



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

GOOD FRIDAY

April 7, 2023

Good Friday at Noon

* CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

Leader: Slowly, we come to worship on this holy Friday.

* Please stand as you are able. (* indicates Congregation standing)

People: Reluctantly, we hear the story of Jesus' suffering.

L: Bleakly, we follow Jesus to the cross.

P: Humbly, we acknowledge our part in his passion.

L: Deeply, we yearn to understand the depth of his sacrifice.

All: Solemnly, we gather this day to pray and worship together, giving thanks for our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

* OPENING HYMN 101

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

Hamburg

1. When I sur - vey the won - drous cross On which the
 2. For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the
 3. See, from His head, His hands, His feet, Sor - row and
 4. Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, That were a

Prince of glo - ry died, My rich - est gain I
 death of Christ my God; All the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down; Did e'er such love and
 pres - ent far too small; Love so a - maz - ing,

count but loss, And pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to His blood.
 sor - row meet, Or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, De - mands my soul, my life, my all.

L: Let us pray.

P: Almighty God, we ask you to look with mercy on your family, for whom our Savior Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

MEDITATIONS AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS ON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

The First Word - “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34)

The Reading of Scripture – Luke 23:32-34

Dr. Ahrens

A Meditation on Forgiveness by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Mpho A. Tutu

Rev. Samuelson

The only way to experience healing and peace is to forgive. Until we can forgive, we remain locked in our pain and locked out of the possibility of being at peace. Without forgiveness, we remain tethered to the person who harmed us. We are bound with chains of bitterness, tied together, trapped. Until we can forgive the person who harmed us, that person will hold the keys to our happiness; that person will be our jailor. When we forgive, we take back control of our own fate and feelings. We become our own liberators. We don't forgive to help the other person. We don't forgive for others. We forgive for ourselves.

Silence

The Second Word - “Truly I tell you, Today, you will be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43)

The Reading of Scripture – Luke 23:35-43

Tom Brownfield

A Meditation on Truth by Henri Nouwen

Jacquelyn Dean

“Jesus died well because he knew he was going to God and he would soon send his Spirit of Love to his friends. “It is good for you that I leave,” he said, “because unless I leave, I cannot send my Spirit who will lead you to the full communion, to the full truth, to the full betrothal.” With that Holy Spirit he knew that his beloved apostles would live better, happier lives.

This vision is not just about Jesus. It is also about you and me. Jesus came to share his identity with you and to tell you that you are the Beloved Sons and Daughters of God. Just for a moment try to enter this enormous mystery that you, like Jesus, are the beloved daughter or the beloved son of God. This is the truth. Furthermore, your belovedness preceded your birth. You were the beloved before your father, mother, brother, sister, or church loved you or hurt you. You are the beloved because you belong to God from all eternity.

God loved you before you were born, and God will love you after you die. In Scripture, God says, “I have loved you with an everlasting love.” This is a very fundamental truth of your identity. This is who you are whether you feel it or not. You belong to God from eternity to eternity. Life is just a little opportunity for you during a few years to say, “I love you, too.”

Silence

The Third Word - “Woman, behold your son! Son, behold your mother!” (John 19:26-27)

The Reading of Scripture – John 19:17-27

Rev. Angie Cox

Sal Brownfield’s painting and a Meditation of Forgiveness by Anne Frank

Rev. John Girard

In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can’t build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever approaching thunder which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again.

Silence

The Fourth Word - “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is,

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46)

The Reading of Scripture – Matthew 27:45-50

Rev. Girard

The Meditation on Forsaken by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Dr. Ahrens

“In me there is darkness, But with You there is light; I am lonely, but You do not leave me; I am feeble in heart, but with You there is help; I am restless, but with You there is peace. In me there is bitterness, but with You there is patience; I do not understand Your ways, But You know the way for me.” “Lord Jesus Christ, You were poor and in distress, a captive and forsaken as I am. You know all man’s troubles; You abide with me when all men fail me; You remember and seek me; It is Your will that I should know You and turn to You. Lord, I hear Your call and follow; Help me.”

