



ON ONLINE SERVICE
FOR
MAUNDY THURSDAY
2020

Jesus said: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

St Matthew's Anglican Church

Guildford

Welcome to our Maundy Thursday service. We are indeed in unprecedented times, but be encouraged because we read in John chapter 16 verse 33 where Jesus had been encouraging the disciples and helping them to stay focused and he said:

32 “A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

So today we give thanks to modern technology that enables us to meet online or to read this booklet, listen to Christian music and to be encouraged together. However, you are connecting to this service, I encourage you to trust the Lord with all your heart.

Ordinarily this evening we would gather together, share a meal together and look forward to Easter Sunday where we shout with joy He is risen, He is risen indeed, Alleluia! Which of course, we are still able to do in our own homes.

On Maundy Thursday we begin the days of our Lord's passion, death and resurrection, the journey from the supper table to the cross, from the cross to Easter dawn.

This is the day when Christ the true Lamb of God gave himself into the hands of those who would betray and kill him.

This is the day when Christ gathered his disciples in the upper room.

This is the day when Christ took the towel and washed his disciples' feet, showing us the way to serve others as he himself serves us.

This is the day when we usually share in Holy Communion together, reminded of what Christ has done for us on the cross. When we proclaim his death until he comes in glory and we are confident that those who die in Christ will surely live with him.

THE COLLECT:

Almighty Father, who's dear Son, on the night before he died, shared a meal with the disciples, thus instituting Holy Communion:
Mercifully grant that we may receive this gift thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who gives us the gift of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

CONFESSION:

We now come to a time of confession, when we ask God for His forgiveness:

Hebrews 4:16 - So whenever we are in need, we should come bravely before the throne of our merciful God. There we will be treated with undeserved kindness, and we will find help.

Let us take a moment to reflect – before we ask God for His forgiveness...

Heavenly Father, you have loved us with an everlasting love, but we have broken your holy laws and have left undone what we ought to have done. We are sorry for our sins and turn away from them. For the sake of your Son who died for us forgive us, cleanse us and change us. By your Holy Spirit enable us to live for you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Jesus Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed" **Amen** (1Peter 2:24)

THE READINGS:

Exodus 12:1-4 The First Passover Instituted

¹² The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.

⁴ If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbour, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat.

Now to Exodus 12:11-14

¹¹ This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover.

¹² “On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. ¹³ The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

¹⁴ “This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance.

Hear the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

¹ I love the Lord, for he heard my voice;
he heard my cry for mercy.

² **Because he turned his ear to me,
I will call on him as long as I live.**

¹² What shall I return to the Lord
for all his goodness to me?

¹³ **I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord.**

¹⁴ I will fulfil my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people.

¹⁵ **Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his faithful servants.**

¹⁶ Truly I am your servant, Lord;
I serve you just as my mother did;
you have freed me from my chains.

¹⁷ **I will sacrifice a thank offering to you
and call on the name of the Lord.**

¹⁸ I will fulfil my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people,

¹⁹ **in the courts of the house of the Lord—
in your midst, Jerusalem. Praise the Lord.**

A reading from the Book of John Chapter 13, beginning
at verse 1 (1-17)

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour
had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having
loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already

prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.

¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Hear the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

SERMON

Today we recall the history of the Passover in which God leads the Hebrew people out of the bondage of slavery through the blood of an unblemished lamb. We recall the history of the Last Supper in which Jesus shares His last meal with His disciples. Jesus the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

The passages of Scripture assigned for Maundy Thursday take us beyond recollection of what happened, to re-presenting them to the people of Jesus Christ today. They are not elaborate instructions to simply serve as reminders of the past. They are real events that have new and fresh meaning to each and every generation, now and in the future.

The Bible gives us insight into the Exodus and people well out of their comfort zone! Some 4000 years ago in a time much different than today, and yet not so different, the Hebrews a small insignificant nation of sinful people had fallen into slavery due to circumstance. Much like we have fallen into circumstances over which we have no control.

They had lived in slavery for so long—400 years—that some probably had no idea things could be any different and just think this was the way it was supposed to be.

Others however, may have desired a freedom of some type, but it had been so long—if there was a God they had heard about from their ancestors—this God must have forgotten about them, or worse yet—didn't care.

But God did not forget about them—and more importantly—God did care. Slavery and bondage was not the way life was supposed to be—sin and evil are against God.

So, God sets in motion a dramatic action to provide freedom. God sends Moses nine times to the Egyptian pharaoh demanding to set the people free.

Each time God sent miraculous plagues on the land from turning the Nile River into blood—to millions of grasshoppers throughout the land. They were mysteries that could not be explained, but contained the work of God's hand leading to freedom from sin and bondage. Anyway, each time the pharaoh said No!

Before Moses' 10th and final visit to pharaoh, God tells the Hebrew slaves to be ready to move quickly. They are to eat unleavened bread because there would be no time for it to rise. They are to kill a blemish free lamb and then smear the lamb's blood above the door of their houses.

