

# *The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York*

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## MAUNDY THURSDAY

March 28, 2024 | 7 p.m.

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*The Session and members of First Church extend a sincere welcome to all persons regardless of race, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and service as an officer of the church.*



*Golden Hour*, Nicolette Peñaranda, mixed media on canvas.

Maundy Thursday begins the Three Days (or Triduum), remembering the new commandment that Christ gave us in word and deed as he taught us how to love one another, washing our feet as a servant.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper, remembering the meal Christ shared with his disciples before his death.

The name this day is taken from the first words sung at the ceremony of the washing of the feet, "I give you a new commandment" (John 13:34); also from the commandment of Christ that we should imitate his loving humility in the washing of the feet (John 13:14-17). The term *mandatum* (maundy), therefore, was applied to the rite of the footwashing on this day.

The opening service of the Three Days is not inherently mournful.

The penitential acts of Maundy Thursday have celebratory aspects as well: restoration through the bold declaration of pardon; the remembrance of the act of footwashing connoting humility

and intimacy; the celebration of the Lord's Supper embodying the mystery of Christ's enduring redemptive presence. Maundy Thursday's acts provide the paradox of a celebratively somber and solemnly celebrative service.

The final act of this service is the final stripping of the worship space. The stark, bare, unadorned church reflects Jesus' abandonment during the night in Gethsemane. The church remains bare until the Easter when the process is reversed and the worship space is dressed again.

PRELUDE

“Agnus dei”

Frank Martin

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

We gather tonight to tell the old, old story.

**A story of bitterness and betrayal, of despair, denial and death.**

We gather tonight to tell an even older story prepared before the worlds began:

**a story of love powerful enough to rewrite our endings with the promise of new life.**

In the telling of the story, in the breaking of the bread, in the coming of the night,  
**we draw near once more to Christ.**

HYMN 833

“O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”

ST MARGARET

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

For every time you asked us to stay with you, and we wandered away,

**forgive us.**

For every time we fell asleep on the job of being your disciples,

**forgive us.**

For every time we boasted of our loyalty, yet crept away, betrayed, or denied you,

**forgive us.**

For every time we hear this story, and think "we would do better,"

**forgive us.**

For every time we meet your faithfulness, with faithlessness,

**forgive us.**

**God, your love for us is unfathomably deep, that you would take all our failures, and still love us as friends. In your mercy, forgive 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.**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ANTHEM

David Hurd

Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back guilty of dust and sin. But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack from my first entrance in, drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning, if I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here: Love said, you shall be he. I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear, I cannot look on thee. Love took my hand, and smiling did reply, who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame go where it doth deserve. And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame? My dear, then I will serve. You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat: so I did sit and eat.

-George Herbert

READING

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

*pew Bible, New Testament page 107/large print, New Testament page 131*

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

MEDITATION

Rev. Ashley Bair

HYMN 836

“Abide With Me”

EVENTIDE

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

## INVITATION TO THE TABLE

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### SHARING THE ELEMENTS

*The congregation is invited to come forward to the communion table by the center aisle at the direction of the ushers. At the table, juice, bread (please tell your server if you need gluten free bread), will be distributed. If you prefer self-contained bread and juice, those are also available at the table.*

### ANTHEM

*Pange lingua gloriosi praelium certaminis  
Et super crucis trophaeum dic triumphum nobilem:  
Qualiter Redemptor orbis Immolatus vicerit*  
-Venantius Honorius Fortunatus

Larry L. Fleming  
Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle, sing the ending of  
the fray; Now above the cross, the trophy, sound the  
loud triumphant lay. Tell how Christ, the world's  
redeemer, as a victim won the day. -trans. John M. Neale

Ah, Jesus, I will ponder now on your holy Passion. Let your Spirit now endow me for meditation. Grant that I in love and faith may the image cherish of your suffering, pain, and death, that I may not perish. May I give you love for love, ponder well the story, that I may in heaven above sing your praise and glory.

-Sigismund von Birken; trans. August Crull, alt.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God, may this time we partake of the bread and cup unite us in the community of saints who know your love and proclaim your truth with fervor and grace to a broken and hurting world.**

**May this meal be exactly what we need to continue today,  
to receive the grace you extend to us without end;  
to find our purpose;  
to heal what needs to be healed;  
to offer ourselves to our friends;  
to be renewed in our simplicity for the good of the world;  
to remember you here, as you asked us to do. Amen.**

### READING

John 13:21-30, 18:1-12

*pew Bible, New Testament page 108/large print, New Testament page 132*

### HYMN 220

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

“Go to Dark Gethsemane”

REDHEAD 76

# STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

*As the hymn is sung, the elements of the Table are removed from the Church in preparation for Good Friday.*

Following worship, you are invited to remain for quiet meditation, or depart in silence.

Worship continues tomorrow at 12:00 p.m. with Good Friday.  
*Through word, music, and silence, we hear and reflect on the Gospel writers' witness to the last words Jesus spoke at the time of his crucifixion.*

## LEADING THIS EVENING

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Senior Pastor*  
Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*  
Rev. Ashley Bair, *Associate Pastor*

The First Church Choir Octet  
Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

**MUSIC NOTE** Published shortly after the author's death, *The Temple* by George Herbert (1599-1633), is a collection of 162 poems concerning Herbert's relationship with God. The poems are divided in three sections: *The Church Porch*, *The Church*, and *The Church Militant*. *The Church* is the largest of the three, and concludes with a trio of poems entitled "Love." "Love (III)," or "Love Bade Me Welcome," is a conversation between us – the *guest* – and *love* – Christ. The guest confesses their unworthiness to sit at Love's table: "guilty of.....sin," "unkind, ungrateful." The guest is reminded by Love that he has borne "the blame," taking on the sins of the guest; the guest is welcomed to table. Herbert's words are set to music by David Hurd (b. 1950), Organist and Director of Music of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin in New York City, and former Professor of Church Music at General Theological Seminary.

Larry L. Fleming (1936-2003) was founder and conductor of the National Lutheran Choir. Through careful curation of repertoire, often interspersed with narrations, NLC concerts under Fleming "invite[d] the listener into deeper contemplation of the text and the message being presented." In *Sing and Ponder*, two Passiontide hymns are united: the 6th century Latin *Pange lingua* (Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle), and the 17th century Lutheran hymn, "Jesus, I Will Ponder Now." –Michael Shake

### GET INVOLVED



### GIVE



### INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?



### STEWARDSHIP 2024



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