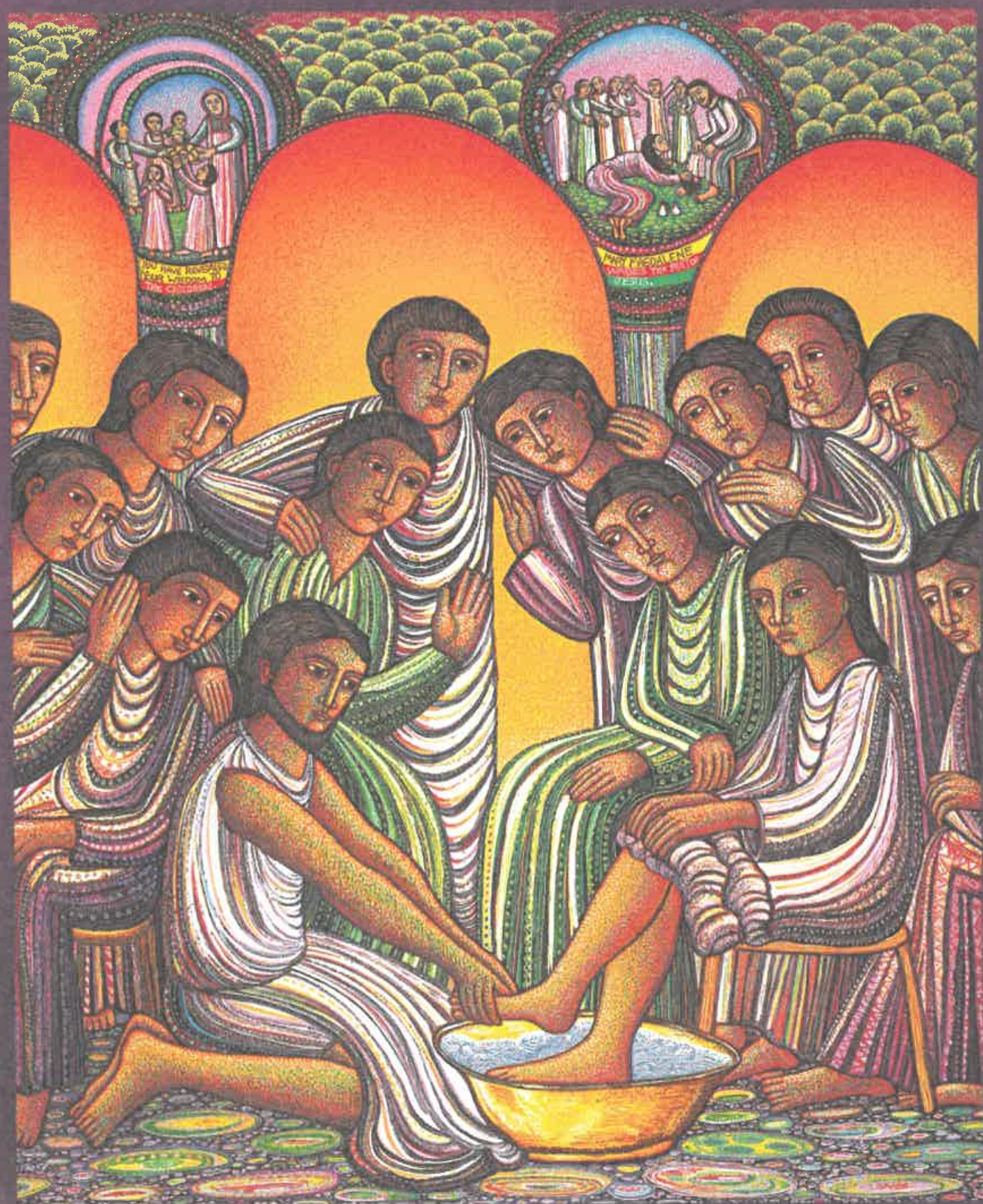


He loved them to the end

JOHN 13:1



Maundy Thursday Worship with Holy Communion

April 17, 2025

The name of this service is derived from the Latin word:
“Maundatum” which means “Commandment”.

