



VIRTUAL Holy Week

March 28-April 3, 2021

Chatham Heights Baptist Church
First Baptist Church
Pocahontas Bassett Baptist Church
Starling Avenue Baptist Church

Daily Devotions

Maundy Thursday Virtual Service at 7:00 pm

Good Friday Virtual Service at 7:00 pm

Join us at-home on the First Baptist Church Facebook page (bit.ly/3lQTLxX), YouTube (bit.ly/2PxuXPK), or Zoom (1-833-548-0276, Meeting ID: 276 632 6336, #, #)

Holy Monday, March 29

The Song is Just Beginning

Isaiah 42:1-9

Rev. Dr. Mike Hatfield, Chatham Heights Baptist Church

Holy Week is beginning. Our journey is in the final stretch towards its conclusion. It was a year ago that everything changed. Our churches went from imagining a “Reshape” of our future to just figuring how to keep worship and ministry alive in an age of Covid-19. We never imagined a virtual world of faith where community had to be re-imagined beyond a physical gathering of believers. We truly had to trust that Jesus was right when he said: “Wherever 2 or more are gathered in my name, there I will be also.” It’s a new world, even as things return to “normal” there is no longer a “normal” to consider.

Our church’s needed re-imagining before 2020. Attendance, numbers, outreach, effectiveness was all waning long before a virus took the headlines of our thinking. But like anyone who carefully reads and allows scripture to read their lives; we are not in some “new time.” Such transitions have happened before.

So, what does this have to do with Isaiah 42? The prophet sings, (it is a song you know), that the new image and revelation of God is found in a Servant. Even if the writer’s original intent were to speak to exilic Israel, to the Christian Jesus becomes the fulfillment of that image as the Holy Servant of God.

The song as three distinct parts to its message. The first verses reveal Yahweh speaking about the Servant. The second section depicts God speaking to the servant. The third and final portion is the last verse. There Yahweh God turns and speaks to the People. (i.e., us)

Israel is between its past and its future here. The kingdom that was, is gone. It will not return. The calling of God to God’s people continues and is found, not in a Davidic monarchy, but in a Servant of all.

As we sit in our own in-between time, the post-exile of Covid-19 demands us to sing once more the song of God’s Servant. In this song we will find our identity, and our future as God’s Children born of a Servant’s love, grace, and sacrifice. Just as before, the Prophet sings to us at this time and moment, the song found in verse 9: Behold, the former things have come to pass, now I declare new things; before they sprout I proclaim them to you.”

May all God’s children hear the word of the Lord to us and embrace the new song, for our new day; that Christ came and called us unto.

Holy Tuesday, March 30

Foolish

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Rev. Ashley Gill Harrington, Starling Avenue Baptist Church

Paul writes to the Corinthians, “For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” Paul perhaps knows this better than anyone having been so transformed by the love and call of God that his life radically changed. Where he once held power and brought destruction, he now holds humility and brings community in Christ. Some might look at Paul’s life and label it foolishness to walk away from wielding the power of the Empire to walking in the Way of Christ.

But for all of us, the Way of Christ *is* foolish. Though our culture has made Christianity such commonplace, I think if we look closely we will see what is sometimes labeled “Christian” can be self-serving, easy even. To be a follower of Jesus doesn’t come at a cost, but rather can work in our favor at work, in relationships. But looking closely to Christ that we claim to follow in word and deed, we might find that we have made it too painless, comfortable even. For the Way of Jesus doesn’t present an easy button, but rather a cross.

What fool would choose to offer their cheek when struck already? What fool would leave behind everything they knew in this life to follow Jesus? What fool would forgive someone over and over again infinitely? What fool chooses to be hated instead of revered? What fool would choose to be last instead of first? What fool would choose humility over power? What fool turns their weapons into plowshares? What fool goes to the trouble of building bridges when it is much easier to build walls? What fool chooses to serve instead of being served?

As Paul points out to the Corinthians, God chose the foolish. God chose the lowly. God chose the despised. So now how do we reorient ourselves to do the same?

Moving through this Holy Week, how might you choose the foolish thing? What choices can you make like dining with one who will betray you? Washing the feet of those who will desert you? Forgiving those who hurt you?

As we make these foolish choices, we might find that they lead us to wisdom, to life, to love.

Holy Wednesday, March 31

John 13:21-32

Rev. A. Brian Harrington, Starling Avenue Baptist Church

On the third day of Holy Week, we turn our attention to the betrayal that led to Jesus' death. It is impossible to know everything that motivated the most infamous betrayal in history, but we do know that Judas is perhaps the most despised character in the whole biblical narrative. We almost cannot help ourselves from shouting, as we recall the betrayal, "How could you—how could you betray Jesus?"

