

# MVLP Gather Round E-News - Issue #7

April 8, 2020

This is the seventh issue of our E-newsletter, "Gather 'Round," to call us together through the internet to share news and needs and stories with each other. If you have a tale to tell or a perspective to share, please send it on for the next issue!

## Maunday Thursday

Our Holy Communion and Tenebrae Service will happen tomorrow, Thursday, April 9, at 7:00 p.m. Bring a candle and a glass of grape juice/wine and a bit of bread to your table when you "gather 'round." I have attached the Order of Worship to this email. Those of you volunteering to read a scripture have already received the text. (If not, let me know right away so I can send it to you.)

How to attend the service? If you receive this newsletter, you have been invited. Simply **click on the link** provided here:

Topic: Betsy's Zoom-Maundy Thursday

Time: Apr 9, 2020 06:30 PM (Okay to log in early; service starts at 7 PM.)

- Join Zoom Meeting at <https://zoom.us/j/183836947>
- Or, if your computer doesn't have speakers and a microphone, you can dial in (301-715-8592).
- If you need it, this is the Meeting ID (183 836 947).

## Good Friday

The Foster Churches Association will hold its annual Good Friday service on Friday, April 10, at noon, with a reading of scriptures, prayers, and a reflection on the Passion of the Cross, with Pastor Scott Knox, presiding. The Order of Worship is attached to this newsletter. To participate:

Robert Hollis is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Good Friday Worship Foster Churches Association

Time: Apr 10, 2020 12:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/768078368?pwd=RW1QN3dOa1ViUFd3Qk5XMTNwTnVDU T09>

Meeting ID: 768 078 368

Password: 025438

If you need to call in, use this number (253-215-8782)

### **The Heart of the Gospel: Rev. Betsy Reflects**

It is the Passover. Jesus and his disciples – and probably a number of women followers, who else would have been in the kitchen making the matzoth balls? – have gathered in an upper room to share the meal. They have been doing this all their lives, since they were young children. And now they are celebrating this meal with their teacher and their closest friends. Picture them sitting around, reclining on one elbow, dipping pieces of pita bread in bowls of hummus, licking their fingers, talking quietly, laughing, raising their mugs of wine, nodding to the women for a refill. It's like any other thanksgiving meal any of us might share, remembering the Exodus centuries earlier, glad to be in Jerusalem on this special night.

I don't imagine they were thinking what was to come next. Jesus had been talking nonsense about dying, but he always seemed to have things under control. The crowds had been spellbound all week by his teaching. Tomorrow, he will show the high priest a thing or two, overthrow the Romans, usher in the kingdom of God. Jesus will have it all planned.

And then, something extraordinary happens. Jesus gets up, takes off his robe, ties a towel around his waist, and kneels down to wash the disciples' feet. What is he *doing*? This is the work of servants, not the work of their beloved teacher! As he makes his way around the circle, pouring water over dusty, callused feet, rubbing them dry with a towel, the mood changes to uncomfortable, awkward. The conversation ceases, the room goes silent. Jesus reaches Peter who protests. "You'll never wash my feet." Jesus has a ready answer: "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Peter is ready to jump in all over. He loves his teacher.

When everyone is washed, Peter too, Jesus puts on his robe and comes and sits with them at the table. "Do you know what I have done to you?" he asks. Jesus is as hard to understand as ever. They must be missing something.... And then he tells them: "I have set you an example." I, your teacher, have assumed the role of servant in this act of hospitality. *This* is what it means to be great: to serve one another. If I, your teacher, can wash your feet, surely you can wash each other's feet.

And then Jesus takes this activity and turns it into a principle: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." This is the heart of the gospel.

**Special Prayers:** Please remember...

❖ Rose and Herold's son, Chris Desilus, and their daughter-in-law, have both tested positive for COVID-19. Pray for their recovery.

❖ Ellen and Charlie Wilkinson's friend, Patricia Sanders Miller (and a Luther cousin) who lives in Cantonment, Florida, lost her husband to a heart condition last week. Ellen asks for us to keep Pat and family in our prayers.

❖ Carl asked for prayers for his cousin, the Rev. Mindy Reed, who is suffering from the final stage of Multiple Sclerosis.

❖ For Glen McCrea, Barbara's friend, whose doctor sent him for testing because he was running a fever. He discovered that there are now four sites in RI, and it's quick and easy and safe. Praying that he's negative.

❖ For all the health care workers who are risking their lives to help those who are infected, that they may have the resources and stamina they need to stem the tide.

### **Gather 'Round for Bible Study**

Both Rev. Betsy and Pastor Bob are leading Bible Study by Zoom. To participate, **ask to be invited** with your email or phone number to be included in the meeting notice.

**Psalms:** Tuesday & Friday mornings at 10:00 a.m. with Betsy, reading and discussing selected psalms. Continues Tuesday, April 14. Contact (by Monday) [BetsyAldrichGarland@gmail.com](mailto:BetsyAldrichGarland@gmail.com).

**Gospel of John:** Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. with Bob. Continues April 8 for a discussion of chapters 18-19. Contact (by Wednesday morning) Bob at [revbobh@gmail.com](mailto:revbobh@gmail.com).

### **What Are You Up To?**

❖ Walk & Talk participants are rethinking where to walk. To find out where and when, call Sonja at 397-4455.

❖ Sonja is not the only one filling the feeders. Jeanne Lavoie has two "squirrel-proof" bird feeders, but her squirrels can't read!

### **Window on Wildlife**

❖ **Pink Moon:** Yesterday, April 7, the full moon was a *supermoon*, the closest it will be to Earth in 2020. Tonight it will still be big, although if you look carefully enough, it will appear slightly out-of-round on the right side. This moon is called the Pink Moon by Native Americans because spring wildflowers are blooming. Kim and I drove to Craigville Beach to see it rise over the water. Amazing!

❖ Remember, too, *Easter is based on the moon*. It's always the *first* Sunday after the *first* full moon after the Spring Equinox – which explains why some years Easter is in late March and other years in early to mid-April. Who knew? Now *you* do!

❖ Speaking of spring, is anyone hearing peepers?

## **Easter Sunrise**

Moosup Valley Church invites everyone to our annual *Easter Sunrise Service on April 12 at 7 a.m. at Green Acres* behind the church. Carl is going to stand by the cross with his mobile phone when he joins us by Zoom! I will attach the bulletin for the service to the next issue of “Gather ‘Round,” which will go out on Saturday, so everyone will be able to follow along.

## **Easter Worship**

Pastor Bob will offer an *Easter Reflection at 10 a.m.* on Sunday morning on the Mount Vernon Larger Parish Facebook page. More information will be available in the next issue of “Gather ‘Round” on Saturday.

**Weekly Offerings** may be mailed for:

**Mt. Vernon** to Ron Allen (116 Barbs Hill Road, Greene, RI 02827),

**Moosup Valley** to Pat Safstrom (76 Moosup Valley Road, Foster, RI 02825),

**Rice City** to Phyllis Dexter (53 Moosup Valley Road, Foster, RI 02825).

## **Prayer for People Critically Ill or Facing Great Uncertainty**

God of the present moment,  
God who in Jesus stills the storm  
and soothes the frantic heart;  
bring hope and courage to all  
who wait or work in uncertainty.  
Bring hope that you will make them the equal  
of whatever lies ahead.  
Bring them courage to endure what cannot be avoided,  
for your will is health and wholeness;  
you are God, and we need you. Amen.

- Adapted from *New Zealand Prayer Book*

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Pastor Bob can be reached at [revbobh@gmail.com](mailto:revbobh@gmail.com) or 401-440-7831.

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