Silence

The Fifth Word - “I thirst!” (John 19:28)

The Reading of Scripture – John 19:28-29

Ms. Dean

The Meditation on Thirsting by Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Mr. Brownfield

“I love you as you are, and I have shed My Blood to rescue you. If you only ask Me with faith, My grace will touch all that needs changing in your life: I will give you the strength to free yourself from sin and from all its destructive power.

I know what is in your heart, I know your loneliness and all your wounds, the rejections, the judgments, the humiliations, I carried it all before you. And I carried it all for you, so you could share My strength and My victory. I know, above all, your need for love, how much you are thirsting for love and tenderness. Yet, how many times have you desired to satisfy your thirst in vain, seeking that love with selfishness, trying to fill the void within you with passing pleasures, with the even greater emptiness of sin.

Do you thirst for love? “Come to Me all you who thirst ... ” (John 7:37). I will satisfy you and fill you.

Do you thirst to be loved? I love you more than you can imagine ... to the point of dying on a cross for you.

I THIRST FOR YOU. Yes, that is the only way to even begin to describe My love for you. I THIRST FOR YOU. I thirst to love you and to be loved by you. So precious are you to Me that I THIRST FOR YOU. Come to Me, and I will fill your heart and heal your wounds. I will make you a new creation and give you peace even in your trials. I THIRST FOR YOU. You must never doubt My mercy, My desire to forgive, My longing to bless you and live My life in you, and that I accept you no matter what you have done.

Silence

The Sixth Word - "It is finished!" (John 19:30)

The Reading of Scripture – John 19:30

Musical Meditation – “*My soul longs to depart in peace*” Jean Langlais

Silence

Dr. Ahrens
Joshua Stafford

The Seventh Word - "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit'" (Luke 23:46)

The Reading of Scripture – Luke 23:44-49

The Meditation on Commending Our Spirits by

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s last words of his last sermon – April 3, 1968

Rev. Samuelson
Rev. Cox

Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind.

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!

And so I'm happy, tonight.

I'm not worried about anything.

I'm not fearing any man.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

Silence

A LITANY ON THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Dr. Ahrens and Rev. Samuelson

L: Lord, when we pity ourselves and think we make great sacrifices for others:

P: Remind us of your life-giving sacrifice on the Cross.

L: Lord, when our patience wears thin and we are ready to give up:

P: Speak to us through the example of your endurance on the Christ.

L: Lord, when we get angry and wish to retaliate against our enemies:

P: Bring to our remembrance your words to your enemies from the Cross.

L: Lord, when we feel rejected or persecuted for doing what is right and good:

P: Sustain us by the knowledge of how you were reviled and rejected on the Cross.

L: Lord, when we suffer pain of body or anguish of mind in this life:

P: Keep us near the Cross.

L: Lord, when we are afraid to stand for that which is true and honorable:

P: Strengthen us with the courage with which you went to the Cross.

L: Lord, when we feel alone in the world, forsaken and forgotten:

P: Comfort us with your love made known on the Cross.

L: Lord, when we come to the time of our own death:

P: Uphold us with the assurance that life did not end for you on the Cross.

L: Lord, when we are tempted by despair or fear of what lies ahead:

P: Fill us with the hope of resurrection and new life which are the fruits of your Cross. Amen.

– Larry Hard from “The Wideness of God’s Mercy” by Jeffery W. Rowthorn

1. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? (Were you there?)
 2. Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? (Were you there?)
 3. Were you there when they pierced Him in the side? (Were you there?)
 4. Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
 Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?
 Were you there when they pierced Him in the side? Oh!
 Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble, trem-ble.

Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? (Were you there?)
 Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? (Were you there?)
 Were you there when they pierced Him in the side? (Were you there?)
 Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? (Were you there?)

* BENEDICTION

Dr. Ahrens

A bell is rung 33 times, once for each year of Jesus' earthly life.
 We then depart in silence. You are invited to remain in meditation if you wish.

The holy vigil of the great three days (Triduum) continues until the time of the Resurrection.

