

Davidson College Presbyterian Church
Davidson, North Carolina
Lib McGregor Simmons, Pastor
“Feet”
John 13: 1-17, 31b-35
Maundy Thursday Service at Davidson Presbyterian Church
April 13, 2017

How are your feet feeling tonight?

Are your feet rested?

Did your feet spend all day taking spring break, propped up on the railing of your front porch while you slowly sipped sweet tea?

The disciples’ feet weren’t rested. Their feet were tired. Their feet were dusty, clumps of sand caked between their toes, from walking with Jesus all over the countryside, their feet most recently having come from witnessing Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. Their feet had had a long, hard march on the Palm Sunday parade route into Jerusalem where they had come for the festival of the Passover.

The disciples’ feet were tired. Oh, so tired.

Let me ask you again.

How are your feet feeling tonight?

I bet not many of you are wearing rested feet tonight.

Are your feet tired from working all day?

Are your feet tired from taking care of children, stepchildren, grandchildren all day, or maybe taking care of someone who is sick?

Are your feet tired from running from here to there to yonder trying to get everything done to meet the deadlines...oh, the deadlines...that loom as large as that biblical giant Goliath in your life?

Will you indulge me for just a moment or two as I tell you about my feet?

Not long ago, I went to buy some new gym shoes. I went to one of those fancy stores where they tell you walk to the other side of the store and back while they analyze, while they diagnose your walk.

So I walked to the other side of the store and back.

They said, “Oh, your feet are pronated.”

Your feet are pronated. They turn inward. That’s why you have that great big, hard callous on the inside of your right foot.

I have been thinking about what I was told about my feet.

And it occurred to me that what they said about my feet at the shoe store isn't just about my feet.

It's not just about my feet.

It's about my soul too.

The tired-er my soul gets and the more I turn inward, the more calloused my soul becomes.

Do you think is what may have happened to Judas?

He had a lot of responsibility you know, being the treasurer, keeping the books, for Jesus's movement. When funds got short, it felt like a huge weight on his shoulders, a huge weight that he felt down to the soles of his sandals.

And his soul started turning inward. And it got calloused.

And when your soul turns inward and your soul gets calloused, it is not a long trip from a calloused soul to a betraying heart and tongue. It is not a long trip at all.

Tonight we bring our tired, calloused feet; we bring our inward-turning, calloused souls; we bring our inward-turning, calloused lives.

We bring them here....to get washed...to get washed by our neighbors, to get washed by Jesus. Jesus is here in the hands of our neighbors; he is washing away our tiredness; he is washing away our fear; he is washing away our anxiety about the future; he is washing away our betrayals, loving us all the while, loving us deeply, tenderly, eternally.

And when Jesus puts his tender hands on our calloused feet and souls and caresses them with his gracious love, he is out to change us. He is out to change us and take to where he wants us to go.

He says to us:

There is a lot of pain in this world.

There is a lot of violence in this world.

There is a lot of racism in this world.

There is a lot of injustice in this world.

Now get your feet moving. Move toward that pain, that violence, that racism, that injustice. Go and make your witness.

Do you remember the story of Mother Pollard?

Mother Pollard was part of the African-American community in Montgomery, Alabama, during the start of the historic 1950s bus boycotts. Despite her advanced years, she refused to take the bus and was adamant that she would walk to see change happen, making the statement, "My feet is tired, but my soul is rested."

May you leave this place tonight, ready to head out into the world, saying "My feet may be tired, but they are washed and my soul is rested and ready to make a witness to Christ in the world."