



Bloom in the Desert Ministries

United Church of Christ

Palm Springs, California

Maundy Thursday

March 28, 2024

6:30pm PDT

*Tonight's service remembers gifts of Jesus at his last supper.*

## **Welcome and Announcements**

Rev. Jeff Munnis

## **Prelude**

“Surely, the Presence of the Lord is in This Place” Julie Adams, piano  
Wolf/Hayes

## **Opening Prayer**

Ray Stimson

God is with you!

**And also with you!**

Let us pray!

**Dear God of Holy Week and every week, we thank you for Jesus' courage to face a coalition of empire rulers and fearful religious leaders. We thank you for Jesus' commitment to justice, as evidenced in his anti-imperial Palm Sunday procession into Jerusalem, knowing it might lead to his arrest and death. We thank you for Bloom in the Desert Ministries United Church of Christ, and for our congregational life together, as we seek to follow Jesus' path of courage, command to love, and justice teachings. Tonight, we celebrate Jesus' Holy Thursday gifts to us, which sustain us on our journey. Help us to welcome, receive, and cherish these gifts, as they help deepen our faith, strengthen our welcome, and witness for your love. We pray in the strong name of Jesus. Amen.**

## Hymn

### Somos pueblo que camina (We Are People on a Journey)

340

*"Misa Popular Nicaragüense," 20th century; alt.  
English version, Carolyn Jennings, 1993*

*John 6:32-35*

1 So-mos pue-blo que ca - mi - na por la sen - da del do - lor.  
2 Los hu - mil-des y los po - bres in - vi - ta - dos son de Dios.  
1 We are peo-ple on a jour - ney; pain is with us all the way.  
2 God has sent the in - vi - ta - tion to the hum-ble and the poor.

*Estrillo (Refrain)*

A - cu - da-mos ju - bi - lo - sos a la san - ta co - mu - ni - ón.  
Joy - ful - ly we come to - geth - er at the ho - ly feast of God.

## The Gift of Mutual Service - Jesus Washes the Feet of his Disciples.

### Gospel Reading

Larry Metcalf

John 13:1-8,12-17

Just before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that the time had come to leave this world to go to Abba God. Having loved these dear companions, Jesus continued to love them right to the end. It was suppertime. The Devil by now had Judas Iscariot, firmly in hand, all set for the betrayal.

Jesus knew that Abba God had put him in complete charge of everything, that he came from God and was on his way back to God. So Jesus got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and put on an apron. Then Jesus poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with his apron. When he got to Simon Peter, Peter said, "Lord, *you wash my feet?*"

Jesus answered, "You don't understand now what I'm doing, but it will be clear enough to you later."

Peter persisted, "You're not going to wash my feet—ever!"

Jesus said, "If I don't wash you, you can't be part of what I'm doing."

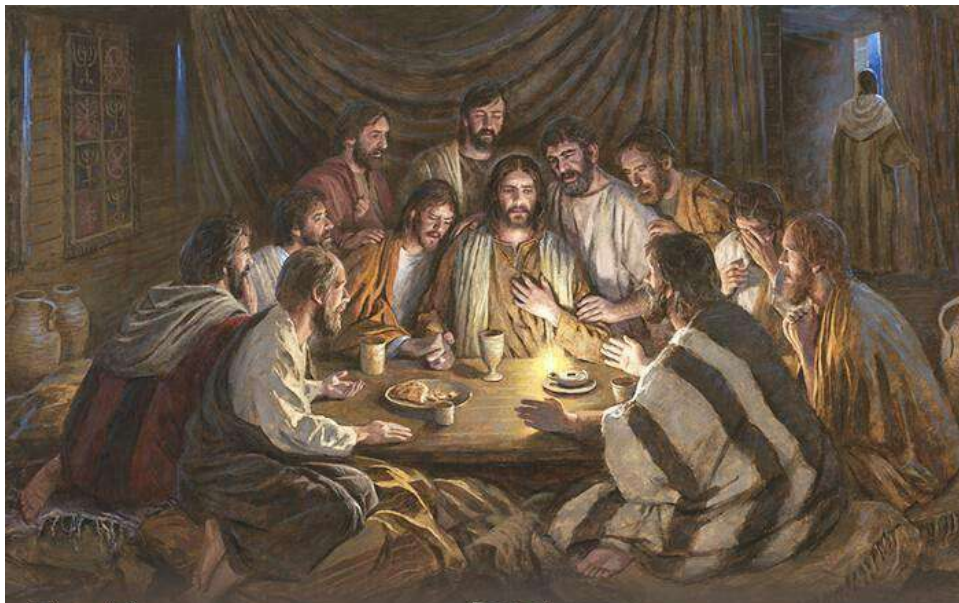
"Lord!" said Peter. "Not only my feet, then. Wash my hands! Wash my head!"