But as quick as we are to villainize Judas, we are equally slow to consider the way we, often beneath our awareness, betray Jesus ourselves. Sure, none of us are selling Jesus out for thirty pieces of silver, but are we sure that we never, intentionally or unintentionally, betray the core commitments of Jesus' life and ministry?

Jesus, like the Hebrew prophets before him, asserted that the core of God's desire for the world is justice for all creation, that all of God's children might be able to thrive. That means that all the oppressed should be liberated, that the orphan and the widow and the stranger in our midst should be lifted out of the conditions that prevent abundant living, that the hungry and housing insecure and sick and imprisoned must be extricated from their pitiable positions, that the rich must sell everything to make the impoverished no longer poor, that the so-called sinners and tax collectors are beloved, essential members of God's family.

And yet, where do we often focus our attention? We worry about attracting new and retaining old church members, particularly those who will best fit in "our" church. We worry about our budgets and build new silos for excess resources that could make a difference in the world today. We are unkind to each other when anything even seems to get in the way of "our" church surviving just as we desire. And then we criticize Judas for betraying Jesus?

Holy Week offers us the opportunity to contemplate not how we were culpable in Jesus' death 2,000 years ago but how we are participating today in the death of Jesus' dream of the kingdom of heaven present here and now. How are we distorting the message of Jesus, how can we repent, and how can we again be faithful? Instead of vilifying Judas, may we ask ourselves these questions so we don't become Judas.

Maundy Thursday, April 1

Our Servant-God

John 13:1-5, 12-17, 34-35

Rev. Susan Spangenberg, Pocahontas Bassett Baptist Church

John tells us that on His last night on earth, Jesus knew ***“the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God.”*** With this statement, he leads his readers to expect Jesus to then perform some divine, majestic act. But what is that divine act? It is the last thing anyone would have expected. He dresses like a household servant and washes his disciples’ dirty feet! Imagine how he might have responded instead. At the very least, He might have considered it beneath the Son of God to wash dirty feet. Even more possible, He might have been so consumed by His own thoughts and emotions – of His impending agony, of Judas’ betrayal and His disciples’ desertion – that anger and exasperation might have been all He could muster. But none of that is in the character of our God. Our God is love. . .and what does that love do? It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. It seeks to meet the need of the other, no matter how lowly the task. So at that moment when He had every right to be all about Himself, he was all about His friends.

Jesus also held this knowledge about Himself with no contempt toward His disciples for their ignorance. He might have told them, “Tonight I will be absolutely clear because you still don’t get it. I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am eternal God. I am worthy of your worship.” No doubt, their resulting expressions of love and adoration might have strengthened and comforted Him as He faced the horrors to come. Yet even back on the Mount of Transfiguration, when Peter put Jesus on par with Moses and Elijah, it was God the Father who corrected him. As Paul wrote, Jesus never “regarded equality with God as something to be grasped.” (Phil. 2: 6)

That night, Jesus left them an example they would never forget. And the next day, ***He loved them to the end***, and laid down His life for them. Unlike people, who quit teams or jobs or choirs, because they don’t get to play first string, or receive the promotion, or sing the cantata solo; Jesus showed his disciples, and us, what His followers do. They humbly serve. It has been said that while humility certainly isn’t thinking too much of yourself; it also isn’t thinking too little. *Humility is having no thought of yourself.*

Then He gave them, and us, a new commandment – love one another *in the same way*.

Some Questions:

**What rights/privileges have I expected because of my experience, position, education etc.?*

**Whose feet might need “washing” today? How will I wash them?*

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I call You “Lord”, yet my Lord is a servant who serves me! When You walked this earth, You did not take the form or position of the God You are. You were one of us, and the servant of all. Forgive me for expecting more for myself than You ever expected for Yourself. This day I affirm, once again, that I am Yours. Put me to whatever work You will, for the sake of Your glory and Your kingdom’s gain. Amen.*

Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00 pm

Facebook (bit.ly/3lQTLxX), **YouTube** (bit.ly/2PxuXPK),
Zoom (1-833-548-0276, Meeting ID: 276 632 6336, #, #)

*As you prepare to worship at home, gather elements for communion
(bread, juice, whatever you have available) to be used later in the service.*

Prelude

Beneath the Cross of Jesus
arr. James Mansfield

Peter Ramsey &
Mary Helen Cameron

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Libby Grammer

Psalter: Psalm 116:1-2,12-19

Rev. Brian Harrington

Call To Worship

Rev. Dr. Mike Hatfield

In the growing darkness we gather. Our Lenten journey has brought us here. Jesus, our Teacher and Lord, sets before us a towel, a bowl, bread, a cup. He gives us an example and a commandment ever new: to love one another as he has loved us. This is how everyone will know we are his disciples, when we love each other.