We remember Jesus’ giving his disciples a new
commandment on the eve of his betrayal and arrest:

“Love one another as I have loved you.”

Prelude

Gary Roberts

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship / Call to the Body

We bring our bodies into the worship of God.

You may do so standing or seated,

by listening to your heartbeat or noticing the rise and fall
of your abdomen with each breath.

A call to worship is a call to presence.

We long to *be* fully present here,

and to feel God’s presence here.

Notice the space around us, the way it looks,
smells, and sounds.

**With all our senses, we recognize a sacred space
and our belonging in it.**

We gather as good creation, wonderfully made.

**We join our bodies into one body as we remember the
life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

Opening Ritual

In a few minutes, we'll hear the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet on the night of his betrayal and arrest. It is a story of deep intimacy and sacred connection.

It is also a story about human resistance to God's grace and our discomfort with the ways that Jesus demands the disruption of hierarchies.

In this story, Simon Peter first objects to Jesus's plan to wash his feet.

Jesus does not rebuke him, but he does insist, for he knows what is to come.

As we prepare to lay down our burdens before God in confession, we place our trust in God's desire to know us and be with us.

As we enter into the sacred story of John's gospel, let us take a few moments to notice our feet.

Take off your shoes if you wish.

Wiggle your toes.

Plant your feet firmly on the ground.

As you experience these sensations, consider the wonder of God, who meets us not only from on high but also kneeling at our feet.

*As we hear the music playing, open your heart to God's Spirit by noticing the gift of our feet and how Jesus chose them as a way to convey the kind of love we should have for others—
A humble, caring, serving and compassionate love.*

Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Forgiveness

Confession returns us to our bodies by reminding us that God claims us, exactly as we are.

Through repentance, we name that which we have left undone and ask for the help of God and our community to seek repair, restoration, and renewal.

Let us pray together our prayer of confession:

**Loving God, you pour out grace upon us exactly as we are,
but we confess we are suspicious
and react from fear of scarcity.
You invite us to take our shoes off
and receive the care our bodies need,
but we sit on our heels.
We sort bodies into worthy and unworthy ones
to mask our insecurities.
We reject and punish fat bodies,
disabled bodies,
transgender bodies,
and racialized bodies—
even when these bodies are our very own.
God, remind us that we are made in your image.
Help us learn to receive from your abundance
so we can share all that we have with others.
Let us see that the cups we longingly hold out
are already full.
May they overflow so that all will have enough!**

As he does with Peter in the foot-washing,
Jesus transforms our confusion and rejection
into joy and connection.
With God's help and mercy,
we can reciprocate abundance
with one another and with Creation.
In Jesus Christ we are loved and befriended by God.

Thanks be to God.

*Opening Hymn "What Wondrous Love Is This" Red # 666

**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?**

**When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.**

**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.**

**And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing God's love for me,
And through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
And through eternity I'll sing on.**

*Prayer of the Day

Celebrate pg. 1

First Reading Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14

Celebrate pg. 2

Psalm Psalm 116:1-2; 12-19

Celebrate pg. 2

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Celebrate pg. 3

*Hymn

"Spirit of God"

Red #800

**Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, strength to me impart,
And make me love you as I ought to love.**

**I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,
No angel visitant, no op'ning skies;
But take the dimness of my soul away.**

**Have you not bid me love you, God and King;
All, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind:
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling.
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!**

**Teach me to love you as your angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame:
The baptism of the heav'n descended dove,
My heart an altar, and your love the flame.**

*Gospel Reading John 13: 1-17, 31-35 **Celebrate pg. 3**

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. John the 14th Chapter

C: Glory to You, O God.

