

Presbyterians Together for Maundy Thursday Communion
17 April 2025 ~ 7 pm ~ at Knox Presbyterian Church
A Service of Washing, Sharing and Shadows

WELCOME and LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Welcome to this service of washing, sharing and shadows. We are gathered on the traditional and unceded territory of the ləkʷəŋən and the WSÁNEĆ. Whenever we pray, reflect, and celebrate in this place, we do so as guests lamenting past and present injustices, asking the God of love and justice to lead us along paths of reconciliation.

On the Thursday before Good Friday we gather to remember the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples. In that meal he took two elements – bread and wine – and identified himself in them. With these two new elements a new covenant – a new promise – is made between Jesus and his friends – between us and God.

We call this celebration Maundy Thursday because maundy means commandment.

This is also often referred to as a Tenebrae Service. The word Tenebrae is Latin for shadows. Together, on this night, we remember the death of Jesus as we move from light to darkness. During the service the lights will be dimmed, and the sanctuary stripped of those elements that remind us of our communion with God and our friendship with one another. This is to imitate Jesus' walk through the shadows of death as we remember the night of his arrest.

There will be a sense of betrayal, abandonment and agony – and it is left unfinished, because the story isn't over until Easter Day.

CALL to WORSHIP

We have gathered tonight as disciples. Within us we have capacities like those of the twelve: to deny – to betray – to doubt... to trust – to honour – to believe.

Tonight, we sit together to share a meal with Jesus – the one we know as teacher, friend, and more – as God's own chosen one.

It is Thursday night – a time of closeness with Jesus.

We sense at the table – as never before – the cost and joys of discipleship.

This is the final night of a life – the eve of the unthinkable – the prelude of a promise.

PRAYER

Gracious God, we give thanks for your presence among us as we gather to worship this evening. Help us to come to new understandings of your love and grant us insights as we strive to focus on the ministry of Jesus. Although we sometimes feel we have been abandoned to the forces of darkness, we ask that you affirm in our lives the power that is never absent – however little we perceive it – however often we ignore it. We join in sharing the simple prayer Jesus taught to his disciples when they asked him how to pray. The words are both his and ours... **Our Father, who art in heaven – hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come – thy will be done – on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen**

SCRIPTURE **John 13: 1-17**

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. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 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. 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."

Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet."

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

Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"

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." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

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? You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than

their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

➤ *Brother, sister, let me serve you*

635

INVITATION

As the disciples were sitting back, chewing over his words, Jesus took a loaf of bread – he gave thanks to God for the bounty of the earth, broke the bread, and said this to his friends: *“Take this, and share it. This is the bread of new life. Whenever you share bread, remember me.”* Later, he took the cup, and said: *“Take this, and share it. This is the cup of the new covenant. Whenever you share wine, remember me.”*

This is the table where Jesus is host – the one who came as a servant – washing his disciples’ feet, feeding them with living bread, loving them into new life. Come to this table all who hunger and thirst.

We remember with thanksgiving the gracious acts of God throughout history and in all creation. We praise our God that we have been invited – to serve one another without pride, to forgive one another as we have been forgiven, to feast at this table as members of one household.

Around this table our voices fall silent as we pray for the Holy Spirit to come upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. Fill them and fill us with the abundance of Jesus.

– **Silence** – The one who suffered for our injustices is now present for us in this bread. The one whose body was hung on a cross is now offered to us in this cup.

Let us serve one another as we share this meal.

WASHING

Jesus set an example for us – to care for and serve one another. You are invited to come forward to have your hands washed and to wash the hands of another – to serve and be served. Remember your baptism and give thanks.

SHARING BREAD and CUP

After washing please move to the communion servers to receive Holy Communion – everyone is welcome at this table. The bread is gluten and dairy-free. You may choose either juice or wine. Please consume the elements as you receive them.

Don’t feel the need to rush. If you are not able to come forward, we will come to offer handwashing and communion to you in the pews.

- *Jesus, remember me*
- *Holy, holy, holy*
- *Eat this bread*

206

303

527

OFFERING and PRAYER (*Loose offering tonight supports the relief work of PWS&D*)

On this holy night, O God, your good gifts catch in our throat – the bread tastes of exile, the wine of betrayal. And, yet, you love us! And, yet, you call us to be the Body of Christ! And, yet, you trust us to wash feet and turn tables. We bring our offering knowing that you ask us to do the work of Christ. – The offering is received –

O God, you come near to us as the taste of bread in our mouth – the coursing of blood through our bodies – the moving of holy imagination that dwells within our spirits. May your loving closeness enable us to be generous and helpful of heart and hand. Accept our gifts we pray, offered in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen

SCRIPTURE **John 13: 31b-35**

...Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 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.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

- *What wondrous love is this*

242

SHADOWS

Mark 14:32-42

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 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. 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. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

Banners are removed. Balcony and side lights extinguished.

Matthew 26:69-75

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Handwashing / Communion elements removed. Back floor lights extinguished.

John 18:33-38a

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him.

Pulpit fall, brass Cross, cloth and offering removed. Remaining floor lights extinguished.

Matthew 27:20-26

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do

with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Candles and back tablecloth removed. Piano closed and cross light extinguished. –

Mark 15:16-20

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Lectern Bible removed and platform light extinguished.

Thank you for participating in tonight's service.

When you are ready, please depart in silence.

May you pass through Good Friday full of reflection & courage.

The service is 10:30 am tomorrow at St. Andrew's.

Come with joy to Easter Worship full of hope and joy!

10:00am Knox / 10:30am St. Andrew's / 11:00am Trinity