



"Lamb" Zurbarán, Francisco, 1598-1664.

Christ Church UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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**Milwaukee Metropolitan
Community Church**

a Vibrant ~ Inclusive ~ Progressive Community of Faith

www.milwaukeeemcc.org

April 1st, 2021 - Maundy Thursday

Today marks the holy Maundy Thursday observance in the Christian Church.

Mandatum, the origin of “Maundy,” is the Latin word for “commandment.” As Jesus’ crucifixion nears, he gives his remaining disciples a commandment related to the time they have spent together. They are to love one another as Jesus has loved them.

Although we are not gathered in person at this time, we gather our hearts and minds tonight in answer to Jesus’ mandate to love one another as God loves us. May this *new commandment*, take root in our hearts and lead us to new life.

**Please recite the PURPLE words aloud.*

Prelude

Lift High the Cross -Cherwien

Words of Welcome

Opening Song

Lift High the Cross

Refrain: Lift High the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore his sacred name.

- 1. Come Christians, follow where our Savior trod, our King victorious, Christ, the Son of God. Refrain.**
- 2. O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree, your death has brought us life eternally. Refrain.**
- 3. So shall our song of triumph ever be: praise to the Crucified for victory. Refrain.**

Call to Worship

One: Do you remember your last supper before the pandemic?

The last meal you had out at a restaurant with friends?

The last meal before fear and anxiety ran the conversation?

If you had known it was your last, would you have lingered?

Would you have ordered dessert?

Would you have held your friends’ hands and told them how much you loved them?

If you had known, would you have washed their feet?

Tonight we gather together, because this night was the beginning of the end.

This night was Jesus’ last supper with his disciples.

Take a moment to imagine how Jesus must have felt.

Pause for silence.

Friends, with all of this in mind, I invite you to join me in our opening words:

All: Tonight we will hear of a love that knows no bounds. May we worship holy God.

Opening Prayer

One: Jesus of Nazareth,
If the disciples had known
That the last supper would be their last meal with you
Before the crucifixion, I bet they would have listened differently.
I bet they would have put down their arguments,
And leaned in with their whole bodies.
I bet they would have asked questions
And halted the small talk.
I bet they would have taken notes and hung on your every word.
Jesus of Nazareth, I want to listen like that.
I want to listen like tonight might be the last time you speak.
I want to listen like everything could change tomorrow.
I want to listen like my soul depends on it.
So gracious God, clear away anything in me that might distract.
Clear away anything in me that might hinder my hearing and receiving of your word.
I am listening.
We are listening.
With hope and honesty we pray.
Amen.

Song of Response *Kyrie Eleison* duet, Nancy Charles & Pam Kothrade

Scriptures (The Inclusive Bible)

Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10), 11-14

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31-35

Hymn

Jesu, Jesu Fill Us with Your Love

Refrain: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love, show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

- 1. Kneels at the feet of his friends, silently washes their feet, Master who acts as a slave to them. Refrain.**
- 2. Neighbors are wealthy and poor, varied in color and race, neighbors are near us and far away. Refrain.**
- 3. Loving puts us on our knees, silently washing their feet, this is the way we should live with you. Refrain.**

Call to Confession

One: The closer and closer we get to the crucifixion,
The more earnest our prayers of confession feel.

For we know that what was done to Jesus –
Betrayal, humiliation, violence, and death –
Are things we do to each other all the time.
So with all earnestness, a sense of urgency, and a deep hope for transformation,
We return to this prayer once again,
Trusting that the God who holds the stars in the sky is holding us tonight.
Now hear our words of confession...

**Holy God who holds us together,
If I were to place myself at your table, I would probably be Peter –
Misunderstanding your radical hospitality,
Sticking to the rules,
Arguing what I do and don't deserve.
Then again, it's possible that I'd be Judas –
The one who betrayed you,
The one who failed to see the good right in front of him,
The one who might have thought he wasn't worthy of your love.
If I were to place myself at your table,
It's possible I would be one of the unnamed disciples –
Watching, but not speaking,
Silently missing the opportunity
To tell you what I believe and how much I love you.
If I were to place myself at your table,
I am confident that I would have made the same mistakes
Your well-intentioned disciples made.
There is no surprise there.
What is surprising is that I know you would have washed my feet nonetheless.
So forgive me, God.
Wash not just my feet, but my hands and my head also. Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness

One: Family of faith,
Jesus knew that Peter would deny.
He knew that Judas would betray,
And he knew the disciples would hide in fear.
And still – *and still* – he invited them in.
He washed their feet, and he *fed* them.
Friends, we worship the living Christ
Whose love shocks, surprises, and far exceeds our understanding of love.
So may this story tonight remind us:

No matter who we are,
No matter where we go,
No matter how great our mistakes or regrets are in life,
We will always be invited in and held together by the Living God.
Again and again and again, we are forgiven.
Again and again and again, we are held. Amen.

Special Music

"How Beautiful"

arranged by Joel Raney

flute solo by Terry Stenstrup

The Sacrament of Communion

Invitation to Communion

The Great Thanksgiving and The Story

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

...We remember together that on *this* night—the last time he sat at the table with his disciples, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it, he broke it, gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is the blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin.”

Prayer of Consecration

Closing Song

An Upper Room With Evening Lamps

- 1. An upper room with evening lamps shine, the twelve disciples, and the table spread; now in our turn Christ bids us pour the wine, and in remembrance bless and break the bread.**
- 2. Dead for our sins, yet reigning now above, still to our hearts we find his presence given; take for ourselves the pledges of his love, foretaste and token of that feast in heaven.**
- 3. So send us out, to love and serve and praise, filled with his Spirit, as the Master said: love, joy and peace the wine of all our days, Christ and his life our true and living bread.**

Benediction

One: We believe the Gospel is this, with bread lying broken and a goblet left empty, love is betrayed but death shall not have the final word. This night is our calling to go into the world, scattered to the ends of the earth to love as Christ loved and serve in the name of Christ. It is our calling to remember, even in our darkest hour, who we are.

We remember that Christ is always with us. And we remember that on this night, we were taught how to love. On this night, eternity begins and the fullness of God's Reign begins to spill into our lives. So, go into the world to give yourself for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Go into the world and love in the name of the One who loved you until the end. It all begins and ends and begins again with Love. That is the story. Go in Peace. Amen.

Postlude

Solitude

Sakamoto

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