(The Gospel is read)

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon

Rev. James P. Lapp

*Hymn

"God, Bless the Hands" ACS (Blue) #1022

**God, bless the hands stretched out in love
through floods below and storms above;
they search and rescue, comfort, calm,
give shelter, offer healing balm.
Oh, guard them by your steadfast hand;
Reach out in love to help us stand.**

**Bring comfort to the hearts that mourn,
Left broken, emptied by the storm.
Give hope to those in deepest grief;
Empower us to bring relief.
To you, O God, we raise our hands.
Save us, we pray, from sinking sands.**

**O God, our strength and refuge sure,
our hope while storms of life endure;
Teach us to live in harmony
with earth and river, sky and sea,
preserving waters, air, and lands
as holy work for human hands.**

Remembrance of Baptism

With simple elements and simple acts,
Jesus flipped the scripts of power to bring about
new possibilities for God's love in the world.
Before his betrayal and death,
Jesus touched his followers and sealed their connection.
Jesus taught us to wash one another's feet so that we
might witness each other's goodness and be made clean.
Through the waters of baptism, God claims us as God's own
and marks the calling for our lives onto our bodies.
Together, we will remember our baptisms.
First, let us pray: God who poured forth water,
God who formed each one of us,
we give you thanks for the sacrament of Baptism.
Allow the cool drip of water on our bodies
to bring us closer to you so that we might live
as your people, with justice, kindness, and humility.
As we remember your promises to us,
renew in us a heart of compassion for others and help us
recognize your presence in all whom we meet. **Amen.**

(Music begins playing)

As we hear the music calling us, you are invited to anoint
yourself at the baptismal font. Dip your fingers in the water,
make the sign of the cross on your forehead and say, "I am
a child of God."

**“I was there to hear your borning cry,
I’ll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized
to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell.”**

**“When you heard the wonder of the Word
I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living Lord,
to whom you now belong.
If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,
I’ll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk till rising sun.”**

**“In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,
I’ll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I’ve begun.
When the evening gently closes in
and you shut your weary eyes,
I’ll be there as I have always been,
with just one more surprise.”**

**“I was there to hear your borning cry,
I’ll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized
To see your life unfold.”**

*Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father , the Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father, God from God,
Light from Light, True God from True God,
Begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven,
Was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
And became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
In accordance with the scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
And his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
Who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Prayers of the Church

Celebrate pg. 4

*Sharing the Peace

*Offering

Through the sacraments, God meets us in physical space, offering God's self to us again and again.

In a spirit of grateful response,
we offer what we have to meet the needs of
our neighbors, to serve Creation, and to glorify God.
Let us give our tithes and offerings.

(Please place your worship slips & gifts in the plates among you)

*Offertory Prayer

**Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.
Thorough your goodness you have blessed us
with these gifts:
Our selves, our time, and our possessions.
Use us, and what we have gathered,
In feeding the world with your love,
Through the one who gave himself for us,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God who took on flesh and lived among us,
we greet you in worship.

We greet you as a Creator

who made us good in our bodies;

we greet you as a Redeemer

who was perfectly divine and totally human;

we greet you as a Sustainer, an advocate,

a helper who surrounds us in all our ways & all our days.
We come in our bodies of all sizes, races, genders,
abilities, sexualities, ages, and appearances,
so that we might join with your body
as we encounter you tangibly, through bread and cup.
Through this joyful feast, you fill our spirits to overflowing.

(Please be seated)

Hymn “*Eat This Bread*” vs. 1 & 2 Red #492

REFRAIN

***Eat this bread, drink this cup,
Taste and see the goodness of God.
Bread of life, cup of love,
We rejoice in your presence***

**I will bless the Lord at all times,
Praise with heart and voice;
In my God I glory forever:
Listen and rejoice!**

REFRAIN

**Look upon the Lord, be radiant,
Never turn away.
God will save in ev’ry affliction,
Hear us when we pray.**

REFRAIN

Eucharistic Prayer

As you nourish us through this holy meal,
leave us hungry for your Kin-dom.
Leave us thirsty for the justice
that you pour out on the world.
Let us encounter the bodies around us.
Let us see you in the faces of strangers and friends,
taste you in the sourness of grapes,
hear you in the creaks of the sanctuary
and the whisper of the breeze.
Through Holy Communion,
teach us how to be for others
as you are for us:
sustaining help, loving accompaniment, eternal hope.

