



Love one another
John 13:34

Maundy Thursday, April 6, 2023



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The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

Thursday, April 6, 2023 ~ Maundy Thursday

Prelude

Contemplation on “Wondrous Love”

North American folk hymn
setting, Rebecca Groom te Velde

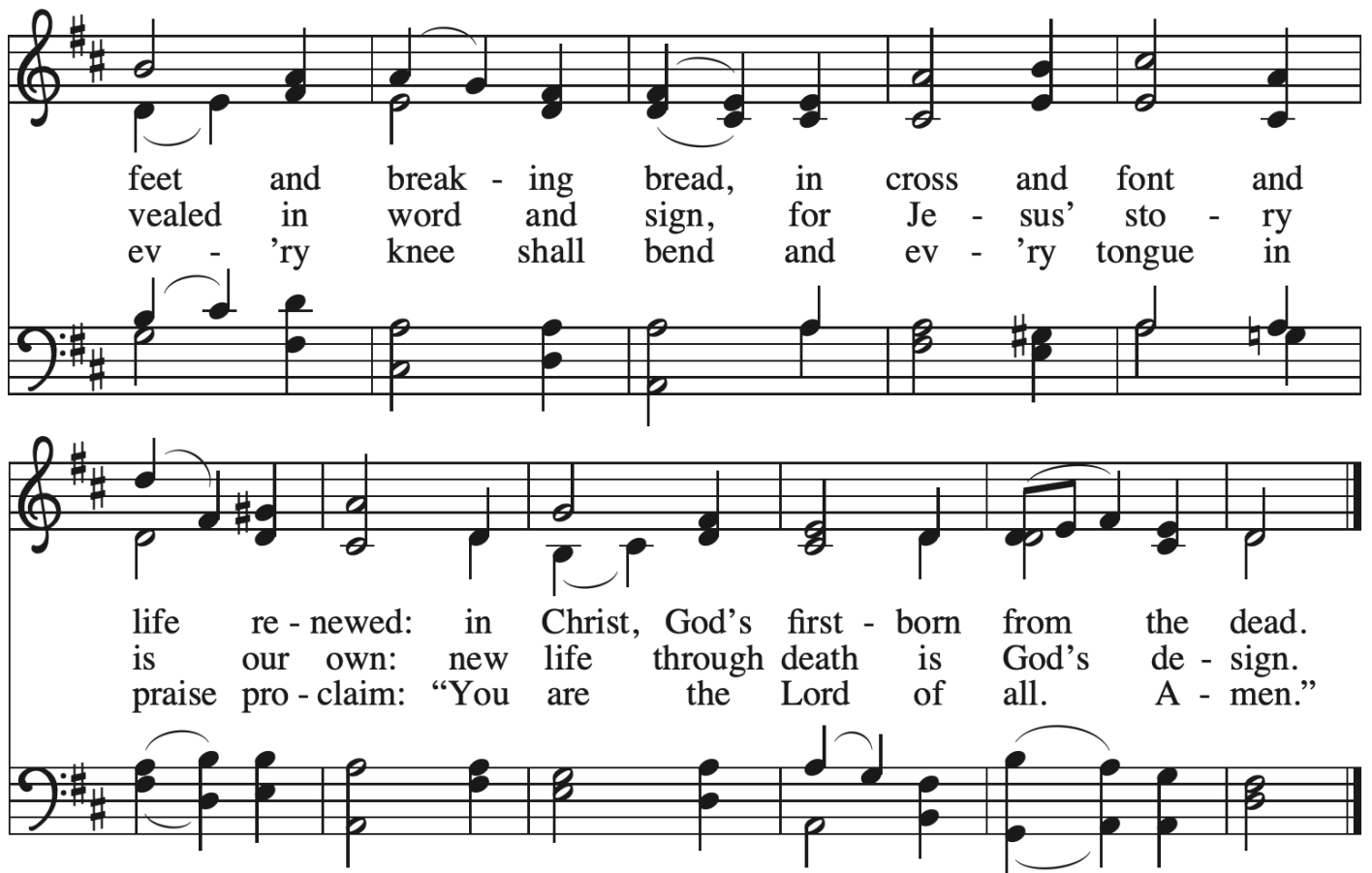
Today our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the Three Days of Jesus’ death and resurrection. We remember Christ’s last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal. As Jesus washed his disciples’ feet, so we are called to give and receive love in humble service to one another. Formed into a new body in Christ through this holy meal, we are transformed by the mercy we have received and carry it into the world. Departing worship in solemn silence, we anticipate the coming days.

