



# MAUNDY THURSDAY

## St. John United Church of Christ

April 9, 2020 – 7:00p

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### PREPARATION NOTES

[This order of service was prepared by Rev. Keith M. Haithcock for the combined Maundy Thursday service with Christ Church, United Church of Christ Ft. Thomas; St. John United Church of Christ Bellevue; and St. John's United Church of Christ Newport. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic we are not able to worship in-person for this service. However, the bulletin has been adapted and made available for a Maundy Thursday service at home. Notes have been added in brackets and in red.

You may use this order of service at any time of the day; however, it is designed to be an evening service with all or most lights off – the Christ candle remains burning through the whole service.

**PREPARING YOUR HOME:** Select and clear a table for the following items: Place 13 candles (any candles you have available) on the table in a line. Identify the tallest candle as the Christ Candle and place it in the center with the other 12 candles – 6 on each side. Have matches and a candle snuffer available. The order of service will indicate when to light the Christ Candle and when to light the 12 Disciple Candles. Place some bread and wine, or grape juice, on your table.

**HYMNS:** are from *The New Century Hymnal* and are included at the end. They may be sung or Read.

**Phones & Time:** Turn your phones off. This service is less than one hour.

It is suggested that you read all Scriptures aloud. *The Inclusive Bible* translation is used in this service – listen for the meaning of each text and how it speaks to you. Most translations have Jesus referring to God as “the Father” in the New Testament, however *The Inclusive Bible* translation hearkens back to Jesus’ own appeal to God as *Abba*, in the garden of Gethsemane. So, don’t be shocked to see the intimate Greek word *Abba* (Awe-baw) which means: daddy or papa.]

# Order of Service

## Lighting the Christ Candle

[Light only the Christ Candle.]

## Welcome

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here!*

## Centering

“I Love My God” (Psalm 116.1-2) -*Isaac Watts*

[Take a few minutes to breathe deeply, sit comfortably, listen for God's voice.  
Then read/sing the text of this African American spiritual based on Psalm 116.1-2]

I love my God, who heard my cry and pitied every groan.  
Long as I live and troubles rise, I'll hasten to God's throne.  
I love my God, who heard my cry and chased my grief away.  
O let my heart no more despair while I have breath to pray.

*-from The New Century Hymnal, page 511*

## Call to Worship

Hebrews 4.14-16

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens—Jesus, the Firstborn of God—let us hold fast to our profession of faith. For we don't have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and favor, and find help in time of need.

## Hymn, 223

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

## Opening Prayer

One: Jesus took the bowl and the towel  
and washed the dirt of the day away.

**All: We come before you, loving God, to make a fresh start.**

One: Jesus took the bowl and the towel  
and met the needs of his friends with compassion.

**All: We come before you, loving God,  
remembering the ties of family and friendship.**

One: Jesus took the bowl and towel  
and shared himself with his disciples.

**All: We come before you, loving God, as part of a**

**faith community that accepts and shares.**

One: Jesus put away the bowl and the towel  
and reminded his friends that they were called to serve.

**All: We come before you, O God, prepared to search out the focus and  
pattern of our Christian service. Amen**

**John 13.1-17, 34-35** (Please rise in body or spirit.)

It was before the Feast of Passover, and Jesus realized that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to Abba God. He had always loved his own in this world, but now he showed how perfect this love was.

The Devil had already convinced Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. So during supper, Jesus—knowing that God had put all things into his own hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God—rose from the table, took off his clothes and wrapped a towel around his waist. He then poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and dry them with the towel that was around his waist.

When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said, "Rabbi, you're not going to wash my feet, are you?"

Jesus answered, "You don't realize what I am doing right now, but later you'll understand."

Peter replied, "You'll never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered, "If I don't wash you, you have no part with me."

