

# Created for Community

## Holy Week

-Rev. Susan Candeia, Bishop

On the night before he was betrayed, on the night before he was arrested, crucified and died, Jesus gathered with his disciples in community. He gathered to wash their feet as an example and give them a commandment which would shape and guide the community –

***Love one another as I have loved you.***

On Maundy Thursday we read from the gospel of John, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter:

*Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end . . . 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, "Unless I wash you, you have no share of me." . . . "So if I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."*

This is how love is shared in community, not from a position over others, imposing on others to meet my needs, but with humility and service. This is how love shapes a community, by being vulnerable, putting aside one's own agenda, to bend down and touch the needs of those around us. This is what it means to be beloved community. And this is what Jesus needed before he faced the last days of his life. Isn't this what we need in the present days of our lives?

*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 another. (John 13:34-35).*

We often hear this new commandment in terms of loving one another **inside** the community of the church. That is the beloved community. After all it does not say "love others" but "love one another." But what we continue to discover is that while we put up walls and barriers around community, Jesus tears down those walls, reconciling us to God which connects us to all of God's creation, expanding community to embrace all of God's people. With a more expansive understanding and living of community, how might people know that we are indeed disciples of Jesus by the love that we show? How might we follow the example of Jesus into the communities that surround us?

As we walk through Holy Week with Jesus, with one another, with those who don't even recognize this as Holy Week, may we continue to give thanks for the gift of community, may we find ways to both give and receiving humble, caring love, and may we experience being part of God's beloved community.

***Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith, as we are being rooted and grounded in love, strengthened by the Spirit, and filled with all the fullness of God.***

***Amen***

*(All Creation Sings, Service of Word and Prayer, page 45)*