GATHERING

GATHERING HYMN	Three Holy Days Enfold Us Now	ACS 930
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Three Holy Days Enfold Us Now

1 Three ho - ly days en - fold us now in wash - ing
2 The mys - t'ry hid from a - ges past is here re -
3 Christ, lift - ed high up - on the tree, be - fore you



feet and break - ing bread, in cross and font and
vealed in word and sign, for Je - sus' sto - ry
ev - 'ry knee shall bend and ev - 'ry tongue in

life re - newed: in Christ, God's first - born from the dead.
is our own: new life through death is God's de - sign.
praise pro - claim: "You are the Lord of all. A - men."

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

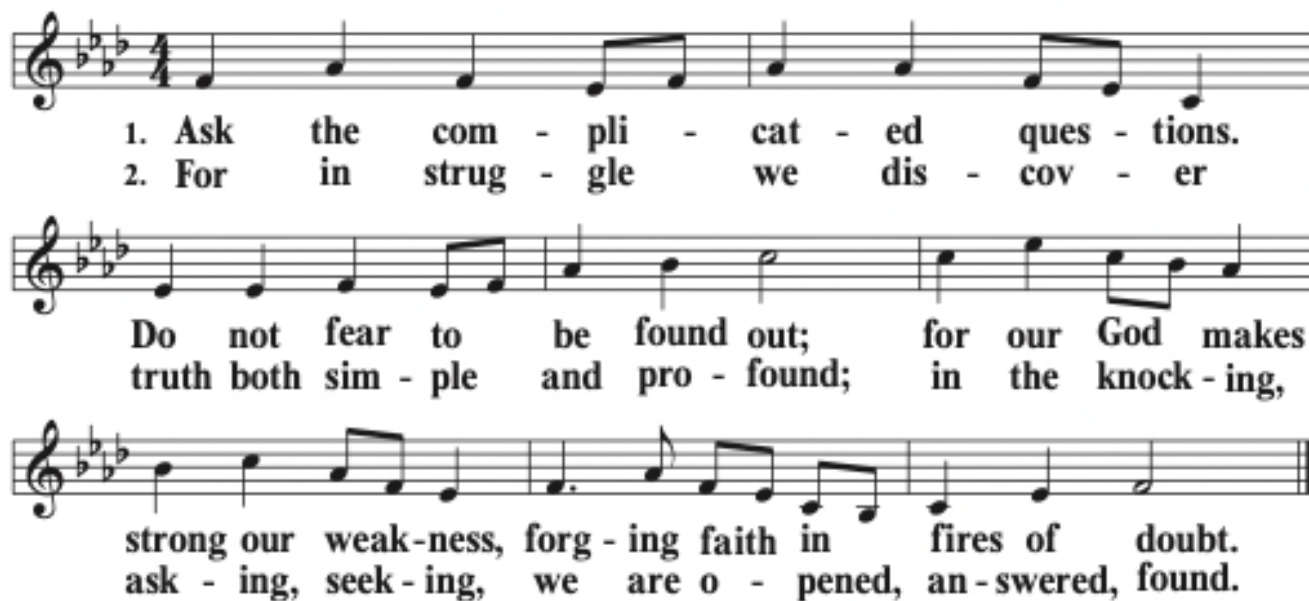
READING: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

In the bread and cup of the Lord's supper, we experience intimate fellowship with Christ and with one another, because it involves his body given for us and the new covenant in his blood. Faithful participation in this meal is a living proclamation of Christ's death until he comes in the future.

²³For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



1. Ask the com - pli - cat - ed ques - tions.
2. For in strug - gle we dis - cov - er

Do not fear to be found out; for our God makes
truth both sim - ple and pro - found; in the knock - ing,

strong our weak - ness, forg - ing faith in fires of doubt.
ask - ing, seek - ing, we are o - pened, an - swered, found.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 13:1-17, 31b-35

The story of the last supper in John’s gospel recalls a remarkable event not mentioned elsewhere: Jesus performs the duty of a slave, washing the feet of his disciples and urging them to do the same for one another.

¹Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” ⁷Jesus answered, “You do not

know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”⁸ Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.”⁹ Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you?”¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am.¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”^{31b} “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

REFLECTION

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Please join me as we confess our sins together. Consider: Where have you gone wrong this week? How have you harmed your relationship with God, with your neighbor, and with yourself?

Silence for reflection

We confess our sins together.

We know we have harmed each other and damaged our relationship with you. We create distractions to hide what we have done. We point our fingers at the faults of others. We interrogate those who have no reason to lie. And we avoid you. What have we done? Is it too late to receive your forgiveness?