Simon Peter said to Jesus, "Then, Rabbi, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus said, "Any who have taken a bath are clean all over and only need to wash their feet—and you're clean, though not every one of you." For Jesus knew who was to betray him. That is why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After washing their feet, Jesus put his clothes back on and returned to the table. He said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call me "Teacher," and "Sovereign"—and rightly, for so I am. If I, then—your teacher and sovereign—have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

"The truth of the matter is, no subordinate is greater than the superior;  
no messenger outranks the sender.

Once you know all these things, you'll be blessed if you put them into practice.

I give you a new commandment: Love one another. And you're to love one another the way I have loved you.\*

This is how all will know that you're my disciples: that you truly love one another."

**\*[Maundy Thursday derives its name from John 13.34 "I give you a new commandment..." Latin: *Mandatum Novum - New Commandment*]**

## Hymn, 225

"It Was a Sad and Solemn Night"

## Prayer for Love and Light

One: God be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Let us pray:

**All: Gracious God, you give us the sun to illumine the day and the moon and the stars to shine by night. As we come to the setting of the sun and our eyes behold your vesper light, kindle in us the flame of your love that our lives may shed abroad the radiance of your light and the world may be full of the splendor of your glory; through Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. Amen**

## Lighting of the Twelve Disciple Candles

**[Light all the remaining 12 candles.]**

## Hymn, 202

"O God, How We Have Wandered"

## Prayer of Confession and Assurance

One: Let us pray:

**All: Spirit of Christ, be with us now. We may try to avoid this hour of trouble; we may not stay awake. Help us to face our fear of the cross on which you died. Help us face the crosses we must carry to honor your life.**

*Moments for Silent Confession*

One: We are your disciples.

**All: And we too follow you with confusion and fear. Strengthen us, we pray, so that we may walk through life into death without fear; through the night into eternal light. Amen.**

## The Lord's Supper Litany

Everyone is welcome at Christ's Table.

The preparations are made in the city of Jerusalem, in an upper room, for a meal,  
**the Passover meal.**

The feet coming up the stairs are dusty, they've travelled far for this meal,  
**the Passover meal.**

The friends recline together weary and hungry as the teacher begins the meal,  
**the Passover meal.**

He looks them in the eye and tells them that he has eagerly desired this meal,  
**the Passover meal.**

The teacher takes a loaf and blessing it, he breaks it saying, this is my body which is for you,  
**the Passover meal.**

He does the same with the cup, blessing it, sharing it, saying this is my blood, the new covenant,  
**the Passover meal.**

The teacher tells them that one will betray him, one whose hand is on the table  
**at the Passover meal.**

The teacher ties a towel around himself and with a basin, he bows to serve,  
**at the Passover meal.**

The teacher handles the dirty feet of his friends, washing them in a basin, a humble act  
**at the Passover meal.**

The disciples of this teacher watch, aghast at this stooping, this lowliness,  
**at the Passover meal.**

The one named Peter pulls his feet away rejecting completely this washing,  
**at the Passover meal.**

The teacher tells them that the greatest must be a servant to all, in this new order  
**at the Passover meal.**

Bread broken, wine shared, feet washed, they leave the room together  
**after the Passover meal.**

In the garden the teacher asks them to watch and pray, but the disciples are too sleepy  
**after the Passover meal.**

The teacher vigils alone, in tears and agony until soldiers come with swords and clubs,

**they will not pass over this teacher.**

The body will be broken and the cup of suffering will be emptied  
**at the Passover this year.**

One: Take and eat, this is the body of Christ, broken for you.

**All: Amen.**

One: Take and drink, this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you.

**All: Amen.**

One: Strength for the journey.

## **Tenebrae (Service of Shadows)**

**[Tenebrae (Latin: shadows) is a service of the Passion readings followed by gradual extinguishing of 12 candles representing the desertion of the disciples and commemorates the betrayal, arrest, passion, trial, death, and burial of Jesus. When the last light is extinguished a loud noise is made to signify Jesus' death and the Christ Candle remains burning as a symbol of hope of the resurrection.]**

***Tenebrae (Service of Shadows) is traditionally a service offered on Good Friday – we include it at the end of the Maundy Thursday service, the eve of Good Friday – and remember the passion of the Christ. Read each brief reflection slowly and ponder the words and meaning.]***

### **Shadow of Betrayal** – Matthew 26.20-22, 25

When it grew dark, he reclined at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating he said, “The truth is, one of you is about to betray me.” They were greatly distressed and started asking him in turn, “Surely, it is not I, Teacher?”