Invocation & Lord's Prayer

Rev. Ashley Gill Harrington

**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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Hymn

I Then Shall Live

FINLANDIA

I then shall live as one who's been forgiven;
I'll walk with joy to know my debts are paid.
I know my name is clear before my Father;
I am his child, and I am not afraid.
So greatly pardoned, I'll forgive another;
the law of love I gladly will obey.

I then shall live as one who's learned compassion;
I've been so loved that I'll risk loving too.
I know how fear builds walls instead of bridges;
I dare to see another's point of view.
And when relationships demand commitment,
then I'll be there to care and follow through.

Your kingdom come around and through and in me,
your power and glory, let them shine through me;
your hallowed name, O may I bear with honor,
and may your living Kingdom come in me.
The Bread of Life, O may I share with honor,
and may you feed a hungry world through me.

Old Testament Lesson: Exodus 12:1-14

Rev. Susan Spangenberg

Hymn

In Remembrance of Me

RED

In remembrance of Me, eat this bread. In remembrance of Me, drink this wine.
In remembrance of Me, pray for the time when God's own will is done.

In remembrance of Me, heal the sick. In remembrance of Me, feed the poor.
In remembrance of Me, open the door and let your brother in, let him in.

Take, eat, and be comforted, Drink, and remember, too,
that this is My body and precious blood shed for you, shed for you.

In remembrance of Me, search for truth. In remembrance of Me, always love.
In remembrance of Me, don't look above, but in your heart, look in your heart for God.
Do this in remembrance of Me.

Gospel Lesson: John 13:1-7, 31b-35

Rev. Dr. Mike Hatfield

Worship In Song

Jesus Took the Cup

Hal Hopson

Trio: Mary Helen Cameron, David Cameron, Becky Collins

Organ: Peter Ramsey

Communion

Using your gathered elements for communion (bread, juice, whatever you have available), listen for guidance to partake together.

Benediction

Closing Hymn

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

DENNIS

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Postlude

Solemn March

Peter Ramsey

Felix Mendelssohn

Good Friday, April 2

John 18:1-19:42

Rev. Brian Harrington, Starling Avenue Baptist Church

Today we remember the state-sanctioned execution of Jesus, our Savior's death by capital punishment. The life of Jesus, that was marked by an overwhelming concern for the health and peace, physically and spiritually, for all people was ended by violence.

As conveyed by the Gospel writers, the religious and political leaders of 1st century Palestine believed that Jesus' message of love and justice and peace was threatening enough to the status quo, to their power structures, that the only solution was a final solution. The violence of crucifixion would solve their problem.

Tragically, misguided atonement theories that claim God could never love sinful humankind without the violence of blood sacrifice within the Godhead subtly suggests that if violence was the answer for our salvation then it must be the answer to other problems, too. When non-Christians and Middle Eastern Christians occupied the Holy Land, the answer was to so violently remove them that eyewitnesses reported blood running down the streets. When a costly war had gone on too long, annihilate two cities, violently murdering over 100,000 men, women, and children. When a country has given greater significance to the second amendment to the US Constitution than to the sixth of the Ten Commandments, we passively accept gun violence, even frequent mass murder, as the cost of freedom, when it is not.

In fact, if we only rewind a few hours from Jesus on the cross, we find a Jesus who explicitly and expressly condemned violence, even though violence against those who came to arrest him could have saved him from his violent death. Jesus so despised violent confrontation that he healed the ear of the officer who Peter had struck with his sword. Jesus was willing to be the victim of violence in order to not be a perpetrator of violence. Indeed, Jesus showed the extent of God's love for all people, even to those who wished him harm, by submitting himself to death, even death on a cross.

So may we never view this day the divine sanction and blessing of violence but its repudiation. And may we then, in love for our Christ and for all God's children, demand that our swords be beat into plowshares, our assault rifles fashioned into pruning hooks, and our war rooms and execution chambers transformed into halls of diplomacy, reconciliation, reparation, and peace. For this, Jesus lived and died.

Good Friday Service at 7:00 pm

Facebook (bit.ly/3lQTLxX), **YouTube** (bit.ly/2PxuXPK),
Zoom (1-833-548-0276, Meeting ID: 276 632 6336, #, #)

Prelude *Savior, Thy Dying Love* Baxter Jennings
arr. Wood

Welcome Rev. Dr. Mike Hatfield

Hymn *What Wondrous Love Is This* WONDROUS LOVE

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down;
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul,
for my soul, Christ laid aside his crown for my soul!