Jesus said, "If you've had a bath in the morning, you only need your feet washed now and you're clean from head to toe. My concern, you understand, is holiness, not hygiene. So now you're clean. But not every one of you." (He knew who was betraying him. That's why he said, "Not every one of you.") After he had finished washing their feet, he took his robe, put it back on, and went back to his place at the table.

Then Jesus said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so. That is what I am. So, if I, the Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other's feet. I've laid down a pattern for you. What I've done, you do. I'm only pointing out the obvious. A servant is not ranked above the boss; an employee doesn't give orders to the employer. If you understand what I'm telling you, act like it—and live a blessed life.

~The Message Translation

### **Personal Meditation on Serving Each Other.**



## MAUNDY THURSDAY

"I give you a new commandment:  
Love one another as I have loved you."

Hymn

Words of Institution in Song

343

Jesus Took the Bread

Matt. 26:26-28; Luke 9:16; 22:19; 24:30

Ruth Duck, 1982

Unison

1 Je - sus took the bread, dai - ly gift of God,  
 2 Je - sus blessed the bread, thanked the God of grace,  
 3 Je - sus broke the bread; then he poured the wine.  
 4 Je - sus gives the bread at our ta - ble still,

formed of wheat and sweat and toil, sun, rain, and sod.  
 thanked the One who made all worlds, all time, all space.  
 Bro - ken bod - y, life poured out, God gives as sign.  
 gives the cup to those who seek God's lov - ing will.

In our hands we take gifts of bread and wine,  
 Bless - ing, hon - or, praise, all to God be - long.  
 Weak, a - fraid, and lost: that is when we're healed.  
 Let us go in peace; let us free - ly give,

gath - ered from the fields of earth, signs of love di - vine.  
 Let us lift our hearts to God in a thank - ful song.  
 In our hu - man bro - ken - ness: there God is re - vealed.  
 shar - ing love with all the world dai - ly as we live.

Ruth Duck wrote this hymn emphasizing the actions of communion—taking, blessing, breaking, and giving the bread—following a summer study of liturgy at the University of Notre Dame. It was first used at New Hope United Church of Christ in Milwaukee.

Tune: NEW HOPE 10.11.10.12.  
 Ruth Duck, 1982  
 Arr. Randall Sensmeier, 1982

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# The Gift of A New Commandment, which is the “Maundy” in Maundy Thursday.

## Gospel Reading

Bill Wallace

John 13:33-35, 15:9-17

“Children, I am with you for only a short time longer. You are going to look high and low for me. But just as I told the Jewish leaders, I’m telling you: ‘Where I go, you are not able to come.’”

“Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other.”

“I’ve loved you the way Abba God has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you’ll remain intimately at home in my love. That’s what I’ve done—kept Abba God’s commands and made myself at home in God’s love.

“I’ve told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: **Love one another the way I loved you.**

This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends. You are my friends when you do the things, I command you. I’m no longer calling you servants because servants don’t understand what their employer is thinking and planning. No, I’ve named you friends because I’ve let you in on everything I’ve heard from Abba God.

“You didn’t choose me, remember; I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won’t spoil. As fruit bearers, whatever you ask Abba God in relation to me, God gives you.

“But remember the root command: Love one another.”

~The Message Translation

## Personal Meditation on the New Commandment.

## Communion Music

Julie Adams, piano

“As the Deer” Nystrom/House, “In the Garden” Miles/House

LOVE   
one  
another  
AS I HAVE  
loved  
 you  
John 13:34

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# The Gift of the Holy Communion - A Shared Meal.

