

Easter Services at Pilgrim

Good Friday

9.30am

Easter Day

6.30am	Sunrise Service
8.00am	Morning Eucharist
9.30am	Community Worship
11.00am	Choral Eucharist



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Pilgrim
Uniting Church

6.00pm
Maundy Thursday

Thursday 1st April 2021

COCU28B

Welcome to this Maundy Thursday Service...

**of light and darkness, quiet meditation and prayer,
readings, song, and sharing around the table**



The Christ candle and other candles around the sanctuary are lit to begin our time together.

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Minister 1:

On this night we gather to remember. We open our hearts and minds to relive the pain and victory which have become for us the doorway to the eternal. We recognise the Shadows which encroach on every life, and meditate on that one moment in history when the Shadows seemed to extinguish the light entirely. We come in awe and in worship, for the darkness has never, and will never, overcome the Light revealed in the human life and death of Jesus Christ. Tonight we gather together, because this night was the beginning of the end.

Minister 2:

Tonight we gather, remembering and experiencing the events of the night before Jesus was crucified. At that first Easter, the time was set at the celebration of the Jewish feast called Passover, where Jews recalled the events that lead the Nation of Israel from slavery in Egypt, into the wilderness and eventually to the Promised Land. Passover was a time of celebration, a remembrance, a party, to recall the acts of God. There was eating, drinking, prayer and storytelling.

There was tension in the air as Jesus and the disciples gathered, something bigger was going on. There was an awkward shift in emotions; eyes were working the room, somewhat suspicious, somewhat confused, and somewhat naive to the events that would unfold.

We are revisiting 'that night', for it's not the first time. We've been here before, we know what to expect, we know the story, but tonight we gather as if it were the first time. We are going back to that very room, that very night. The disciples are with us and they will share their stories with us. We are there, they are there, Jesus is there.

2 candles are lit either end of the long table

Music for contemplation

Narrator 1:

Jesus knew that God had put all things under his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, Jesus poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Minister 1:

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.

We leave this place to seek rest, full knowing what lies ahead. We have celebrated and broken bread, we have watched and we've been fed. But now it is time to leave, for here tonight, there is nothing more to be done, except to pray.

The Christ candle is extinguished.

The people remain in silence for as long as they desire, and then leave in silence.

(This liturgy includes meditations by John van de Laar in Dying For a Change, 2021)

Darkness

"To know the dark, go dark.
Go without sight, and find that the dark, too,
blooms and sings" (*Wendell Berry*)
A candle is extinguished

"Even when light fades and darkness falls -
as it does every single day, in every single life -
God does not turn the world over to some other deity...
Here is the testimony of faith; darkness is not dark to God;
the night is as bright as the day."
(*Source: Barbara Brown Taylor, Learning to Walk in the Dark*)

A candle is extinguished

The darkness asks us questions.
We are invited into the night.
The stillness. The loneliness.
The darkness sighs around us,
dense with unseen presence
As close as our breathing.
A candle is extinguished, followed by silence.
Only the Christ candle remains lit.

Closing

A voice from the darkness of the church declares:
A candle is a protest at midnight. It is non-conformist.
It says to the darkness: I beg to differ'

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.
Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that
has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.

Minister 1:

I do not know what these shadows ask of you,
what they might hold that means you good or ill.
It is not for me to reckon whether
you should linger or you should leave.
But this is what I can ask for you:
That in the darkness there be a blessing.
That in the shadows there be a welcome.
That in the night you be encompassed
by the Love that knows your name. (*Jan Richardson*)

Minister 2:

Step quietly into this night, for it is indeed a night of deep sorrow.
Shadows loom and will grow tall as the dawn of a new day reveals its true
nature. Promises are broken. Fear - a prelude to death - grows strong.

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.