The Hebrews are released from the bondage of slavery, pass to safety through the waters of baptism, and set out for a new life of freedom with God's commandments in hand. Now through the celebration of the Passover, the bread and blood of the Lamb become symbols of promised freedom from sin and evil. The work of God's hands is revealed.

Now we fast-forward 2000 years later and 2000 years ago, where the work of God's hands in the Passover is re-created in a spectacular manner. Here the spotless, unblemished Lamb is the Son of God.

It is now the hands of Jesus that take the bread, break it and offer it as his body. It is now the hands of Jesus that hold the cup, bless it and share it as his blood. It is the last night before those beautiful hands have nails driven clean through them for our sake and for the sake of a broken world.

Not unlike the Hebrews, we are feeling scattered, disconnected, not unlike the Hebrews, already longing for freedom to do as we please and when we please, we are indeed in trying times. God has not forgotten about us, he does care about you.

God sent His Son to come and to live among His people in the person of Jesus, in a way that cannot be explained He becomes that spotless unblemished Lamb.

Many still do not follow the commandments given from God. Many deny and flee from the pierced hands of the spotless Lamb. One would think enough is enough, but God's love is unconditional. Jesus right before his crucifixion ties a towel around himself, and begins to wash the disciple's feet.

He even washes Judas' feet, the one who betrays Him. What amazing grace.

The hands of Jesus that washed the disciple's feet are not only a kind and humble act of forgiveness. The hands of Jesus that washed the disciple's feet are an indication of how we are called to live.

It is a visible action joined with a new commandment that we are to love one another just as Jesus has loved you. These are holy hands commanding that we serve one another with humility each and every single day.

The amazing thing is the work of God's hands comes to us not just when we are at our best, but when we are at our worst—always, always granting us freedom from whatever holds us in slavery and bondage.

God knows our situation, He is with us on the journey, watching over us and drawing us closer to Him each and every day.

Whatever happens in this lifetime, we know we have the promises of God; the sure and certain hope of a future with Him for all eternity

Those nails that pierced the hands of Jesus are not only the cruel consequence of an innocent person dying at the hands of a sinful world. It is how you and I are saved!

Prayer:

God bless you and keep you safe and give you the peace that passes all understanding. Thank you for Jesus' encouraging words from Johns Gospel...

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Amen

THE GIFT OF HUMILITY:

We are reminded that we are called to serve as Jesus served. Tonight may we be reminded whose servants we are, and remember Jesus' teaching; that what has been and continues to be done for us, is also to be done by us for others.

You may like to pause and take a moment to listen to the song Elshaddai, Elshaddai, this is the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuxB1a3NBCw>

THE PRAYERS:

Merciful God, on this, the night he was betrayed your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet. And as we commit ourselves to following your example of love and service, teach us humility.

God of love and grace,

hear our prayer

On the night, Jesus prayed for his disciples to be one.
As we grieve for the divisions in the church, unite us.

God of love and grace,

hear our prayer

On this night, Jesus prayed for those who would come to believe through the disciples' message. Lord encourage us in these trying times of COVID-19, help us to stay focused and trust in you.

God of love and grace,

hear our prayer

On this night, Jesus commanded his friends to love, but he suffered rejection himself. Fill us with your love as we open our hearts to the rejected and the unloved. We pray for all who are struggling at this time, give them patience and a firm trust in your goodness.

God of love and grace,

hear our prayer

Jesus loved his friends to the very end. As we open our hearts to all who face darkness tonight, we pray for the sick, those who mourn, those trapped by violence, addiction, or pain. We pray for our government, our Prime Minister, doctors, nurses, all hospital staff, emergency services and all who are on the front line. Father we pray you give healing and hope to all who lost and in need.

Take a moment to offer up to the Lord those who are on your hearts...

God of love and grace,

hear our prayer

Prayer

Loving and gracious Father,
You are the loving God of all the nations and peoples on this earth. Please look with mercy and compassion on all you have created. This day we ask for your help. Please deliver us from the coronavirus and limit its impact on Australia and the world. In your mercy bring a swift end to this crisis.

Please protect with your loving care those we love; our families, friends and neighbours. Let your fatherly hand guide, shelter and strengthen them. Remove all anxious fears and doubts. Give us an increasing trust in you and fill our hearts and minds with your peace. We pray for those around the world now struggling with COVID-19. Heal and comfort those who are sick and suffering. Protect and guide the health professionals who are at the front line. Please give wisdom and courage to those who bear responsibility for confronting this challenge.

Loving and gracious God, source of all love,
on the night of betrayal Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another as he loved them, help us to likewise. We ask these things through the powerful name of Jesus. **Amen**

You may like to finish by singing (or listening) to Be Still for the Presence of the Lord.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOXj-ZE_2Zo

Rev. Katrina Holgate

St Matthew's Anglican Church

Stirling Square, Meadow Street, Guildford WA 6055

Telephone: 08 9279 1141

Email: minister@stmatthewschurch.org.au

Web: www.stmatthewschurch.org.au