Help us to embrace the mystery of the sacrament
as the symbolic and literal blur together
until all that remains is your presence with us.
We do not come to the Table
with perfect understanding.
Some of us come with child-like faith;
some of us wrestle with questions and doubts;
some of us bear wounds
that make us suspicious of this ritual of faith.
With your grace we trust
the sacred possibilities that become tangible
when we eat the bread and drink from the cup.
We have hope that in doing this,
we might gain a glimpse of all that you offer to us.
We give thanks for the familiarity of rituals
and ask that we would continuously notice
the possibilities you offer in them.
Be with us as we pray the familiar prayer
that Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

Lord's Prayer

1. Holy God of ours, hear our prayer.

Keep us always in your care.

May your Kingdom come to us.

And may we learn how to trust.

2. Do your will among us now,

As we here before you bow.

Give to us but what we need,

As upon your Word we feed.

3. Forgive us for the things we have not done,

When we've failed before we've yet begun;

And may we as children of yours,

Give forgiveness in return.

**4. Keep us from the things that do you wrong,
When we're weak because we think we're strong.
Save us from our selfish desire;
Fill us with your love inspire.**

**5. Honor, greatness belong to you,
Love & peace & mercy too!
Praise to you again and again!
A-a-ahh—Amen. Amen. Amen.**

Words of Institution & Preparing the Elements

Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed,
took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks,
he broke it and said,
“This is my body that is for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”
In the same way he took the cup also,
after supper, saying,
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Table of the joyful feast is not our Table but God's.
Nothing you do, nothing you say,
nothing about you can prevent you from partaking,
for in Holy Communion God reveals
the wholeness of who we are together and with God.
So as you receive this joyful feast, come exactly as you are.
There is more than enough. Come, for all is ready.

*Everyone is invited to come forward to receive
Holy Communion. The wine is red. The grape juice white.*

Communion Hymn *“Here is Bread” Red #483*

**Here is bread, here is wine
Christ is with us, he is with us
Break the bread, taste the wine
Christ is with us here
REFRAIN In this bread there is healing!
 In this cup is life forever!
 In this moment, by the Spirit
 Christ is with us here**

**Here is grace, here is peace
Christ is with us, He is with us
Know his grace, find his peace
Feast on Jesus here REFRAIN**

**Here we are, joined in one
Christ is with us, He is with us
We’ll proclaim till he comes
Jesus crucified! REFRAIN**

*Prayer After Communion

Holy Mystery, through Holy Communion
we unite our bodies with your body,
and in unity we gain strength and hope.
We give thanks for your transforming love.
Like the sacraments, we know that love is a *doing*,
and so we ask for your help to turn this
nourishment into love for all we meet.

*Sending / Benediction

Jesus chose to use his final hours to establish intimate and profound physical connections with his friends. In the midst of this connection, he offered a new commandment: to love others as he loves us. This is not an abstract, sentimental love. This is bread-breaking, foot-washing, messy love. We have visited the font, we have been nourished at the Table, and now we go out into the world to live out Jesus's commandment. As we leave this place, may the presence of the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer fill the nooks and crannies of our lives. Go in love!
We go out together in love. Amen.

Stripping of the Altar

(Psalm 22:1-11 is said in unison Red pg. 339)

The stripping of the altar is symbolic of Jesus' humiliation at the hands of the soldiers that will take place on Good Friday. The altar is made bare so that we may focus only on the cross.

Lights are dimmed. The service ends in silence to signify that we continue this 3-day worship service tomorrow on Good Friday.

Good Friday Observance

"The Seven Last Words"

April 18 at 7 pm

Easter Sunday Celebration April 20 - 10 am

Bring Flowers for the Easter Cross

Breakfast 8:30a – 9:45a

Reconciling in Christ

*“We welcome all who are seeking God’s love and grace.
We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of
race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity,
gender expression, or relationship status.*

*We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or
mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances,
or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.”*

Our Mission Statement

St. Stephen’s is a welcoming, healing community
who worship God in Christ, nurture people
growing in faith, serve others with acceptance & love,
and invite people to share the joy of the Spirit.

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