

Ellington Congregational Church, UCC
ORDER OF VIRTUAL WORSHIP

April 1, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Our Church Mission Statement

*To be a dynamic and nurturing community
called by God's grace
to know Christ and make Him known
through worship, love, and service.*

Adopted September 15, 2019



*As we remember the last events of our Lord's life, let us observe
a discipline of holy silence.*

PREPARATORY NOTES

MAUNDY is the English form of the Latin word meaning *commandment*. Jesus' new commandment to "love one another even as I have loved you" is the focus of Maundy Thursday. This love is demonstrated in Jesus' example of servanthood and the gift of Jesus' self in Holy Communion. The theme of servanthood is included in the observance of Maundy Thursday through a service of footwashing. The Order for Tenebrae follows the conclusion of a Maundy Thursday service remembering Jesus' last supper.

TENEBRAE is the Latin term for *shadows*. It is a service of lessons followed by the gradual extinguishing of lights. The moment of total darkness recalls the days Christ was in the tomb. The relighting of the Christ candle is prophetic of Easter, which is soon to dawn.

The service of Tenebrae is *not* a reenactment of the Last Supper; the readers do not represent Christ and his disciples. The readings of the Tenebrae service recall the events of Christ's last days: the Last Supper, the betrayal, the arrest, Christ's suffering, the trial, Christ's death, Christ's burial, and the destitution of the disciples. Originally celebrated over the course of three evenings, here these events are combined into one ceremony.



THE APPROACH

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In remembrance, we gather:

People: to be with the One who teaches us the meaning of faithfulness.

Leader: In remembrance, we worship:

People: lifting our voices to the One who calls us to love one another.

Leader: In remembrance, we feast:

People: breaking the Bread which makes us whole, drinking the Cup which fills us with grace.

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #200

What Wondrous Love Is This

1 *What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!*

What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss

*to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!*

*3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb I will sing!
To God and to the Lamb, who is the great "I AM,"
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing!*

Appalachian folk hymn // CCLI #1326969

UNISON PRAYER

Creator and Loving God, you kneel to wash our feet, yet we are reluctant for you to see all the places we have gone in our attempts to escape you. You would bathe us in the warm, living waters of your love though we splash and play in the puddles of temptation. We have received all the gifts you have to offer, yet we are tempted to think they are only for us, rather than sharing them. Forgive us, Holy One, and have mercy on us. What can we give you for all your wonderful graciousness towards us? As you have broken your heart for us, may we open ours in service to others. As you have given your life for us, may we offer ours to bring healing to the world. As you have called us together around your Table, may we go forth to feed a world hungry, not only for food, but for that Spirit which brings peace and reconciliation. This we pray as servants of Jesus Christ, who came to serve us in life, in death, in resurrection hope.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

Pastor: On this holiest of nights, we have received the good news: God has come in Christ Jesus, to fill us with hope and peace, to bathe us in grace and mercy and forgiveness. Amen.

JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET

GOSPEL LESSON

John 13:1-17

13 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. ² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ 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. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus 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." ¹² After 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.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE UPPER ROOM

SONG FOR REFLECTION

Nora Chapman ~ Solo

Lamb of God

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

An Invitation to Communion

Pastor: Whenever we gather together for this sacrament, we remember that Jesus invited folks to share a meal with him as part of his ministry, not just at the Last Supper. So we have asked you who are participating in this evenings special worship to prepare your own bread and cup—so that Jesus can share this meal with you and all of us. If you have not already done so, please take a moment to find a slice of bread or pastry or croissant or roll, and put it on a kitchen plate, and get a glass, mug, or cup of juice or water or wine or tea.

Jesus used the parable of a great banquet to which all people are invited in order to talk about what the “kin-dom” of God, the family of God, looks like. He said, “Go to the highways and back alleys and *urge* people to come in so that my house will be filled.” He often ate with the most unlikely guests at his mealtimes, which confounded the disciples and irritated, no angered some of the religious leaders of his day. By doing this, he was encouraging a deep love and connection beyond social norms. He knew that we humans need connection and inclusion. Jesus comforts us, saying “you have a place at the table” and Jesus challenges us to make sure we are doing the same—that all people know they are welcome in our hearts, in our homes, in our churches—even if we can’t physically be with each other right now.

Jesus is no longer physically on earth, yet every time we gather around a table and we call him to mind, he is present with us in Spirit. And so too, our loved ones are with us. Let this be a comfort to us tonight.

Blessings and prayers at the table are part of our Judeo-Christian heritage. Indeed, Jesus adapted his Jewish ritual blessing spoken before and after meals. He asked us to remember him whenever we break bread and raise a cup in thanksgiving.

So we will now bless the food and drink which we are about to share together. I invite you to repeat after me the following prayer, saying it aloud where ever you are gathered:

Gracious and Loving God...

Gracious and Loving God...

We gather in your name...

invited by Jesus...

bound together with your Spirit...

in union with each other...

Feed our bodies and our spirits...

with your loving presence...

so that we can be your love for others...

Now I ask you to lift up the bread as a gesture of offering to God.

And repeat after me:

Bless this food...

and break open our hearts...

Now I ask you to lift up the cup or mug as a gesture of offering to God. And repeat after me:

Bless this drink...

and pour out your love...

Amen...

Now as a prayer of gratitude to God, I invite you to imagine what extravagant love looks like as you reach across the social distance to loved ones, to friends, and even acquaintances or strangers. On this holiest of nights, let us be grateful for God's gifts to us and the life of Jesus in our lives to share God's love with everyone.

© www.worshipdesignstudio.com/wds

TENEBRAE -THE GATHERING DARKNESS

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #195

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

*1 When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.*

*3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

Isaac Watts, 1707; Lowell Mason, 1824 // CCLI #1326969

THE SHADOW OF BETRAYAL

Matthew 26:20-25

THE SHADOW OF DESERTION

Matthew 26:31-35

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #210

Ah, Holy Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended

*1 Ah, holy Jesus, how have thou offended,
that mortal judgment hath on thee descended?
By foes derided, by the world rejected, O most afflicted!*

THE AGONY OF SOUL

Luke 22:39-44

THE UNSHARED VIGIL

Mark 14:32-41

*2 Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee; I crucified thee.*

FATHER, THE HOUR IS COME

John 17:1-6

“THAT THEY MAY BE ONE”

John 17:15-22

*3 For me, kind Jesus, was thy incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion, for my salvation.*

THE ARREST AT THE GATES

John 18:1-5

THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

Mark 15:16-20

*4 Therefore, dear Jesus, since I cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will ever pray thee,
think on thy pity and thy love unswerving, not my deserving.*

Johann Heerman, 1630; tr. Robert S. Bridges, 1899, alt.; Johann Crüger, 1640 // CCLI #1326969

THE LIGHT OF GOD REJECTED

John 1:1-4, 14, 10, 12, 3:19

SILENCE

Patti Hany ~ Solo

Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?



Our service is now concluded, we invite you to sit in prayerful
silence contemplating the love of God.



This evening's readers are:

David Feindel

Matthew Mangold

Rev. Joanne Myer

Jane Scordato

Joann Scott

Alice Spowles

Basil Stone

Beth Tautkus

Brian Wright



Please participate from your home in the prayer vigil tomorrow
beginning at Noon through Sunday morning by spending an hour
in prayerful contemplation of Jesus self-giving love.

***Celebrate Easter Morning With Your
Church Family!***

***Friends and Extended Family Are Always
Welcome...***

Easter Sunday Virtual Service

April 4th ~ 10:00 a.m.