Friends, † Jesus died to reveal the limitless depth of God’s love. You can doubt this love. But you can never change the truth of it. God knows all and forgives all.

We embrace your mercy, and we thank you, God.

Worshippers are invited to come forward for the laying on of hands and individual absolution. Those at home may speak these words to yourself or another: In obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins.

HYMN

To You All Hearts Are Open

ACS 1012

To You All Hearts Are Open

To you all hearts are o - pen, to
you all de - sires known. To you there are no
se - crets, al - might - y God; we come to you.

Last time

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.

In these holiest of days, we offer prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and our world.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church around the world. Write your new commandment of love on the heart of every believer and strengthen bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders in humble service for your people. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for leaders in every land. Kindle compassion and equity in all who are called to administer justice. Guide all in positions of power away from the temptations of abuse and toward work for the common good. Lead us into peace. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for this congregation and our siblings worldwide who gather to receive your body and blood this night. Fill us at this shared table and nourish us well to heed your example of grace. Send us in love to those who cannot be with us, especially those we remember or name before you. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We offer to you these petitions and those we carry in our hearts, trusting in your abundant and ever-present mercy.
Amen.

SHARING GOD'S MEAL

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Greet those with whom you worship physically with a sign of peace. At home, extend the peace of Christ through the comments section or text to those who are at a distance.

OFFERING

Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry.

OFFERING OF MUSIC (Evening Service only)

Gethsemane

based on *Legenda*
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
adapt. Linda Spevacek

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY



4. Cre - ate in me a clean and right - eous heart, O God, put a
will - ing spir - it in my soul. Let me sing with joy a - new the sal -
va - tion found in you, sing - ing praise to you who made me whole.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Gracious God,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

HOLY COMMUNION

Where is our God?

God is here in this place.

Where are your hearts?

We have given them to God.

What shall we do in the presence of our God?

We shall give our thanks and praise.

The night before Jesus died, the people who knew Jesus best were hungry for answers.

They wondered where they should prepare the meal. They wondered what would happen next.

And as Jesus spoke of impending betrayal, each of them wrestled with a personal question:

Is it me?

But what Jesus did around a table that night meant they never had to worry about those questions again. Jesus' answer was to take bread.

He gave thanks; broke it,

And gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup
we never have to question your love for us, Great God.
Now send the Spirit into this meal and into our hearts.
Blend this food and drink with holiness.
Fuse our searching souls with your perfect friendship,
and we will become people who delight in what you have done
and joyfully wonder what you shall make of us today. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Jesus, you asked us to ask you for anything we need. So we pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

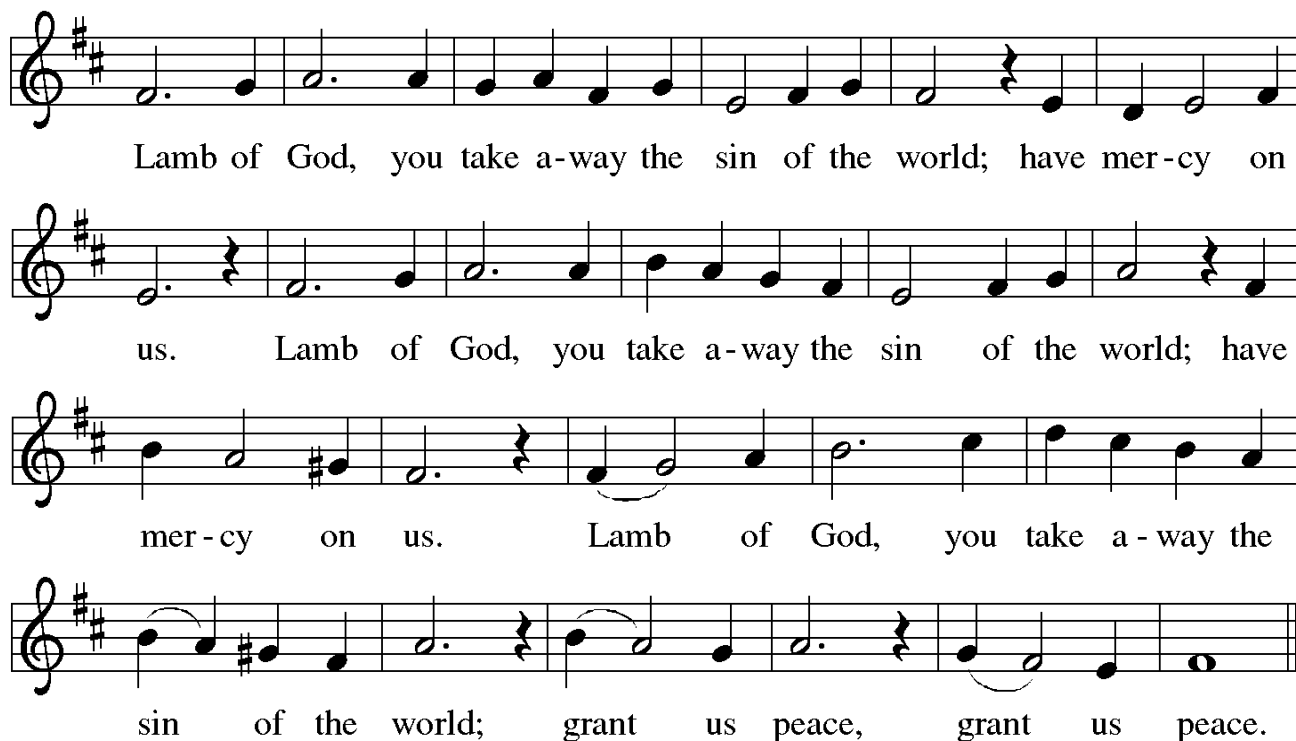
Your questions are welcome. You are welcome. God wants you at this table.

