



# CATAWBA CONFERENCE – NC SYNOD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

## SERVICE OF WORD for Maundy Thursday, April 9, 2020

(P) Pastor; (L) Lector / Leader

**Congregation – Respond in bold portions**

### INTRODUCTION –

The group of ELCA pastors you see tonight, from the NC Synod’s Catawba Conference, are working together to bring you worship opportunities. We are honored and humbled to lead in this time. We are glad you are joining with us for worship. The pandemic of COVID-19 has so many things in flux. Part of tonight’s worship is simply about holding space for you, with you—holding space together for the breath of God, the presence of God to speak, to move among us all, and to embrace each of you. The traditional order for Maundy Thursday builds toward Holy Communion; but given the current circumstances we have ordered this worship service differently.

We invite you to take a breath or two and prepare for worship with the prelude.

### PRELUDE

### OPENING DIALOGUE (*The quotations are from Hebrews 1:1-3.*)

P We gather in the name of our one God.

**All Blessed be the Holy Trinity now and forever.**

P “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son.”

**All Jesus is “the reflection of God’s glory.”**

P He “sustains all things by his powerful word.”

**All Thanks be to God; Amen.**

### MUSICAL OFFERING: “God of Grace and God of Glory”

*We invite you to pray these words as the soloist sings.*

God of Grace and God of glory,  
on your people pour your pow’r;  
crown your ancient church’s story;  
bring its bud to glorious flow’r.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
for the facing of this hour,  
for the facing of this hour.

Save us from weak resignation  
to the evils we deplore;  
let the gift of your salvation  
be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
serving you whom we adore,  
serving you whom we adore.

GREETING

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

**All And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Holy God, source of all love, write the commandment to love upon our hearts, and through the work of the Holy Spirit empower us to love one another. Give each of us eyes to see the dignity of each person and a will to serve like that which Jesus showed as he knelt to wash his disciples' feet. During this time of crisis and isolation make your steadfast love known and deepen the bond of humanity. Through Christ Jesus who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**All Amen.**

FIRST READING: John 13:1-17; 31b-35

*(To better bear the drama of the dialog, the brackets and italicized portions will not be read aloud.)*

Narrator Now 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. <sup>2</sup>The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper <sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup>got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <sup>5</sup>Then 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. <sup>6</sup>He came to Simon Peter, *[who said to him,]*

"Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

*[Jesus answered,]*

"You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

*[<sup>8</sup> Peter said to him,]*

"You will never wash my feet."

*[Jesus answered,]*

"Unless I wash you, you have no share with me."

*[<sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him,]*

"Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"

*[<sup>10</sup> 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."

Narrator <sup>11</sup>For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

<sup>12</sup>After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them,

Jesus “Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup>You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup>So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup>For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup>Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup>If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

Narrator When he had gone out, Jesus said,

Jesus “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>If God has been glorified in him,<sup>[1]</sup> God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup>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.’ <sup>34</sup>I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

*We observe a brief silence to allow for reflection.*

#### WHAT DOES FOOT WASHING LOOK LIKE IN A PANDEMIC? A RESPONSIVE READING IN TWO VOICES

L1 Jesus took off his outer robe,  
L2 Tied a towel around himself,  
L1 Poured water into a basin,  
L2 Washed and dried his disciples’ feet.

L1 What is foot washing beyond the washing of feet?  
L2 Foot washing is an act of service.  
L1 Foot washing is an act of humility.  
L2 Foot washing is an act of mercy.  
L1 Foot washing is an act of kindness.  
L2 Foot washing is an act of love.

L1 Recognizing the faith active in love  
the symbolism,  
and sacrament-like quality of foot washing,  
and recognizing that we are in the midst of a pandemic,

L2 we invite you to prayerfully seek out ways to enact the heart of foot washing  
among family, friends, and neighbors.

- L1 Defining family seems clear for many;  
L2 but, like the man in Scripture, we too often ask: “Who is my neighbor?”
- L1 My family with whom I stay at home?  
L2 Yes, and...
- L1 The widow down the street?  
L2 Yes, and...
- L1 The paramedics, nurses, doctors working the front lines of crisis  
in streets, in Emergency Rooms, in make-shift hospitals?  
L2 Yes, and...
- L1 The under-served population of homeless men, women, veterans, families  
made especially vulnerable because they have no place to hunker down and  
lay their head?  
L2 Yes, and...
- L1 Children with asthma, autoimmune disorders, cancer?  
L2 Yes, and those who cannot shop, cook, shelter in place,  
those who keep watch at night, stock the shelves, pick up our trash.
- L1 Yes, and more...
- L2 Again, we ask you to prayerfully consider what the heart of foot washing might  
look like in a time of pandemic:
- L1 Giving blood, cutting grass for a sick neighbor, shopping for someone at high risk;  
washing hands, playing games, sharing resources; texting a word of hope and peace.  
These are but a few possibilities;
- L2 Foot washing takes the basin, the towel, and kneels.  
L1 Today, this week, this month there are opportunities to do this;  
L2 we shelter at home as much as we can—  
L1 as act of service, as an act of love,  
L2 it is at the humble heart of foot washing.

