

Saint Giles Presbyterian Church
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April 8, 2020

Friends,

Thursday is Maundy Thursday. On Maundy Thursday, Jesus celebrated the Passover meal the disciples and gave them a new commandment - a new mandate - that they love one another.

I invite you to take time - before, during and after your evening meal - to read and remember.

Peace,
Katherine

A Blessing before the Meal (based on a prayer by Julie M. Hulme)

Loving God, you have given us this feast
to be enjoyed in your presence,
to be shared with those who love you,
to fill this place and these people with good things,
and to strengthen us to love and serve all people.

Loving God, you have given us this hour
to deepen our love for one another,
to strengthen our relationship with you,
to gather around your table,
and to more fully grasp the expansiveness of your love.

Loving God, you have given us so much and yet, we continue to ask:

Bless this meal - and all who have harvested its ingredients
Bless this meal - and all who have prepared it
Bless this meal - and all who will serve it
Bless this meal - and all who will eat it
Bless this meal - as we give thanks for it and for you. Amen.

Readings during the Meal

And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 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. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" (John 13:1-9)

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

A Reading after the Meal

Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13: 33-35)



Closing Prayer

Holy One - God of creation, Lord of life,
Companioning Spirit,
thank you for the experience of this meal -
for what we know (what feels safe and secure)
and for what remains a mystery (what is unknown
and unknowable).

As you have nourished us with your love,
may we nourish the lives of everyone we encounter
with love far greater than our own.

In Christ and through the Spirit. Amen

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please Pray for these Members, Relatives and Friends

Pat Lindsay, Rachel Williams, Sandra Richbourg, **Charolette Brown**, Libby Morton, Dan Grassi, Dick Grassi, **Paula Hagler**, Dave Smith, Carol Pope, Aleta Wheeler, Marie Minani, Inez Ruchte, Andrew Scharfe, **Peggie Bell, Jeane Nagel, Peggy McNeill**

- **Sallie Taylor's sister, Janet**
- Jan Morgan's daughter, Anna
- Betty Fetvedt's sister, Peggy
- Marti Ranney's friend Sherrill
- Teresa Johnson's cousin, Kaitlyn
- Charolette Brown's friend, Jaqueline
- Janet Wherry's sons David & Stephen, & her sister Fran
- Rachel & Rodney Williams' daughter, Rene
- Pat & Bob Lindsay's granddaughter Rebecca, niece Stephanie & family, & friend Ann Weber
- Chris Zaineddin's friend Peggy, nieces **Colleen**, & Sourour Dehnadi, **brother Ken**, & friend Paul Hutter & family
- Dave & Rita Hart's friends Max, Terry, neighbor Mary & her family
- Roberta Dibble's friend Margaret Rothman
- Carmen Rosa, along with Tania Valentine & Maurice Kersey
- Friends of Hess & Hart families, Max & Leatha Carey & family, & Allen Lee & Family
- Jo Lourens' father Flip Viviers
- Kimberly & Chad Craven's friend & her family
- Lisa, coworker of Koreen Thomasson, & Lisa's husband Ed
- Sara Monazah's grandmother Zary
- Carol Pope's brother, David
- Kathy & Bob Wolinski's daughter, Amy
- John Lavender's brother Don Allen Lavender, & John & Susie's niece's husband Ben Cooper
- Nicole Goolsby's mother Lyn Rion
- Joe Moody's sister Mary Lynn
- Cindy Hemminger & family following her 5 year old cousin Hazel's diagnosis with Leukemia
- Donald and Nancy Ross' friend Terri McIrvine, and her husband and daughters
- Mary Ellen Jackson's cousin Betty Turner
- Frank Boyd, following a second surgery for a detached retina
- The Tatum-Carter family, following the death of their friend Matthew
- **Chris Maxwell's sister Cecile**
- **John, Carin and Elizabeth Iager following the death of John's sister Cindy, who died on Saturday, March 28 following a fight with COVID-19**
- **Family and friends of Ray Kressman, following his death on Friday, March, 27th**
- **Don & Shirley Sprinkle's family member Whitney Huskey, following COVID-19 diagnosis, and Whitney's daughter as her mother undergoes treatment**

*requests in bold have been recently added or are in need of special prayer.

If you need assistance with shopping or other errands, please contact Emmie (office@saintgiles.org) or Katherine (katherine@saintgiles.org).

If you are able to offer assistance with shopping or other errands, please contact Emmie (office@saintgiles.org) or Katherine (katherine@saintgiles.org).



This beautiful double rainbow was captured by Dave Gospodarek at Smith Mountain Lake. Where do you see beauty in your life?

