

FIRST PARISH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (CONGREGATIONAL)
176 West High St., P.O. Box 228, Somersworth, NH 03878
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An Open & Affirming Congregation

The Vigil of Maundy Thursday

ORGAN PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Jesus said: I am the light of the world.

P: **Anyone who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.**

L: If I say, "Let darkness cover me, and the light around me turn to night,"
Darkness is not dark to you, O God.

P: **The night is bright as the day: Darkness and Light to you are both alike.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Gracious God, you give us the sun to illumine the day,
And the moon and the stars to shine by night. Kindle in us the flame of
Your love that our lives may shed abroad the radiance of your light
And the world may be full of the splendor of your glory;
Through Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. AMEN

The Sharing of the Upper Room

*HYMN

"According to Thy Gracious Word"

No. 402

WORD OF INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Eternal God, whose Word is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path, we recognize and confess that we have failed to respond fully to your gracious presence in our lives. Through Jesus Christ you have offered us new life, that our sin binds us with false pride, and the wrong we do is made worse by the good we leave undone. Reconcile us to you and to all people. God of mercy, forgive us and strengthen us anew for life as you intend it; through Jesus Christ our Savior. AMEN

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

1

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION + WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Distribution of the Elements. The Deacons will partake at the Table, after which the bread and cup will be shared with you in the pew.

Partake of the bread and cup as you are served.
Empty cups are placed following the Prayer of Thanksgiving

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

FOOTWASHING – AN EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

Jesus, in John 13, washed the feet of the disciples as a sign of humility.

The Shadows of Separation

*HYMN

"O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"

No. 202

The Shadow of Temptation

Matthew 16:21-24

The Shadow of Greed

Matthew 26:14-16

+ Response: *Go To Dark Gethsemane* + (No. 196, Vs. 1 & 2)

The Shadow of Apathy

Matthew 26:36-46

The Shadow of Cowardliness

Matthew 26:47-56

+ Response: *'Tis Midnight And On Olive's Brow* + (No. 194, Vs. 1 & 4)

The Shadow of Deception

Matthew 26:57-68

The Shadow of Rejection

Matthew 26:69-75

+ Response: *Beneath The Cross of Jesus* + (No. 197, Vs. 1 & 2)

The Shadow of Irresolution

Matthew 27:15-23

The Shadow of Ridicule

Matthew 27:27-31

+ Response: *When I Survey The Wondrous Cross* + (No. 195, Vs 1 & 4)

THE TIME OF DARKNESS + THE HOPE OF RECONCILIATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (trespasses)

OUR DEPARTURE The Congregation is asked to leave the Sanctuary in **SILENCE**.
A silent greeting of your neighbor is appropriate.

2

If you want to participate in the foot-washing, please remain following the service as the Deacons prepare. Men will wash the feet of men, women of women. Come forward to the appropriate station. For each person, we will pour minimal amounts of fresh water over your

feet, and each time wipe them with a clean towel. This invites a quiet, reflective time. Prayer for blessings and the gifting of the Holy Spirit will be shared.

oOo

Our Deacons read the Office of Tenebrae: Nancie Cameron, Kathy Latchaw, Nancy McDonough, Sharon Sirois, Dave Stolpe, Anthony Trussell, Priscilla Chellis, Alex Vollkommer.

Deacons on Duty: Laurel Curtis, Sharon Sirois

A special thanks to our organist, Bette Daley, for the music ministry tonight.

GOOD FRIDAY Ecumenical Worship, 5:30PM, joining with Berwick United Methodist Church in the Chapel at Evergreen Cemetery, Cemetery Rd., Berwick, ME

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunrise Service, 6AM Jointly lead with United Methodist Church, Berwick, ME, **outdoors in the upper parking area to the side of the American Legion Hall, Somersworth [corner of Constitutional Way and Washington St.]**. Light breakfast in the American Legion Hall follows. Wear appropriate footwear. In case of inclement weather, we will worship in the American Legion Hall.

Morning Worship, 10AM, Festive and joy-filled service, will include Children's Message, Adult Choir and Choir Chimes. There is **NO Sunday School** on Easter Day. Come and worship together as a family!

Christianity from its beginning has made much of the use of symbols in its worship. One of the most ancient symbols is Light, portraying Jesus in the role of the Light of the World. The two lighted candles on our altar represent the two natures of Christ: Human and Divine.

The Office of Tenebrae (named for the Latin scriptural text: "Tenebrae factae sunt" in the crucifixion narratives: "And darkness fell over the face of the earth..."), was developed by the Church in the 4th century. The rule of silence is observed: no conversation or greetings other than the silent recognition of friends. The service is phrased in words of Scripture, without comment. The human stanzas, which are sung softly, help to interpret the significance of the falling shadows of separation, symbolized by the gradual extinguishing of the lights.

As we observe this order of worship drawn from the days of antiquity, we recognize anew our common heritage of faith and our common failings. As the candles are extinguished one by one, we are moved to identify with the disciples in their desertion and aggression. At last we come to the Christ candle standing alone in the darkness of human separation, and we are moved to pledge anew to the God of love the loyalty of our hearts.

Let us note that the darkness of hostility is never complete so long as **ONE** candle gives forth its light.

oOo

Maundy Thursday

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." John 13:34

Maundy is the English form of the Latin word [*mandatum*] meaning *commandment*. Jesus' new commandment to "love one another even as I have loved you" is the focus of Maundy Thursday. This love is demonstrated in Jesus' example of servanthood and the gift of Jesus' self in Holy Communion.

The observance of Maundy Thursday often included the custom of washing the feet of the poor as a fulfillment of the "new commandment", and as seen in Jesus' washing of the disciple's feet in the Upper Room. [John 13:1-12]

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3

+THE OFFICE OF TENEBRAE+
A Holy Week Service of Symbolism