Then Judas, who was betraying Jesus, said, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” Jesus answered, “You have said it yourself.”

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **Shadow of Desertion** – Matthew 26.31, 33-35

Jesus then said to them, “Tonight you will all fall away because of me, for scripture says, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’”

Peter responded, “Though all may fall away because of you, I never will!”

Jesus replied, “The truth is, before the cock crows tonight, you will deny me three times.” Peter said, “Even if I must die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **Agony of the Soul** – Luke 22.39-42

Then Jesus went out and made his way as usual to the Mount of Olives; the disciples accompanied him. When they reached the place, Jesus said to them, “Pray that you not be put to the test.”

Then Jesus withdrew about a stone’s throw from them, knelt down and prayed, “Abba, if it’s your will, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done.”

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **Unshared Vigil** – Mark 14.32-41

Then they came to a place named Gethsemane. Jesus said to them, “Sit down here while I pray.” Jesus took along with him Peter, James and John. Then he began to be very distressed and troubled, and said to them, “My heart is filled with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.”

Jesus went a little further off and fell to the ground, praying that if it were possible this hour might pass him by. He said, “Abba, you have the power to do all things. Take this cup away from me. But let it be not my will, but your will.”

When Jesus returned he found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Asleep, Simon? Could you not stay awake for even an hour? Be on guard and pray that you not be put to the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Going back again, Jesus began to pray in the same words. Upon returning Jesus found them asleep once again. They could not keep their eyes open, nor did they know what to say to him.

He returned a third time and said, “Still sleeping? Still taking your rest? It will have to do. The hour is upon us—the Chosen one is being handed into the clutches of evildoers.”

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **The Hour Has Come** – John 17.1-4, 6

After Jesus said this, he looked up to heaven and said, “Abba, the hour has come! Glorify your Only Begotten that I may glorify you, through the authority you’ve given

me over all humankind, by bestowing eternal life on all those you gave me. And this is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and the One you have sent, Jesus, the Messiah. I have given you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

I have manifested your Name to those you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me; and now they have kept your Word.”

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **That They May Be All One** – John 17.15-18

[Jesus prayed] I don't ask you to take them out of the world, but to guard them from the Evil One. They are not of the world, any more than I am of the world.

Consecrate them—make them holy through the truth—for your Word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world;

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **Arrest in the Garden** – John 18.1-5

After Jesus had said all this, he left with the disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. There was a garden there, and Jesus and the disciples entered it. Judas, the traitor, knew the place well, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. Judas led the Roman cohort to the place, along with some Temple guards sent by the chief priests and Pharisees. All were armed and carried lanterns and torches.

Then Jesus, aware of everything that was going to take place, stepped forward and said to them, “Who are you looking for?”

“Are you Jesus of Nazareth?” they asked. Jesus said, “I am.” Now Judas, the traitor, was with them.

**[Extinguish a candle]**

### **Shadow of the Cross** – Mark 15.16-20

The soldiers led Jesus away into the hall known as the Praetorium; then they assembled the whole battalion. They dressed Jesus in royal purple, then wove a crown of thorns and put it on him. They began to salute him: “All hail! King of the Jews!” They kept striking Jesus on the head with a reed, spitting at him and kneeling in front of him pretending to pay homage. When they had finished mocking him, they stripped him of the purple and dressed him in his own clothes. Then they led him out to be crucified.

**[The last four candles are slowly extinguished while singing the Spiritual. The Christ Candle remains burning.]**

## Spiritual, 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) Where you there when they nailed him to the tree?....
- 3) Where you there when they laid him in the tomb?....

**[Silence is kept – the Christ Candle is snuffed out and lit again on Easter.]**

*The peace of God be with you.*

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