Homewood nursery has informed us that Easter Lilies will not be available this year. If you were planning to give a Lily in honor or memory of someone(s), we encourage you to stick with that plan by giving those funds to an organization that helps our neighbors. Maybe a local charity? A group supporting small businesses or restaurateurs? An extra thank-you to the person who collects your trash, brings your mail, delivers your groceries? You may also give to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund which is being used to assist our many neighbors.



Photo by British Library on Unsplash

Addendum related to Live-Streaming:

Friends -

Several of you have reached out to inquire about Saint Giles using ZOOM or Facetime Live to live-stream worship services. I have considered both options. I am continuing with the podcast for several reasons.

- **Health and well-being:** The health and well-being of our staff-team and community of faith is my top priority. Requiring, even asking, folks to come to the church puts everyone at an increased risk of exposure. Initiating new ministries (and a new learning curve) adds to already heightened anxiety.
 - In addition to physical health, I am aware of online security concerns (including “zoom blasting” and being “zombomb”) and pop-up advertising (which can often be misleading). While some folks will navigate these with ease, others are more easily confused.
- **Maintaining reasonable workloads:** I am the only staff-member coming into the office on a regular basis. While some activities in the life of St Giles are not happening, those that continue (worship, pastoral/congregational care, communication/outreach, supporting our neighbors) take more time to organize, coordinate and implement.
- **Awareness of who we are:** Saint Giles is a faith community of 259 members, 100 of whom are over 65 years old. While some in our congregation use live-stream technology on a daily basis, many others do not use live-stream technology regularly or even at-all. As a reminder: our faith community includes members who do not have or use email.
 - **I am aware we have folks who would like more from the podcast.** To that end, we launched an extended podcast that includes a welcome, one or two songs, several prayers, the preaching and a charge and benediction. Links to the podcasts are imbedded in the electronic At-Home Worship Guide. This week’s electronic At-Home Worship Guide will include links to additional recordings: songs from Mona, YouTube recordings of anthems, etc.
 - To be clear: we are offering an extended podcast, an At-Home Worship Guide with hyperlinks and a hardcopy At-Home Worship Guide that is sent with a printed sermon.

- **Stewardship of resources:** learning (and utilizing) new technology takes time and requires skills/talent I do not possess. I need to use my time and energy utilizing the tools we already have in-place to provide an effective and meaningful worship experience.
 - **Sidebar:** Conversation among clergy includes an awareness of streaming-related challenges on Sunday mornings, especially 10:30am-12:00pm. My limited experience viewing live-stream worship has included significant technical difficulties, even when such live-stream worship is supported by highly experienced volunteers and staff.
- **Screen Fatigue:** I have significant concerns about screen fatigue in a time of social distancing. I have colleagues who participate in 6-8 live-streaming calls/day. I speak with friends whose children are required to participate in live-stream school and extra-curricular activities. While social connection IS vital, I am uneasy about adding to the screen-burden.
 - **Note:** This is one reason we have 12 folks making regular phone calls to the households in our congregation. I want folks to have regular interaction with members of their faith community. Email and USPS mailings provide contact; phone calls invite communication.
- On March 22, I posted the following message on my personal Facebook page. The post intends to communicate my experience and raise questions about the rapid increase of live-streamed worship services.

I am pushing back (big time) on my urge to do/provide everything these days...facilitating worship, connecting with parishioners, serving neighbors-in-need, saying "yes" to every suggestion, etc.

Maybe my "Coronan Discipline" (thanks, Sis, for this amazing phrase!) should be to slow down, pause the urge to "fix" and sit with a couple disconcerting questions:

Is "this" sustainable over time? Does "this" provide comfort or heighten anxiety? Does "this" support resiliency or further dependency? Does "this" respond to an actual need or my need to/to be...? Is "this" about what I am called to do or keeping up with what others appear to be doing? about keeping up with _____ Church?

*Peace,
kk*

Several of you have inquired about other opportunities to use live-stream technology during this time.

- Our Youth Program Director, James Brown, is using ZOOM for Youth Sunday School and a Sunday Afternoon Gathering for Youth. We purchased a basic ZOOM subscription for this purpose. The subscription uses one moderator (host) at \$14.99/month/moderator. When we purchased the subscription, we explored the “next higher” subscription package. The next higher package requires that we identify ten moderators at \$19.99/month/moderator.
- If there are other groups in the congregation who wish to use ZOOM for Sunday School or Fellowship activities and have already identified who would serve as the moderator, please let Emmie (office@saintgiles.org) or me (katherine@saintgiles.org) know.

I am deeply grateful for the community of Saint Giles: for your ideas, suggestions and words of encouragement; for the ways you are supporting our neighbors in need; and for your willingness to engage in active conversation about what God is calling us to do and be at this unusual time in our country, indeed world. This work - of assessing needs, exploring options and identifying the way forward - IS the work of discernment. Thank you for sharing the work and the ministry.

Peace to you and yours,
Katherine