## Anthem/Hymn

330

### Let Us Break Bread Together

*Acts 2:42*

*African-American spiritual*

1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;  
\* 2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;  
3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;

let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.

*Refrain*

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing sun,



## Gospel Reading

Ray Stimson

Luke 22:7-10,13-26b

The Day of Unleavened Bread came, the day the Passover lamb was to be butchered. Jesus sent Peter and John off, saying, “Go prepare the Passover for us so we can eat it together.”

They said, “Where do you want us to do this?”

He said, “Keep your eyes open as you enter the city. A man carrying a water jug will meet you. Follow him home. Then speak with the owner of the house: The Teacher wants to know, ‘Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?’ He will show you a spacious second-story room, swept and ready. Prepare the meal there.”

They left, found everything just as he told them, and prepared the Passover meal.

When it was time, he sat down, all the apostles with him, and said, “You’ve no idea how much I have looked forward to eating this Passover meal with you before I enter my time of suffering. It’s the last one I’ll eat until we all eat it together in the kingdom of God.”



Taking the cup, he blessed it, then said, “Take this and pass it among you. As for me, I’ll not drink wine again until the reign, the Kin-dom of God arrives.” Taking bread, he blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, given for you. Eat it in my memory.”

He did the same with the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant written in my blood, blood poured out for you.

“Do you realize that the hand of the one who is betraying me is at this moment at this table? It’s true that the Chosen One is going down a path already marked out—no surprises there. But for the one who betrays, turns traitor to the Chosen One, this is doomsday.”

They immediately became suspicious of each other and began quizzing one another, wondering who might be about to do this.

Within minutes they were bickering over who of them would end up the greatest. But Jesus intervened: “Kings like to throw their weight around and people in authority like to give themselves fancy titles. It’s not going to be that way with you. Let the senior among you become like the junior; let the leader act the part of the servant.”

~The Message Translation

## Personal Meditation on the Gift of Holy Communion.

# Holy Communion

## Contextualizing the Invitation and Words of Institution

Commentary Words of Institution written by the Rev. Gregory Dell (1945-2016)

Commissioning Pastor for Rev. Kev and Mike's "Ministry to the West"

At Broadway United Methodist Church, Chicago, Illinois, June 16, 2002

This liturgy was used in Bloom's first Maundy Thursday Service, April 2003, and occasionally thereafter.

### **Introduction**

Stelli Munnis: There is no more central act of worship for Christians than the Eucharist or Holy Communion. It has been part of the life of faith communities from nearly the very beginning of Christianity. Its interpretation is as varied as the movements and cultures of the faith. What is offered below is a contribution to that variety. It is an approximation of the invitation and Words of Institution that (The Rev. Greg Dell used) used and some have found meaningful. Its setting is any group of Christians celebrating the full inclusion of God's table.

### **The Invitation**

Larry Metcalf: Let's be clear. It is Christ who is host at this table. It is God who provides the elements. When we understand that truth we understand who is to be included at this meal. Any child of God – anyone who has known the power of brokenness and the hope of new life – that person is invited. No church or authority dare deny access to one of God's children. Every expression of the diverse image of God created in humanity – every age, every size, every color, every gender, every sexual orientation is welcome here. You don't qualify because you understand. Who really understands this mystery? You qualify because you choose to respond not because you belong to a particular church or have a particular understanding. Come to the feast!

### **The Words of Institution**

Bill Wallace: Even from the scriptural accounts it doesn't seem like Jesus wanted to start a new religious ritual when he first lifted the bread and cup. It's more like he wanted to help his friends understand something about what was going to happen the next day, something about life beyond that next day, something about all of life, and something about God.

Bob Patnode: He lifted the bread – that normal, most basic of foods – he held it up in order that all those sisters and brothers who had followed him off and on for the three years of his ministry might see. He wanted them to see the beauty of the bread. Bread in its wholeness is beautiful. It is an expression of the harmony of a wonderfully diverse creation coming together like a symphony. It is sunlight and rain, seed and soil, patience, impatience, human sweat and toil, an oven's searing heat, and nature's cooling breezes – all working, playing together. It is a wonder.

