**First Presbyterian Church**

**Maundy Thursday, April 13, 2017**

**Sentences of Scripture/Gathering**

John 13:34-35

Jesus said, “**34**I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. **35**By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

**Prayer of Blessing and Welcome**

Lord as we gather together in love, and remembrance of your love for us. Train our hearts to be more loving, so that the world may know that we belong to you, by our love. Amen.

**Call to Confession** 1 Corinthians 11:28-32, BCW 271

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth: “Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. If we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we receive discipline so that we may not be condemned along with the world.” With confidence in God’s abundant mercy, let us examine ourselves and confess our sin.

**Prayer of Confession:**

**Eternal God whose covenant with us is never broken, we confess that we fail to fulfill your will. Though you have bound yourself to us, we will not bind ourselves to you. In Jesus Christ you serve us freely, but we refuse your love and withhold ourselves from others.**

**We do not love you fully or love one another as you command. In your mercy, forgive us and cleanse us. Lead us once again to your table and unite us to Christ, who is the bread of life and the vine from which we grow in grace. Amen.**

**Assurance of Forgiveness John 13:12-17**

\* After Jesus had washed the disciples’ feet, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 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.”

Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Special Music**

**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. **2**The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper **3**Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, **4**got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. **5**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. **6**He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” **7**Jesus answered, “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” **8**Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” **9**Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” **10**Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And youare clean, though not all of you.” **11**For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

**12**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? **13**You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. **14**So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. **15**For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. **16**Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. **17**If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

**Homily “No Joke”**

Love is no joke. Every so often, Eastertide happens around April Fools’ Day. And that for me gives me a little chuckle. I find other strange things funny too, mostly the ironic things. And we are a people of irony. When we partake of the Holy Communion meal today, we do so knowing that we are sinners and do not deserve a seat at God’s table. And yet, we are invited. God is sharing with us by inviting us to His table.

God does not have to share with us. God has no need to be generous towards us. Many humans receive the fruits of God’s generosity without a second thought. We often have misplaced assumptions about what belongs to us, what we deserve and where all those good gifts come from.

But when we arrive at this place for this meal of remembrance, we can also remember that we are truly dependent upon God for our very survival. By receiving this meal together, we are bound together more closely to one another and to Jesus Christ our dinnertime host. Have we truly considered God’s generosity? Have you ever really thought about how to receive God’s gifts without taking them all for granted?

**Hand Washing and Sharing of the Communion Meal**

**Explanation and Invitation**

**Words of Institution**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them unto the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right, Almighty God, that we thank you this evening

For the great love you have taught us to have for one another,

For the hope that the world may be healed and helped by your lessons of lovingkindness.

Since the beginning of humanity, you have reached out to us as your beloved creatures

And we have turned our backs on you again and again.

Therefore we remember now, moments when you reached out to us
through the deliverance of Israel from Egypt
through the giving of your Law
through the election of prophets
through the giving of Jesus Christ, the sign and seal of your own presence with us.

In silence we now take a moment to contemplate the fullness of your gifts to us…

Holy are you, O God, having given of yourself time and again.

Fill the water, the soft towel, the bread and the juice here today with your powerful Spirit who can work through all things and people,

That we may remember with the smells, the touch and sight, your extraordinary grace.

Through these gifts, strengthen us all with the assurance that you work through us,

That we may become for the world, your hands and hearts. In the name of the one who taught us to pray, “Our Father…”

Amen.

**Communion by Intinction**

You are invited to come forward and form a line in front of the basin, if you desire the pleasing warm water in a traditional hand washing similar to the ancient customary footwashing. Then, if you desire it, you are invited to tear off a piece of bread, dip it in the cup and receive it into your body. If you prefer us to come to you, please signal to us after the line is complete.

O taste and see that the Lord is good. The meal is ready.

**Prayer after communion**

God, you have washed us and fed us by the hands of your disciples. Now, prepare us for the rest of the journey through Holy Week, prepared to show that we love one another as you love us, so that the world may know that we belong to you. Amen.

RH 397 More Love to Thee O Christ

**Removal of elements, darkness**

**From Mark 14:41b-49 [Jesus and Judas behind Communion Table]**

**Jesus:** “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.”

**Judas (turned away):** “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.”

**Judas (turning to Jesus):** “Rabbi!”

**Jesus:** “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.”

**(Wayne or Eric turn off overhead lights)**

**From Mark 14:66-72 Servant Girl, Peter, Bystander in front middle of aisle)**

**Servant-girl:** “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.”

**Peter:** “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.”

*Cock Crows*

**Servant-girl:** “This man is one of them.”

**Bystander 1:** “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.”

**Peter:** “I do not know this man you are talking about.”

*Cock Crows*

**(Ryan and Kenna drape black over the flowers in front, then sit down)**

**Mark 15:33-39 (everyone sitting in their pews, Jesus behind the table)**

**Jesus:** “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani!”

**Everyone:** “Listen, he is calling for Elijah.”

**Bystander 1:** “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.”

**(Amy blows out candles)**

**Centurion:** “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

**When the lights are out, please depart in silence.**

**Parts:**

**Bystanders – Everyone but Jesus and Peter**

**Jesus – Amy**

**Judas – Ryan**

**Peter – Sharon**

**Servant Girl – Kenna**

**Bystander 1 – Ryan**

**Centurion - Sharon**