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant. If you worship through the Livestream and wish to receive communion, please reach out to one of the pastors.

The Communion:



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

Great God, Your Love Has Called Us

WOV 666

A New Commandment

WOV 664

Where Charity and Love Prevail

WOV 665

TABLE BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

Amen

LEAVING TO SERVE

SENDING HYMN

Go to Dark Gethsemane
sing sts. 1-3; hum st. 4

ELW 347

At the end of the evening service we will strip the altar.

We do not use a Benediction on this day in order to keep a sense of connection to Good Friday. Today's worship ends in silence. You are welcome to remain for silent prayer as long as you wish. When you leave, please do so in silence.

BLC Musicians

Raelynn Clare, Music Director and Organist

Dr. Jim Jefferis, Director of The Chancel Choir

Rich Towsley, Director of The Folk Group and BLC Dulcimers

Holy Week/Easter Sunday Schedule

We gather this Holy Week to follow Jesus' journey from his triumphal entry into the city to a desolate cross to an empty tomb. Share in worship with Bethlehem this Holy Week either in person or through Livestream.

April 7, Good Friday

12 – 3 pm – Private prayer and silent devotion in the Bethlehem sanctuary. (Enter through the Perrin Street lift entrance.)

12 noon - Ecumenical Way of the Cross, sponsored by Perinton Pastoral Association

7 pm – Stations of the Cross: Refugee Journeys, in-person and livestreamed

April 9, Easter Sunday

8:55 am – Festive Easter Celebration with Holy Communion, in-person and livestreamed

10:15 am - Easter Breakfast

All You Need Is Love

Jesus' command today to love one another is not about having good feelings for each other or being "nice." Jesus tells his disciples that they are to love one another "just as I have loved you." By this definition, love means compassion, mercy, and plenty of hard work. As we see in today's gospel, Jesus' love is active in service and, ultimately, sacrifice. All we need is love, but to love as Jesus loves is no easy thing.

Jesus' love is also inclusive, not meant only for the inner circle. Taken in the context of Jesus' teaching and ministry, his love, and the love he has in mind for us, is offered to all of humanity and, in fact, all of God's creation. The world will know that the church follows Jesus not only by our behavior within our own community, but also as we relate to the world. To love as Jesus loved is to cross boundaries, to stand with the lowliest among us, and to challenge the accepted ways in which the world does business.

John's is the only gospel in which Jesus does not institute the Lord's supper at his last Passover with the disciples. At John's last supper Jesus gives himself to them in a different way. His washing of his disciples' feet is an enactment of his witness to the dominion of God: the first will be last; the lowly will be lifted up; whoever loves their life will lose it. This act of self-sacrifice, one which prefigures his death on the cross, is a living example of Jesus' countercultural definition of love, one which he passes on to the twelve and to us. Washed by Jesus in our baptisms, we too are blessed with and challenged by God's love in Christ and the command to share that sacrificial love with the whole world.

Cover Image

Our cover art today was drawn by Jeff Tokarz, a member of the Bethlehem community. Jeff resumed drawing two years ago and recently created this image of Christ as he reflected on the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection. We are grateful for Jeff's openness to sharing this image for our reflection this Holy Week.

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