

Maundy Thursday, Thursday April 9, 6 PM

We hope to eat and worship 'together' through Zoom videoconferencing.

Message Zion's Facebook page, or Pastor Caitlin, or email pastorckurtz@gmail.com for log in or call in information (we aren't posting it publicly for security reasons). This service is also designed for you to be able to follow along on your own, if you wish.

Before you begin, please gather: A simple meal to eat, bread and wine or grape juice (for remembering the Last Supper, and acknowledging the grief we share over not being able to share in Holy Communion during these weeks of isolation), lotion, a candle, and a Bible

Begin by lighting a candle, symbolically setting aside this time as sacred.

Greeting (led by Pastor Caitlin): Tonight we gather as dispersed community, the body of Christ deployed into the world. We long to gather physically, yet have chosen the way of love and care for our neighbors. As we hear God's word, reflect upon how it impacts our lives, and pray for those we know and those we might never meet, know that this gathering, though not what we are used to, is also a selfless act of love. The peace of the Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Opening Prayer (Led by Pastor Caitlin or prayed on your own): Let us pray. Gracious God, none who trust in your Son can be separated from your love. Give to those who live alone peace and contentment in their solitude, hope and fulfillment in their love of you, and joy and companionship in their relations with others; though Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer over the Meal (led by a participant, or prayed on your own): Let us pray. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us to do the work you have called us to do, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

In our own homes, we will begin to share our meals. If you are gathered with others, try to serve one another.

Introduction (led by Pastor Caitlin or read on your own): We know that the meal Jesus shared with his disciples the night before his crucifixion was a Passover meal, a meal of thanksgiving that recalled how God had saved God's people from slavery and oppression, leading them to freedom in the Promised Land. Our readings tonight will recall how and why that Passover meal began, and how Jesus worked through that meal to love and care for his disciples, knowing that they would soon betray and deny him, and watch him die upon the cross. Through this meal we witness God's unending love for us, and for all creation...love that carries us through every hill and valley, and, yes, love that carries us through these weeks of pandemic.

Read Exodus 12:1-4 (led by a participant, or on your own)

Reflect: The first Passover takes place at the end of a series of ten plagues that God sends to change Pharaoh's heart. Surely, God's people were terrified, and so God provided a visible sign of God's love and care for them. How has God helped you in times of fear?

Pray: For those who live in fear of violence, sickness, and shortage of resources.

Read Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 (led by a participant, or on your own)

Reflect: The entire book of psalms is a collection of prayers prayed by God's people throughout the centuries. This psalm gives thanks to God for hearing our prayers and caring for us always. For what do you give thanks today?

Pray: Commend all these thanksgivings to God, and pray for those who struggle to give thanks today, and those struggling with faith.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (led by a participant, or on your own)

Reflect: The Apostle Paul recalls for the people of Corinth how Jesus took what he had—bread and wine—and turned it into a promise: that Jesus would be with us always, and that Jesus would give his very body for you and for me.” Who are all the people involved in getting food to your table?

Pray: Pray for all the hands that make eating possible.

A Reflection on Fasting From Holy Communion: Pastor will share a word about how hard, and odd, it is to be separated from the communion table for this long. We trust that Jesus is fully present with us, where we are, and acknowledge the grief we feel over not sharing the Lord's Supper together this night. Pastor invites people to join in prayer over the wine and bread of each of our tables:

Pray: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine and bring forth bread from the earth; you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ, and feed us on our way with the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. May the time come quickly when we can share again that bread and cup, even as we trust that you are with us **now** in our very hunger and thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Read John 13:1-17, 31-35 (led by a participant, or on your own)

Reflect: Pastor will lead a meditation on what it means to “love one another”, especially in light of Judas' betrayal, and Peter's denial. When have you been accepted by someone even when you did not deserve it?

Pray: For an open heart and God's help that we might be able to forgive our neighbors.

Share an Act of Love If you are gathered physically with others, anoint each other's hands with lotion, in remembrance of Jesus' act of service for his disciples. If you are physically alone tonight, rub lotion over your own hands, recalling Jesus' act of love *for you*. We use lotion tonight, instead of hand washing, because we are all sick of handwashing! And because our hands are likely chapped from it. Lotion is symbolic of God's lavish love and grace for each of us, embodied in this Last Supper Jesus shares with his disciples.

Pray: Lord, we come to you celebrating the last meal you enjoyed with your disciples apart from our community of worship. In this time of social distancing, let your spirit draw us together. We read tonight that even though you knew you would be betrayed you washed the feet and shared a meal with your betrayer. Lord in this time of fear and anxiety help us to live out our call to be your disciple. It is hard, oh Lord, for us to understand loving our neighbor by being separated from them. Help us as we seek new ways to show our love for one another.

God of love, unite your church in its commitment to humble service. Speak words of truth and grace through us. Encourage us in acts of kindness and service to those in need as they deal with the corona virus. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, tend to flocks and fields. Guide the hands of those who cultivate, farm and garden. Let the earth flourish so that all may have food to eat. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, you give us a new commandment, to have love for one another. We give thanks for persons and agencies that respond to the medical needs of others. Please bless all who work in prisons, nursing homes and health care facilities especially Linda, Larry, Nickole, Kelly, Debbie, Pam, Travis, Rebecca, Bob, Ed, Ashley, Chris, Janelle, Jamie, Holly, Jon, Diane, Stacy, Paz, Lori, Jordan, Christian, Lindsey, Kristy, Nick, Morgan, Kayla, Kara, Kate, Erin, Kathy, Kenny, Steve Lum, and Sara. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, give ear to all who call upon you in need. Provide for those who are unemployed, fearful or isolated because of the corona virus. Tend to all who are ill especially Doug, Jean, John, Jeanette, Barbara, Val, Dave, Don, Liesel, Kristen, Dawn, Pastor Fred, Natalie, Joel, Sophia. Mary, Dorothy, Sherry, Laura, Carl, Tim, Margaret, and Brian. We also pray for Eric, and Michael and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts. [P-a-u-s-e] Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We us pray together as Jesus taught us:

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 and ever. Amen.

Blessing (Receiving Pastor's virtual blessing, or read it for yourself): Almighty God bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace. **Amen.**

****Worship continues tomorrow night with a "Global Good Friday" Stations of the Cross, on YouTube and Facebook****

If you would like to make an offering tonight, you can:

- Mail a check to Zion's Lutheran, PO Box 658, Jonestown PA 17038
- Give electronically by visiting <http://www.zionsjonestown.com/giving/> and choosing either our PayPal account, or Simply Giving. Simply giving is our regular electronic offering service, which offers both one-time options, and regular, automatic options. Simply Giving fees are less than PayPal fees, so if you're giving regularly, this is an awesome program to check out. Any questions, contact pastorckurtz@gmail.com
- If you are experiencing financial hardship right now, please know that we understand that you may not be able to give as you'd like. If you are in need of financial assistance, please contact Pastor Caitlin (pastorckurtz@gmail.com or 717 819 0420) as we have funds set aside to assist you.