Participants

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *First Congregational Senior Minister*
The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *First Congregational Interim Associate Minister*
The Rev. John Girard, *Broad Street United Methodist Senior Pastor*
The Rev. Angie Cox, *Broad Street United Methodist Associate Pastor*
Thomas Brownfield, *First Congregational Commissioned Minister for Social Justice*
Jacquelyn Dean, *First Congregational Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction*
Joshua Stafford, *First Congregational Minister of Music*
Peter Murray, Mike Kennedy, Geoff Dean, Pat Patterson, Aran Cunningham, *Livestream Ministry Team*

Easter Day, April 17

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

7 a.m. – Sunrise Service – Washington Gladden Social Justice Park
in person
8:45 a.m. – Holy Communion Services – Nave
in person and livestreamed
11 a.m. – Holy Communion Services – Nave
in person and livestreamed

The Broad Street United Methodist Church

11 a.m. – Easter Service

Church Leadership

Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, D.Min., M.Div.

Interim Associate Minister: Rev. Joanna Samuelson, M.Div.

Minister of Music: Joshua Stafford, M.M.

Commissioned Minister for Social Justice: Tom Brownfield

Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction: Jacquelyn Dean

Administrative Manager: Amy Wagner

Office Assistant: Pat Patterson

Communications Consultant: Melissa Kulwicki

Business Administrator: Annette McCormick

Building and Grounds Superintendent: Mark Dahnke

Building and Grounds Superintendent: Quang Pham

Custodians: Jenkins Smith, Alexis Wayne

Wedding Coordinators: Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani

Nursery Staff: Miranda Brooks, Shelly Gies, Celecia Smith

Senior Deacon: Martha Wilson

Senior Deacon-elect: Lynn Wallich

Deacons: Tom Kiesel, Nan Kreimer, Gail Lowe, James Lowe, Allison Lowery Palmer, Alex Palmer, Fran Panek, Joel Mathias,

Dayna McCrary, Matt Myers, Tyler Rogers, Hank Wilson, Martha Worth

Church Council Leadership

Moderator: Gregory Halbe

Moderator-elect: Sarah Reed

Treasurer: James Velo

Treasurer-elect: Ramona Moenter

Secretary: Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen

Secretary-elect:

Nominating Chair:

Board of Trustees

Chairperson: Sue Cook

Trustees: Cindy Conn (Treasurer), Greg Halbe, Elizabeth Iannarino, Todd Jacobson, Victor John, Melody Leidheiser, Janet Miller, Judy Smith (Secretary), Hugh Schultz

Commissioners

Administration: Thomas Brownfield

Administration-elect: David Hogrefe

Church Growth: Steve Sterrett

Church Growth-elect:

Church Vitality: Wendy Kennedy

Church Vitality-elect: Annette McCormick

Education: Janice Taft

Education-elect: Mariner Taft

House & Grounds: Mike Kennedy

House & Grounds-elect:

Justice & Mercy: Kris Brant

Justice & Mercy-elect: Janet Miller

Music, Arts & Heritage: Melissa Kulwicki

Music, Arts & Heritage-elect: Jim Griffin

Members-at-Large: Jacquelyn Dean and Aran Cunningham

Welcome Statement

You are welcomed, affirmed, and loved here; our faith informs us that you are a child of a loving God. Your characteristics and gifts will enrich our congregation. In this community, you will be celebrated, embraced, and honored, no matter how you identify or how your identity may evolve. Wherever you are on your faith journey, we invite you to join us in our diverse yet united experience.

First Church is a Faith Community

† Called together by God, the Creator and Sustainer of life, to worship, pray and serve;
† Led by Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Savior, to learn the faith and welcome all God's children;
† Empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness God's love and justice between ourselves, and throughout the world.

Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, welcome and affirm all. We believe we are all created in God's image and called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, called to unite all people in God's love. We are a community seeking God's presence and love in our lives. We seek to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, sexes, gender identities and expressions, family structures, mental, intellectual and physical conditions, economic circumstances, political, theological and faith backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)

—Adopted September 8, 2002 by the congregation

Revisions adopted January 27, 2019 by the congregation



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
God is still speaking,

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