Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ an Open and Affirming Congregation Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2025 Full to the Brim – "Take Your Shoes Off"

L Reflections To walk barefoot is sacred. — Michael Bassey Johnson

Our feet tell our stories. They carry us through this life, moving us from one sorrow and season to the next. Our gait can reveal us to be buoyant or bullish, dispirited or steadfast. — Cicely Tyson

At the end of life, we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked, and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in. — Mother Teresa

The question should not be "What would Jesus do?" but rather, more dangerously, "What would Jesus have me do?" The onus is not on Jesus but on us, for Jesus did not come to ask semidivine human beings to do impossible things. He came to ask human beings to live up to their full humanity; he wants us to live in the full implication of our human gifts, and that is far more demanding. - The Rev. Peter Gomes

Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love. — St. Therese of Lisieux

If the scandal of Jesus was that He was always touching the wrong people and inviting the wrong people to the table—how on earth can we think the Communion meal now is for the extra holy or the super spiritual? - Jonathan Martin

The church is God saying: 'I'm throwing a banquet, and all these mismatched, messed-up people are invited. Here, have some wine.— Rachel Held Evans

Love without justice is cheap sentimentality. — <u>Carter Heyward</u>

Apart from love, everything passes away. – **Rumi**

Greeting



Call to Worship

We invite you to bring your body 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.

Hymn NC #331 Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life
Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life; such a way as give us breath;
Such a truth as ends all strife; such a life as con ---- quers death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength; such a light as shows a feast; Such a feast as mends in length; such a strength as makes ---- a guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart; such a joy as none can move; Such a love as none can part; such a heart as joys ---- in love.

Reading - Lead, by Mary Oliver



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 footwashing, 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.

J Hymn Take Your Shoes Off

As Christ invited friends to share in one last holy meal, We gather here in song and prayer to witness Christ revealed.

Refrain: Take your shoes off, let me wash you,

You're on holy ground.

Take your walls down, let me love you,

Christ is all around.

As grains of wheat are gathered in to be one loaf of bread, We are one body following where Jesus Christ has led. *Refrain*

With tender hearts and tender hands we wash each other's feet, In holy vun'rability we serve each one we meet. *Refrain*

To be the body Christ has called we follow Christ's command To love and serve each other well and seek to understand. *Refrain*

Reading - *John 13:1-17*

Reader: It was the day before the Passover festival. Jesus and his

disciples were sharing the evening meal. Jesus got up from the table, took off his robes, and tied a towel around his waist. Then Jesus poured water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel he was wearing. Jesus came to Simon Peter, who

said to him:

All: Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?

One: Jesus answered Peter:

Leader: "You do not understand now what I am doing,

But you will understand later."

Response: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,

Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

One: Peter declared:

All: Never at any time will you wash my feet!

One: Jesus answered:

Leader: If I do not wash your feet,

you will no longer be my disciple.

One: Simon Peter answered:

All: Lord, not only my feet then,

But my hands and head too!

Response: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,

Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

Leader: Jesus said: "Those who have bathed are completely clean

And do not need to wash other than their feet."

Reader: After washing their feet, Jesus put his robes back on,

Returned to his place at the table and said,

Leader: "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call

me 'Teacher' and 'Lord' and you speak correctly, because I am. If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet,

You too must wash each other's feet. I have set an

Example for you, so that you will do just what I have done For 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."

Response: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,

Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

Blessing of Feet

Pastoral Prayer - Water Marks, by Rev. Sarah Are Speed

Response - *Ubi Caritas / Live in Charity*

Ubi caritas et amor, Ubi caritas Deis ibi est.

Live in charity and steadfast love,

Live in charity; God will dwell with you

Gathering at the Table

Leader: This table is for all who are hungry.

If you are hungry, come.

All: Where compassion and love are, there is God.

Leader: The love of Christ has gathered us as one.

Let us love one another.

All: Where compassion and love are, there is God.

Leader: When we are gathered in spirit,

even distance cannot separate us. Christ is present in our midst.

All: Where compassion and love are, there is God.

Leader: Tonight, we remember...

... you fill our spirits to overflowing.

Hymn Eat This Bread

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.

Lord's Prayer using whatever version you wish

Sharing the Meal

Leader: Here we are at table...

...Come, for all is ready.

[Sharing the bread]

J Hymn Eat This Bread

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.

[Everyone is invited to eat]

Reading - The Story Continues: John 13:1-3, 21-35

Hymn NC #223 What Wondrous Love Is This

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 Christ should come in bliss

To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,

To bear the heavy cross 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 and joyful be,

And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,

And through eternity, I'll sing on!

Sharing the Cup of Grace

Leader: Like Jesus' disciples, we have broken bread together...
...Do this and remember me.

[Sharing the cup]

月 Hymn Eat This Bread

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst.

[Everyone is invited to drink]

Reading - Matthew 26:31-34

Leader: Full of awe and wonder, the friends at the bread and shared the cup. They had been fed with stories and prayers, words and deeds, and now this most special bread and wine.

Jesus and his friends sang a hymn before they went to the Mount of Olives.

1 Hymn

Bless the Lord My Soul (3 times)

Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's holy name. Bless the Lord my soul who leads me into life.

Leader: Jesus looked at them lovingly saying, "pray that you do not come into the time of trial." And moving away from them, about a stone's throw, he knelt down and he prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done. Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength.

J Hymn Stay With Me (3 times)

Stay with me, remain here with me, Watch and pray, watch and pray.

Reading - *Luke 22:47-53*

Reading - I Have Come Into This World to See This, by Hafiz

Hymn NC #223 What Wondrous Love Is This, vs. 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 Christ should come in bliss To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,

To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul.

Sending/Benediction

Leader: ...Go in love!

All: We go out together in love. Amen.

[We will end our time together in silence]

For Further Prayer and Reflection:

Music: Idina Menzel – <u>At This Table</u>
The Highwomen – <u>Crowded Table</u>
Antonio Vivaldi – <u>Stabbat Mater</u>

Visio Divina –

 $other\ interpretations\ of\ Maundy\ Thursday\ images:$

Washing Osama's Feet by Lars Justinen

The First Supper by Susan Dorothea White



Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service

Full to the Brim - "Take Your Shoes Off"



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