MUSICAL OFFERING: “Love Consecrates the Humblest Act”

*We invite you to close your eyes if you choose, listen to the music and lyrics and receive this gift.*

SECOND READING: Mark 14:22-42

- L1 While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body."<sup>23</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it.<sup>24</sup> He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."<sup>25</sup> Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."
- L2 <sup>26</sup>When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>27</sup>And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'<sup>28</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."<sup>29</sup> Peter said to him, "Even though all become deserters, I will not."<sup>30</sup> Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times."<sup>31</sup> But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same.
- L3 <sup>32</sup>They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."<sup>33</sup> He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated.<sup>34</sup> And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake."<sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.<sup>36</sup> He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want."<sup>37</sup> He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?<sup>38</sup> Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."<sup>39</sup> And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.<sup>40</sup> And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him.<sup>41</sup> He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.<sup>42</sup> Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

HOMILY: "Prayer as Communion with Jesus"

MUSICAL OFFERING: "Go to Dark Gethsemane"

*We invite you to prayerfully listen or sing along at home if you wish.*

1 Go to dark Gethsemane,  
all who feel the temper's pow'r;  
your Redeemer's conflict see.  
Watch with him one bitter hour;  
turn not from his griefs away;  
learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

2 Follow to the judgment hall,  
view the Lord of life arraigned;  
oh, the wormwood and the gall!  
Oh, the pangs his soul sustained!  
Shun not suff'ring, shame, or loss;  
learn from him to bear the cross.

3 Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb;  
there, adoring at his feet,  
mark the miracle of time,  
God's own sacrifice complete.  
"It is finished!" hear him cry;  
learn from Jesus Christ to die.

4 Early hasten to the tomb  
where they laid his breathless clay:  
all is solitude and gloom.  
Who has taken him away?  
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes.  
Savior, teach us so to rise.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, COMMUNAL SILENCE, HOLDING SPACE TOGETHER

P Psalm 46:10 is an ongoing invitation to be still and know God. Psalm 131 speaks of calming and quieting our souls. As we turn our attention to God through prayer, we invite you to a calming stillness. Leaders will come one by one to the microphone and name a concern—the church, the world, the nation, and so on. Then we will hold space, silence, together in God’s calming quiet. During the silences, you are invited pray what is in you related to the category. Let the inner noise pass by; let the outer noise pass by. After a silence, the leader will then conclude the time with a spoken petition. The prayer categories are in your bulletin if it helps you; but you’re encouraged to relax into this time. Petitions end, “Lord, in your mercy,” and you’re invited to respond aloud: “**hear our prayer.**”

Sit comfortably, close your eyes if you like, and take a few deep breaths.

P Let us pray for church and her various ministries...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and that the unity we have in Christ Jesus may be more visible in these isolating times. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for bishops, pastors, deacons, theologians, ethicists, and all the baptized...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and that we all may boldly, compassionately, proclaim the gospel in word and deed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for all of God’s creation...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and that we each may be good stewards of the earth and the gifts before us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for peace and justice in the world...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and for war-torn places, those demeaned by injustice, those oppressed by poverty, prejudice, hate, greed, slavery, human trafficking, and false imprisonment. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for the nations and those in authority around the world...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and that people in every land will work for the common good of humanity across our political divides. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for the sick, especially those dealing with COVID-19, those struggling with chronic health issues, and those struggling with mental health concerns...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and for those families waiting to bury loved ones, and those near death.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for the doctors, nurses, first responders, epidemiologists, pharmacists, for all medical staff and health care workers, the scientists and researchers dealing with the new coronavirus...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and that they may each have the personal protective equipment and soon be safely returned to their families and loved ones. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray in gratitude for the gift of faith, hope, love...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and may these virtues abide in us, flow through us, until the fullness of your salvation is revealed throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Let us pray for our enemies and ourselves...

*Brief silence to pray what is in you.*

...and may we find ways to live into forgiveness, even as we await the fullness of reconciliation and resurrection. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P Lastly, let us pray together the prayer Jesus taught.

**All Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed by 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.**

## STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

*Psalm 22 is sung by the Cantor(s) as the altar is stripped, a symbolic reminder of the stripping of Jesus.*

Verse 1: All who see me deride me;  
they curl their lips, they toss their heads:  
"He trusted in the LORD, let him save him;  
let him release him, for in him he delights."

Verse 2: For dogs have surrounded me;  
a band of the wicked besets me.  
They tear holes in my hands and my feet;  
I can count every one of my bones.

Verse 3: They divide my clothing among them,  
they cast lots for my robe.  
But you, O LORD, do they stay afar off;  
my strength, make me haste to help me!

Verse 4: I will tell of your name to my kin,  
I will praise you in the midst of the assembly;  
You who fear the LORD, give him praise;  
all descendants of Jacob, give him glory;  
revere him, all descendants of Israel.

*The worship concludes in silence, and continues Friday evening.*

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