

**It's hard to throw stones when  
you're busy washing feet.**

CoNet:  
The Clergy  
Coaching  
Network



Luke Lezon

**Love like Jesus.**

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

119 North Franklin Street

New Bremen, Ohio 45869

Phone (419-629-2502), Fax (419-629-3207)

Email [stpaulnb@nktelco.net](mailto:stpaulnb@nktelco.net) or [stpaulnb@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulnb@gmail.com)

Visit our website at <https://stpaulnb.org>

Like and follow our page St. Paul United Church of Christ – New

Bremen, Ohio on Facebook

Rev. Becky Erb Strang-Senior Pastor

Roland Dicke-Council President

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

Whether you are worshipping online or in person, this is the house of the Lord, and all are welcome to enter and praise our loving Creator.

May God's love fill you with kindness, mercy, and joy.

**April 14, 2022**

**Maundy Thursday**

### **Worship Leaders**

Ministers

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

Connie O'Neill

Tracy Oldiges

Diane Gilberg

Jim Strang

The Congregation

Senior Pastor

Organist

Sr. Deacon

Sr. Elder

Music Director

### **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 predictable ease of those who know not what they do.*

*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 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

HOLY WEEK

273 *Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love*

*Refrain (Unison)*

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love,  
show us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.  
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  
feet, race, love, feet, Mas - ter who acts as a slave to them,  
neigh-bors are near us and far a - way,  
all these are neigh-bors to us you,  
this is the way we should live with you.  
to Refrain

## 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.***

## NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: John 19:23-30 (NRSV)

*When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.<sup>24</sup> So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,*

*"They divided my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots."*

<sup>25</sup> *And that is what the soldiers did.*

*Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.*

*<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

## 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

Tonight we hear a mother's agonizing story. It is the story of one mother's love from the position of the cross.

Jesus' mother is not named in the Gospel of John. We call her Mary—a name given by the other gospels--but in John she remains unnamed. Yet, in the Gospel of John, more than any other gospel, Jesus' mother played a prominent and active role in his ministry.

We first met Jesus' mother in the Gospel of John at the wedding in Cana. When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother gently encouraged her son to take action. According to this Gospel, she was with Jesus from the very beginning of his earthly ministry.

Tonight our reading brings us to the cross as she is watching her son die. Tonight, she witnesses the end of her son's earthly ministry—a ministry filled with mystery and miracles, with lessons and with love.

Tonight, she huddles with the other women—her world, her family, and her love torn asunder by prejudice, jealousy, and hatred.

What agony it must be to watch one's child die—inch by inch and minute by minute. What helplessness she must feel—unable to ease his pain.

Mothers throughout history know the agony of not being able to take away the pain of their children. Some of us have known the agony of losing a child. Most of us, male and female alike, have watched on the news stories of families torn apart by war, children gunned down in schools, cries of mothers and fathers whose arms are now empty.

On this night of remembrance, on this night of sorrow, on this night when our hearts bring us to the cross, we stand with Jesus' mother as she watches her son die AND we stand in solidarity with all mothers and fathers who have lost their children.

Yet, even on this dark night, even at the base of the cross, there is a dawning of new hope. On this night of death, on this night of sorrow, our flow of tears is stemmed by Jesus' words of love to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."

"Woman, here is your son." Standing near the grieving women was a disciple of Jesus. We are told he is the one whom Jesus loved. Tradition tells us his name is John, but like the mother, he remains unnamed in this Gospel.

"Woman, here is your son." From the place of the cross, Jesus creates a new kind of family for his grieving mother and his grieving disciple. He creates a family for whom discipleship and love, care and compassion, create bonds stronger than bloodlines. From the place of the cross, Jesus creates a new kind of family—a family that huddles together at the foot of the cross **and** at the heart of pain.

We, as followers of Jesus, are part of this new family. In a few minutes we will gather around the family dinner table. In a few minutes we will invite one another to experience healing. The people sitting next to you and around you are your brothers and sisters. The people dying on the streets and in our cities and in nations far away are your children.

The people who come this night seeking healing are your mothers and fathers. Because of Jesus, we are family—not just this night, but forever and ever.

“Woman, here is your son.” Jesus’ words to his mother are his words for us this night. We each bring to this night burdens, sorrows, grief, and a need for healing.

From the cross, Jesus cries out for us to forge new relationships based on loving care. From the cross, Jesus commands us to find a home for our sorrow. From the cross, Jesus calls us to recognize the grief and agony that others bear, that we might take their hands, and call them brother, sister, mother, or father. From the cross, Jesus invites us to be healed with the promise that sometimes healing and newness of life come to us after we have been to places of deep loss and sorrow.

Here is the good news: When we lift our heads and peek around the corner of this day, we can see what will happen to Jesus at Easter’s dawn. A new day is coming. Life will surprise us: even in the midst of death. But for now, let us stand at the foot of the cross, holding our grief, burdened with sorrow, and reaching out to one another in love. Amen.

## TIME OF OFFERING

OFFERTORY SENTENCES: God is the author of all of creation. God created the world and God created us. As much as we’d like to believe we are self-made, we are not. We belong to God and we worship not ourselves, but God who created us and gave us the gift of Jesus. Our stewardship of time, abilities, and financial resources places God through Christ Jesus at the center of our lives.

## DOXOLOGY

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host:  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison): **Gracious and loving God, you call us to be stewards of your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. May our faithful use of these resources bear witness to the love of Jesus Christ in our lives. 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 to 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

It is this night we remember each and every time we celebrate this sacrament. This is the night Jesus brought together his closest friends for a Passover Meal. Jesus knew he would be betrayed. He knew he would be denied. And yet, he sat at the table with his disciples, breaking the bread and saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." He also took the cup and said, "This is the Cup of Salvation, my blood poured out for you. Do this as often as you drink it for the forgiveness of sins."

The gifts of God for the people of God. All things are now ready.

## SHARING THE ELEMENTS

The Bread of Heaven, the Body of Christ, broken for you.

The Cup of the New Covenant, the Blood of Christ, shed for you.

## SERVICE OF HEALING, HANDWASHING AND CANDLE LIGHTING,

(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.)

*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.*

**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.**

## They'll Know We Are Christians 595

*Unison* N.C. Fm Eb Fm Cm7 Fm Eb 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 Ab Bbm Gm7(b5) Fm Eb 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 Ab Bbm Gm7(b5) Fm Eb 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. Db Ab Db Fm Cm Fm Bbm

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

Bbm7 Fm Bbm Csus Cm Fm

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

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.