Stelli Munnis: And then he broke it. He tore it apart and said, "This is the way it is, the way it has been, the way it will be. The beauty that God creates is broken. It will be broken on that cross tomorrow, but it is broken again and again in your lives and in history. Every injustice, every act of bigotry, every rampaging disease, every famine, every abuse of human life or creation's balance is the brokenness of my body, this loaf, all of the cosmos, again and again."



And then he said, "Take and eat." That's right, eat. Know that you can eat, you can be fed, even when you're broken, even when the world is broken. God sets it up that way. You're not alone, not even there. You don't need to run from the brokenness; you can enter it, you can live even there. Take, receive, eat.

Larry Metcalf: We hold that brokenness, weep over it, rage at it. And even as we do, Jesus lifts the cup. And he says, "This is the way it can be. This is the cup of the new covenant, a new promise. It is my very life energy – my blood, and it is poured out for you! Why? Because God won't let the brokenness have the last word. The wild intoxicating cup of life has the last word: resurrection not crucifixion. See how, even now – as you dip the jagged edges of that morsel of bread into the cup – the healing begins. The promise surrounds and begins the transformation of the wounds. Take and drink this cup poured out for you and for many for the healing of the brokenness – which is what the forgiveness of sin is really all about."

Stelli Munnis: The statistical odds aren't with the cup, they're with the brokenness. But be assured, God is with the cup. And every small victory for justice, every new birth of hope against the odds, every healing moment, is a declaration that God won't leave it alone – won't leave us alone – until love and life get the victory.

Rev. Jeff Munnis: So, now, come to the banquet, joining with all who sing on earth and in our Cloud of Witnesses!

(All sing)

*Text and music: Anon., Argentina*

C   G7   C   F   C

San - to, san - to, san - to, mi cor - a - zón te a - do - ra! Mi  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you! My

F   C   Am   F   G7   C

cor - a - zón te sa - be de - cir: san - to e - res Dios.  
heart is glad to say the words: you are ho - ly, God.

### **The Euciclesis – Invocation of the Holy Spirit**

Rev. Jeff Munnis: Pour out your Spirit on us and on these gifts of grain and grape, both at this table and at the tables of those participating with us in their homes, that in this sharing we may recognize the risen Christ in this meal, in one another and in all creation. This offering of praise and thanksgiving is an offering of us to you. Hasten the day when the prophets' dreams come to pass: when justice rolls down like waters and nations no longer threaten each other, neither shall they learn war any more.

### **Communion Invitation and Sharing**

These are the gifts of God for the people of God presented both here and in your homes. You need not be a member of this congregation or any community of faith to join us at the table. For we believe that Christ is the host, Christ sets the table, and Christ welcomes all. Let us come, for God's table is ready. The bread of heaven! The cup of salvation!

**For everyone born, a place at the table!**

*(While those at home partake of the bread and cup they have prepared, you are welcome to come forward, either to take a sealed cup with wafer or to take a piece of bread and dip it into the cup).*

### **Communion Music**

Julie Adams, piano

"As the Deer" Nystrom/House, "In the Garden" Miles/House

### **Prayer after Communion**

Rev. Jeff Munnis

#### **A Modern Prayer of Jesus**

**Good caring presence within us, around us, and above us;**

**Hold us in a sense of mystery and wonder.**

**Let the fullness of your goodness be within us and around us;**

**Let all the world know your ways of caring and generosity.**

**May we find we have all we need to meet each day without undue anxiety.**

**Overlook our many stupidities and help us to release everyone from their stupidities.**

**May we all know that we are accepted.**

**Strengthen us that we will reach out to the best, always with the faith to rise above the ugly realities of our existence.**

**And we celebrate the gifts you have given us – the rich kin-dom of life's possibilities, the power to do good and the triumphs of good and the moments when we have seen the glory and wonder of everything.**

