of grace. As we gather around this table, our prayers search for words beyond our own understanding. Our prayers grope for the Spirit within who intercedes with sighs too deep for words. Our prayers bring us to this table of grace—that together we might know wholeness out of brokenness and promises kept through pouring out of one's all.**

Pastor: As we partake of the cup and the loaf, we are reminded of our unity we have in the name of Christ Jesus. As we seek healing in our lives, we look to Christ as our Physician. For it is through his love for us that we come to know God's gifts of grace and healing. Let us pray.

**People: O merciful God, tonight we take our place at the table with Christ Jesus. When he predicts our betrayal, let us examine not our neighbors but ourselves. When he predicts our falling away, let us remember that the crow of the cock is more predictable than any of us. As we contemplate his imminent arrest, let us feel not only the pain of our great loss but the shame of our tragic guilt. Accept us at this table, Holy God, that we might live anew—washed clean in the sorrow of this night and the day to come. Lay your hands gently upon us, heal us, and strengthen us to do your will and sing your praises. All this we pray in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray: 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after offering thanks, he gave it to the disciples saying, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also 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."

## SHARING OF MEAL, LIGHTING OF CANDLES, AND CLEANSING OF HANDS/HEALING PRAYER

*(In the United Church of Christ, we celebrate an Open Table. All are invited to receive communion in the southwest corner of our sanctuary. You are also invited to light candles of healing for yourself and others. If you so desire, a member of the Called to Care Team will invite you to cleanse your hands, offering the Iona Prayer for Healing. Spirit of the*

*living God, present with us now, enter you: body, mind, and spirit, and heal you of all that harms you, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

(If you are at home with others, you are invited to wash each other's hands, while speaking the Healing Prayer from Iona. If you are home alone, you are invited to wash your own hands, praying this prayer.)

### Words for Sharing the Meal

Bread: Take and eat. This is the body of Christ broken for you and for all.

Cup: Take and drink. This is the blood of Christ poured out for the forgiveness of sins.

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (in unison): O Jesus, our ever-living Teacher, Friend and Master: we have heard your new command to love one another; we have seen your example of how to serve humbly as you, their leader and Lord, bent down to wash your disciples' feet. We have received the bread and wine, signs of your presence and power within us. By your Spirit, prompt us now, we pray, to do as you command, to imitate your willingness to serve, and to live as your children, fed and nourished on our journey with Jesus. Move our hearts to love you more and more. Amen.**

HYMN

*They'll Know We Are Christians*

## They'll Know We Are Christians 595

*Unison* N.C. Fm  $\frac{E\flat}{F}$  Fm Cm7 Fm  $\frac{E\flat}{F}$  Fm



1 We are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord.  
2 We will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand.  
3 We will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side.  
4 All praise to the Fa - ther, from whom all things come.

Fm Bbm  $\frac{A\flat}{B\flat}$  Bbm  $\frac{Gm7(\flat 5)}{B\flat}$  Fm  $\frac{E\flat}{F}$  Fm



We are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord.  
We will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand.  
We will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side.  
And all praise to Christ Je - sus, his on - ly Son.

Fm Bbm  $\frac{A\flat}{B\flat}$  Bbm  $\frac{Gm7(\flat 5)}{B\flat}$  Fm  $\frac{E\flat}{F}$  Fm



And we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored.  
And to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land.  
And we'll guard each one's dig - ni - ty and save each one's pride.  
And all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one.

*Refrain* N.C. D $\flat$  A $\flat$  D $\flat$   $\frac{Fm}{C}$  Cm Fm Bbm



And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our love.

Bbm7  $\frac{Fm}{A\flat}$  Bbm Csus Cm Fm



Yes, they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love.

WORDS and MUSIC: Peter Scholtes (1938- ); para. John 13:35

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BENEDICTION (Benediction written by the Rev. Dr. Clare McBeath and the Rev. Tim Presswood. Posted on the Church of Scotland's Starters for Sunday website)

May the blessing of the God who calls the people out of Egypt call us out from our comfort and our safety to embrace a journey of challenge and risk.

May the blessing of the Son who kneels and washes our feet call us out from our comfort and safety to embrace and serve those we meet on the journey.

May the blessing of the Holy Spirit who weaves dreams of a new community call us out from our comfort and safety to provide welcome and hospitality to all. Go in peace. Amen.

You are invited to depart in silence.



Sometimes  
showing love  
just looks like  
washing your  
hands.