*Water is poured into the bowl. People are invited to come forward, with
water poured over their hands to wash them, and then wiped dry with
the paper towel.*

Narrator 2:

After washing their feet and taking his garments again, Jesus sat down
and said "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you
the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains
only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The one who
loves their life will lose it, while the one who hates their life in this world
will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and
where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who
serves me. Jesus offered the disciples a new covenant. He blessed the
bread and the cup, beginning the journey that would lead to the cross.

Minister 1:

Let us recollect the last meal that Jesus shared with his friends. On the
night of his agony and arrest, the followers of Jesus gathered with him
around a supper table. Then during supper Jesus took bread, and having
said the blessing he broke it (*bread is broken*) and gave it to his disciples,
saying, take this and eat: this is my body.
Then he took the cup (*cup is lifted*) and having offered thanks to God, he
gave it to them saying, drink from it all of you. Remember me as you
drink from this, for it is my life, poured out for you - the beginning of a
new relationship with God.
And so we do this, now and always, in grateful and loving memory of the
Christ who gave his life for love, justice and the Reign of God.

Minister 2:

This was just a cup filled with wine this was just ordinary bread, baked for
guests until Jesus took them, took and drank from the cup,
even though it was his cup of pain, filled with the agony of the world;
he took and broke the bread - even though his body was too young to
be broken.
My life, our lives, would be ordinary lives unless the bread, unless the
wine, is poured into them: and the mystery of grace takes place.
Come, not because you fully understand, but because you need to reach
out and receive the life that is offered to you. (*Ann Siddall*)

Ministers sit at the table in silence and partake

All is ready. Come and share in this, our remembrance of the Last Supper.

People come forward to take the bread and dip a segment into the cup and eat.

Minister 1:

If the disciples had known that the last supper would be their last meal with Jesus before the crucifixion, they would have listened differently. They would have put down their arguments, and leaned in with their whole bodies. They would have asked questions and halted the small talk. They would have taken notes and hung on every word, like their very soul depended on it.

*Candles on table are extinguished
Two people lift the black cloth and stretch it over the table and lay it down.*

Meditation 1

We are afraid of the dark Jesus: it always turns against the Light.

**Help us to ensure that, in our fear,
we do not give power to the darkness.**

Narrator 2: 'Hear how the darkness turned against the Light'

John 13: 18-30

Jesus said, The Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me." After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side, so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

A candle is extinguished, followed by silence.

Meditation Five

We are afraid of the dark, Jesus:
it always seeks to question and discredit the Light
**Help us to ensure that, in our fear,
we do not lose faith in the Light.**

Narrator 2: 'Hear how the Light' was put on trial.

John 18: 28-38

Jesus Before Pilate

Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

A candle is extinguished, followed by silence.

Meditation Six

We are afraid of the dark, Jesus:
it always tries to expel the Light from our hearts.
**Help us to ensure that, in our fear,
we do not forget the Light's strong grasp on us.**

Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. The servant girl at the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

They said to him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

The narrator pours water over their fingers, and traces tears down their cheek.

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

A candle is extinguished, followed by silence.

Meditation Four

We are afraid of the dark, Jesus: it always pretends that it is Light and Light is darkness.

**Help us to ensure that, in our fear,
we do not forget the truth about the Light.**

Narrator 1: 'Hear how the Light was accused of Darkness'.

John 18: 19-24

The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?" Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

A candle is extinguished, followed by silence.

Meditation Two

We are afraid of the dark, Jesus: it always seeks to imprison the Light.

**Help us to ensure that, in our fear,
we do not close our hearts to the Light.**

Narrator 2: 'Hear how the Darkness captured the Light'.

John 18: 1-12

Jesus went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one." Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

A candle is extinguished, followed by silence.

Meditation 3

We are afraid of the dark, Jesus: it always denies the Light.

**Help us to ensure that, in our fear,
we do not allow darkness to lead us to despair.**

Narrator 1: 'Hear how the Light was denied'

John 13: 36-38, 18: 15-18, 25-27

Simon Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward." Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."