To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to God and to the Lamb I will sing!
To God and to the Lamb, who is the great "I AM," while millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing, while millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on!
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
and through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
and through eternity I'll sing on!

Invocation & Lord's Prayer Rev. Susan Spangenberg

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

HAMBURG

When I survey the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ, my God;
all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Psalm 22

Worship in Song

When I Think of the Nail Prints

Mary Kay Beal

Duet: David Cameron & Becky Collins, Piano: Mary Helen Cameron

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Rev. Ashley Gill Harrington

Hymn

Were You There

WERE YOU THERE

Were you there when thy crucified my Lord?
Were you there when thy crucified my Lord?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when thy crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

The Scriptural Narrative of Betrayal & Passion

Revs. Harrington & Spangenberg

The Service of Darkness

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness
but will have the light of life." John 8:12b*

*The gathering darkness is symbolic of the shadows that settled about our Lord as his enemies
closed in upon him and his disciples deserted him. The candle left burning, removed from our
sight, speaks to us of the One who remained faithful to the will of God in the darkest hour.*

-Observe a Moment of Prayer Silence-

Holy Saturday, April 3

The Great Silence

Matthew 27:57-66

Rev. Dr. Libby Grammer, First Baptist Church

“When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock.”

He’s really gone. No really. Jesus has died. His body has been placed in a tomb. Joseph of Arimathea made sure he had one. This death is no illusion. His limp form was taken from the cross, wrapped in cloth, and laid to rest. The women were there; they saw the stone rolled away and witnessed the body of their Lord gently left on the stone.

The religious leaders and Pilate were actually a little worried people might believe Jesus to be alive if the body was stolen, so they secured the tomb by rolling the stone back over the entrance and placing guards at the doorway. He’s really in there, and he will stay that way unless something drastic happens.

We can only guess what happened as Jesus “descended to the dead” (1 Peter 3:19; 4:1-8). But we know that like Daniel sealed in the lion’s den, Jesus has been sealed away, and we await his deliverance from death, but not just any death: a death that left him feeling forsaken by God in his final hours: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matt 27:6; quoting Psalm 22:1).

God’s incarnation came to experience our lowliest, loneliest, and most painful suffering and death. The crucifixion was where humanity least expected to find God—on a cross, in a sealed tomb. Yet, because God was found there, we know where God is in our lives today: when we feel forsaken and alone, when we suffer and find ourselves in Hell on earth, there is our God, suffering alongside us in the depths.

Holy Saturday should open us to holy silence. The deafening silence of God in the moments following Christ’s death that lasted the better part of two days should be our devotional time today. This isn’t a time for words. There are no words left. Christ is dead and buried. We sit with that reality as the disciples did.

-continued-

Like the holy space that is sitting in a silent cemetery, hold today's holy moments in quiet stillness. As one preacher said it: "The dead calm of Holy Saturday is a reminder that no one gets to Easter without going through a graveyard first." (James, E. Lamkin)

Use part of the Liturgy of the Hours for Holy Saturday as your devotional guide this day:

"Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear." (RCC Liturgy of the Hours)

About Our Worship Services

Maundy Thursday

The English word *Maundy* for this service is derived through Middle English and Old French *mandé*, from the Latin *mandatum* (also the origin of the English word “mandate”), the first word of the phrase “*Mandatum novum do vobis ut diligatis invicem sicut dilexi vos*” or “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”

On Maundy Thursday, we commemorate Jesus’ last meal with his disciples before his crucifixion: remembering how he taught his disciples to be servants to one another through the washing of feet and remembering Jesus’ command to the disciples to love one another.

Good Friday

The Tenebrae, meaning “darkness” or “shadows,” dates from medieval times. In our observance, scripture, song, and silence lead us in a prolonged meditation on the events of salvation following the Last Supper through the entombment of Christ. With each progressive step of the Passion, the candles are extinguished until only the one Christ candle remains. When it, too, is removed from sight, we ponder the apparent victory of the forces of evil at the moment of Christ’s death. The Christ candle returns with its ray of promise for the third day.

The cross is veiled in black, symbolic of the death of Christ, and of mourning.

Chatham Heights Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Mike Hatfield, Pastor

Rev. David Cameron, Associate Minister

First Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Libby Grammer, Pastor

Becky Collins, Music Minister

Baxter Jennings, Accompanist

Pocahontas Bassett Baptist Church

Rev. Susan Spangenberg, Pastor

Mary Helen Cameron, Music Minister

Peter Ramsey, Organist

Starling Avenue Baptist Church

Rev. Ashley Gill Harrington, Co-Pastor

Rev. Brian Harrington, Co-Pastor

Martinsville, Virginia