

April 1, 2021 Maundy Thursday Communion 1 Corinthians
4:8-16

Dearly Beloved;

Our area, Prince Edward-Hastings is rated Green. That is why we are holding in-person worship gatherings. We continue to mask, socially distance, and following the Public Health Guidelines. Should our Governmental leaders invoke a lockdown, I will request Session to suspend services. In that case, the Sermon will appear on the Church Web Site, as we are doing, and the video link to, The Sermon From The Dining Room Table, will continue. Our local numbers are very good at the moment but as others have said, we need to be careful.

We meet tonight for several reasons. This is the Thursday night of HOLY WEEK. It is the anniversary of that night in which Jesus met in the Upper Room, and having celebrated the Passover meal with HIS disciples, He used the remnants of that meal to give them what we now call, The Lord's Supper, the sacrament of holy communion. We will eat, and drink and remember, just as Jesus told us to do.

Tomorrow is Good Friday. So we are also mindful this is the night when Judas betrayed Jesus, facilitating HIS arrest, the trials before the Sanhedrin, the puppet King Herod, and the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate. The events remembered on this night lead directly to the crucifixion of Jesus as ordered by the Roman Procurator. This night's events

set in train the suffering, the bleeding and the death of Jesus. We remember all of those things.

I want you to remember one more thing. This is April Fool's Day. And that is the reason for my reading to you, from Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians, chapter 4:8-16. He writes, "We are fools for Christ...weak...dishonoured...brutally treated...cursed...persecuted...we endure it, when we are slandered, we answer kindly..." I am not suggesting that here in Canada, or Ontario we are brutally treated, because we are not. But there are places in our world where followers of Jesus are treated brutally. There have been more martyrs, people killed for their faith in Jesus in the 20th, and 21st centuries, than in the balance of what we call Christian history.

It is true that we are not taken terribly seriously by the balance of the citizens of our nation. We are a minority. And there are moments when our rights are simply ignored by the culture in the midst of which we live. Some think we are weird because we believe. The majority do not take us seriously. And do not think about us at all. I want to underline the fact that you are here. You have chosen to gather. You choose to read sermons. You choose to watch videos, like The Sermon From The Dining Room Table. As Martin Luther said, you too have chosen to be baptized, to have your children baptized, to profess your faith. You support charitable works that provide care for others, because you believe in Jesus. This is one of those evenings of the year when you are like Paul, visibly "fools for Christ."

Gathering in HIS name, we have hummed along as Sherry played the choruses and hymn tunes. Were it not for the propulsion of droplets and the sharing of the air, we would be singing the words, "We have come into HIS house, The Lord's My Shepherd, Let Us Break Bread Together." Do not forget your presence and participation declares you have gathered in the House of Jesus. Your presence declares that Jesus is your Shepherd, and we break bread together to remember Jesus. You are numbered among those who follow HIM. You trust in HIM for eternal life, which is not just about the future, it is also about the life you live today. Eternity is here. Jesus our Saviour is alive and with us. HIS HOLY SPIRIT, guides and guards our steps. All the time, no matter what. Like the apostles, we are fools for Christ. I can pay you no higher compliment, and I can issue you no greater praise. God loves you...and so do I.

Let us pray;

Lord Jesus, we remember you were betrayed. And we confess we too have moments and journey through times when we forget we are yours. Forgive us we pray. Renew us by the means of your Spirit. Walk with us. Minister to us. Use us in the service of others, in YOUR name, which is above every name. Amen