



Maundy Thursday
April 6, 2023

Prelude

Call To Worship¹

Leader 1: We regularly say: “We proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

In these last days, in these latter days,
In these final days, in these very late days,

All: We draw closer to your promised “until.”
We draw closer in fear, in hope
in gladness, in dread.

Leader 2: So we do proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes

All: until he comes in peace against all our violence,

Leader 2: until he comes in generosity midst all our parsimony,

All: until he comes in food midst all our hunger

Leader 1: We are your faithful hoppers, distracted by despair,

All: but hoping,

Leader 1: distracted by affluence

All: but hoping,

Leader 1: distracted by sophistication

All: but hoping.

Leader 2: Come soon, come Lord Jesus, come soon

All: While we face afresh your death.

Leader 2: Until you come soon and again,

All: again and soon, we proclaim, we hope. Amen.

¹ Inspired by Walter Brueggemann’s “In these very late days” from *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 169.

Hymn: #218 *Were You There?*, v. 1

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, p. 933

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord 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. 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.

RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen (Danish)

Reflection on the Scripture:

Hymn: #218 *Were You There?*, v. 2

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? (Were you there?)

Come to the Table²

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

**Give us this day, O divine storyteller,
precisely what we need,
so that we’re nourished
and encouraged into the very places
where we’ve been called to live, speak, and breathe
with the fire of love and the water of grace;
through Jesus Christ, the risen one, who taught us to pray,**

Let us recite the Lord’s Prayer together:

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass
against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for
thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

² Inspired by Maren Tirabassi’s “Come to the Table — Holy Communion for a Lenten Sunday or Maundy Thursday,” Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted March 27, 2017, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2017/03/27/great-prayer-of-thanksgiving-holy-communion-for-a-lenten-sunday-or-maundy-thursday/> (accessed March 10, 2023).

Hymn: #218 *Were You There?*, v. 3

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? (Were you there?)

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? (Were you there?)

The Stripping of the Sanctuary

The Deacons will come forward to strip the sanctuary in a time of quiet reflection on the loss we all face on Good Friday and Holy Saturday, dramatizing the abandonment and darkness of the passion of Jesus in the days to come.

A Prayer of Confession to Send us Back Out into the World

Leader 1: Trusting in the steadfast love of Jesus Christ,
who has delivered us from sin and death,
let us confess our sin.

Leader 2: Lord Jesus Christ, how well you know our hearts,

**All: and still you love us—
you have loved us to the end.**

Leader 1: We have denied you,

**All: and we have denied our calling
to serve one another.**

Leader 2: We have betrayed you,

**All: and we have betrayed your commandment
to love one another.**

Leader 1: Pour out your Spirit of grace upon us.

**All: Teach us to love and serve you faithfully
and to love and serve one another
by the example you have set for us;
in your holy name we pray. Amen.**

Leader 2: The promise has been and will be fulfilled,
and love's redeeming work is done:

All: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Tonight's service ends in a way that is intentionally unresolved, indicating that there is more to come.

Maundy Thursday Household Prayer: Morning

O Lord, as I live for you this day, keep me faithful. Let my living and my dying be precious in your sight, so that I may live for you forever; I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Maundy Thursday Household Prayer: Evening

O Lord, as I rest in you this night, keep me faithful. Let my dying and my living be precious in your sight so that I may rest in you forever; I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Maundy Thursday Questions for Reflection

The lectionary readings for Holy Thursday are full of sacramental themes and imagery: (1) the institution of the Passover meal in Exodus 12:1–14, just before the crossing of the sea; (2) the gift of the Lord's Supper described in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; and (3) the imagery of bathing and washing in John 13:1–17, 31b–35. Reflect on the understanding and practice of the sacraments in your congregation. How are these biblical themes and images reflected? Think about the relationship between the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper in your congregation. How is that relationship communicated, negotiated, or lived out?

Good Friday Household Prayer: Morning

God, on this most challenging day, be with me. Open my eyes to see moments of pain and suffering around me into which I may carry your loving presence. Amen.

Good Friday Household Prayer: Evening

Holy One, into your hands I commit this day that I have lived. Salvage what needs saving in me. Strengthen what is good in me. And in all things bind me closer to you through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Good Friday Question for Reflection:

The cross is the central symbol of our faith. Why do you think that is? Has its meaning changed for you over time? Jesus was willing to die for his cause, but not kill for it. How does that inform you on your Christian journey?

Notes on This Evening's Worship Service

Participants

Reverend Catherine A. Merrill
Reverend Veronica Walsh Don
Charlene Ledoux

Minister
Minister
Cello

The sanctuary hosts many items that reflect the Christian faith. In silence and shadows, symbols of the church are removed, dramatizing the abandonment and darkness of the passion of Jesus. The sanctuary remains bare. Symbolically, Christ is stripped of his power and glory and is in the hands of his captors. The elements will be restored before worship begins on Easter morning.

There is no Benediction or Postlude because the events of this night do not conclude until the Easter morning celebration of resurrection. Therefore, tonight ends in a way that is intentionally unresolved, indicating that there is more to come.

Tonight's service continues with the Vigil on Good Friday in the Brookline sanctuary from 4:00 to 9:00pm. Easter Sunrise Services are at 6:00am on Musket Mountain at the Andres Institute of Art in Brookline or at Wally Brown's home 421 Meetinghouse Hill Road at 6:00am. Then both Brookline and Mason will celebrate Easter Morning Worship in their own churches at 10:00am.