**You are life's richness.**

**You are life's power.**

**You are life's ultimate meaning –Amen.**

~Francis Macnab in "The Historical Jesus Goes to Church", adapted

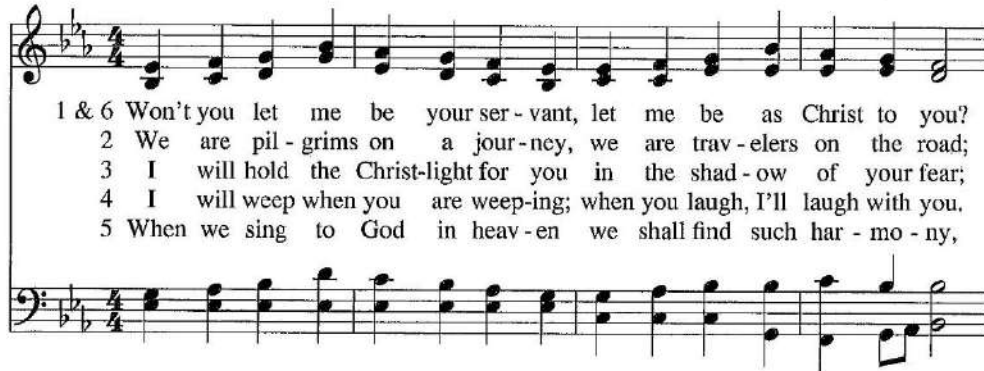
# Hymn

## Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?

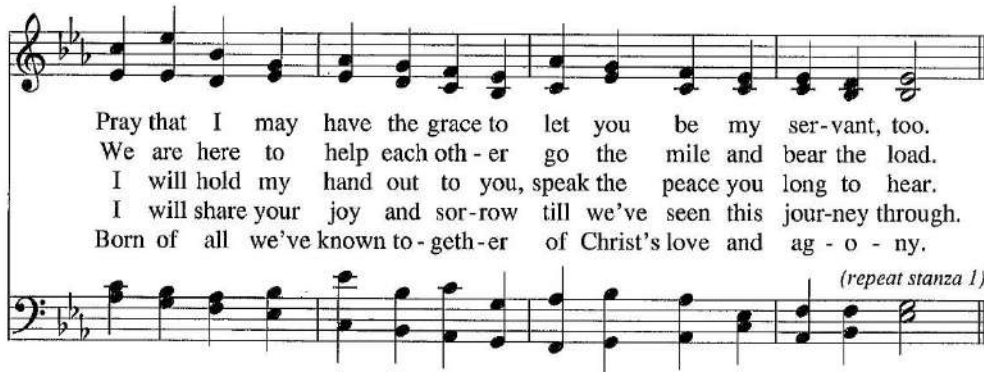
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*Richard Gillard, 1977; alt.*

*Rom. 12:9-18; Col. 1:24-29*



1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as Christ to you?  
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ncy, we are trav - elers on the road;  
3 I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shad - ow of your fear;  
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you,  
5 When we sing to God in heav - en we shall find such har - mo - ny,



Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser - vant, too.  
We are here to help each oth - er go the mile and bear the load.  
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.  
I will share your joy and sor - row till we've seen this jour - ney through.  
Born of all we've known to - geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.

*(repeat stanza 1)*

*Richard Gillard was born in England and later made his home in New Zealand. Largely self-taught, Gillard has described his musical style as "folk." This is the best known of his many songs in the United States.*

Tune: SERVANT SONG 8.7.8.7.  
Richard Gillard, 1977  
Arr. Betty Carr Pulkingham, 1977; adapt.

## **Benediction**

Rev. Jeff Munnis

## **Mutual Blessing**

May God, who formed us from the dust of stars and earth, bless and keep you in this life and the next.

May Jesus Christ, the living Word of God, our sibling, savior, and friend walk with you as you continue his work of justice and peace all your days.

May the Holy Spirit, the Wisdom of God, empower, lead, and guide you in the path of love for God, neighbor, and self.

What does God need from you?

**Simply to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with our god.**

(Micah 6:8)

My dear friends in faith, will you go from here and be people of God in Christ's name?

**We will.**

## **Passing of the Peace**

## **Postlude**

"Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross"

Julie Adams, piano

*Thanks to all who volunteered their help for this service.*

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# **Easter Services**

**March 31, 2024**

## **Easter Sunrise Service**

**6:15am PDT**

**Demuth Community Center**

## **Easter Celebration Service**

**10am PDT**

**Demuth Community Center**

and on Facebook Live