

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Chatham, Massachusetts

Maundy Thursday

April 9, 2020



GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

you are made, my child, my Beloved
from water and dust
both holy
both mine.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Find a quiet place. Light a candle. Center yourself for worship. For this service, prepare a basin of water, dry cotton towels. Take your time and read the liturgy slowly. Digest every word and let it nourish your soul.

Jesus began the final days of his earthly life by washing the feet of his disciples. You are invited to the basins of water to wash your hands or the hands of another. As you feel the coolness of the water, may it be like a spring in the wilderness—a reminder of baptism, the assurance that no matter what happens, God will provide what you need. As you feel the touch of your hands or someone else's, pray that your hands might be the hands of Christ—comforting, healing, and supporting all those you know.

Especially this season that we are living now seem quite fit for this practice of washing hands, for not only ourselves but also for others. Now we say that washing hands is an act of worship. Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show them what servanthood looks like. It's about serving. It's about putting others before ourselves. It's sacrificing. It's giving up and giving to others.

Also washing hands symbolizes our sins being washed away. Our selfishness, our pride, our bias, our fear, our anxiety, our worries, our doubts, our problems, our trauma, our stubbornness... It's time to wash them away.

CALL TO WORSHIP

(This could be sung or spoken. The sung version can be found [here](#).)

One: Come, come, whoever you are,

All: Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving.

One: Ours is no caravan of despair.

All: Though we have broken our vows a thousand times,

One: Come, come again, come!

If there is any time to stop and remember how we have fallen short, it is now.

If there is any moment when we should be honest about what we have done and what we have failed to do, it is tonight. As we sing, let our voices bring our prayer of confession to God.

A PRAYER TO KEEP AWAKE

Broken and bleeding God, do not let us turn away.
Do not let us fall asleep.
Do not let us fail to witness the road you walk for us
the pain you bear for us
the love you pour out for us. amen.

PROCLAIMING & RESPONDING TO THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING [John 18:1-19:16a](#)

SUNG RESPONSE “[Stay With Me](#)” by the Taizé Community in France

POETIC RESPONSE “This is the Breaking”

this is the breaking
when the very ground seems to
crumble
because this is what it means to be
forsaken.
scream
but no one will hear
so save that breath
for your last
three.
two.
and your bones seem to split
and fracture
as every face that once loved you
howls like a hunter
and you are the prey
and they tell you to pray
and see if that will make it better
pray to the God who left you.
three.
two.
i do not wish this on you.
to feel your body destroyed
your joints disintegrate
your mouth dry up
your blood pour out
and all the while

the crowd looming
waiting
for you to crack.
this is the breaking
when the betrayals
and denials
cannot be taken back
and you are
alone.
(will those stones
cry out now?
will those angels
carry me now?)
(no.)
three. two.
i will pray to the god who left me
because what else is there to do?
no one else is listening either.
do not save me
i am gone
save them.
forgive them.
save them.
three.
two.
one.

SCRIPTURE READING [John 19:16b-30](#)

SILENT RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE READING [John 19:31-43](#)

POETIC RESPONSE **“The Night Weeps”**

the night weeps
and covers the earth
with her protective arms
whispering, ‘i will hold you.’
the skies crack
and the earth groans
as God dies.
and the wilderness is truly empty.
and there is nothing but
silence.
the kind of silence that comes
when there is no more point
to breath.
...
and yet somehow
the rest of us still go on.
breathe with us, o earth
breathe with us, o sky
breathe with us, o night
stay with us as we wait
we wait
we wait

SENDING

CLOSING HYMN [“Fear Not the Pain”](#) by Rainer Maria Rilke

Put away everything one by one in silence. Bear the emptiness. Sit in the harshness of the story. This pain is something that we have to go through, but “fear not the pain”.

Fear not the pain,
Let its waves fall back into the earth.
For heavy are the mountains, heavy are the seas.

(This worship liturgy was originally written by
Slats Toole, A Sanctified Art LLC and has been altered.)