

[\*Excerpts from The Methodist Worship Book / Please see notes before commencing]

*Maundy Thursday*  
*Worship in the home*

\*On this night, our Lord Jesus Christ said: 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love each other, as I have loved you.'

**StF N°18 – Be Still and know that I am God.**

**\*Let us confess our sins to God and ask him to cleanse us.**

Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you,  
against our neighbour,  
and against each other,  
in thought, word and deed,  
in the evil we have done  
and in the good we have not done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love  
and marred your image within us.  
We are sorry and ashamed  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and lead us out of darkness  
to walk as children of light.

*This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim,  
that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.*

*If we walk in the light, as he is in the light,  
we have fellowship with one another,  
and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

*This is Christ's gracious word:*

*'Your sins are forgiven.'*

*Amen. Thanks be to God.*

**StF N°62 – Our God is an awesome God**

A reading from the Gospel according to John 13:1-17, 31b-35

\*Let us pray.

Gracious God,  
your Son Jesus Christ girded himself with a towel  
and washed the feet of his disciples.  
Give us the will to be the servants of others  
as he was the servant of all,  
who gave up his life and died for us,  
yet lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

**Read the reflection and / or continue with your personal reflecting**  
Spend time reflecting with God by yourself or with another on the prompts below.

Consider all that Jesus has done for you and how you live in response?

In what ways do follow Jesus' example and teaching to serve others (wash feet)?

Jesus gives the commandment to love each other, how does this shape the way you live and meet others?

**StF N°266 – All the room was hushed and still**

\*Let us pray; Father, on this night, the night on which he was betrayed, you Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet and said they ought to wash one another's feet.

We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, humble us.

On this night, Jesus prayed for his disciples to be one.

We pray for the unity of your Church...

Lord, hear us.

Lord, unite us.

On this night, Jesus prayed for those who were to believe in him.

We pray for the mission of your Church...

Lord, hear us.

Lord, renew our zeal.

On this night, Jesus commanded his disciples to love, but suffered rejection himself.

We pray for those who are rejected and unloved...

Lord, hear us.

Lord, full us with your love.

On this night, Jesus reminded his disciples that if the world hated them it first hated him.

We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith...

Lord, hear us.

Lord, increase our faith.

On this night, Jesus told his disciples that he was going to prepare a place for them.

We remember in your presence all who have died... and those who have been bereaved...

Lord, hear us.

Lord, renew our hope and trust in you.

*On this night, Jesus the Light of World stepped out into arrest of darkness. In our darkest hour we turn to you. Enter the darkness of this world and speak your perfect love, your truth, your inextinguishable light.*

*We pray for the world...*

*Lord, hear us.*

*Lord, hold the world in your healing hands.*

**We say the prayer that Jesus gave us:**

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your Name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,

now and for ever. Amen.

**StF N°242 – A new commandment I give unto you**

When the disciples had sung a hymn

they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus prayed to his Father:

'If it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me; yet not my will but yours be done.'

Christ was obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

*Hold silence, being in God's presence as we conclude this act of worship.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ln1uhThDyY>

**StF N°18 – Be still and know that I am God.**

Be still and know that I am God.  
Be still and know that I am God.  
Be still and know that I am God.

I am the Lord who saves and heals.  
I am the Lord who saves and heals.  
I am the Lord who saves and heals.

In you, O Lord, I put my trust.  
In you, O Lord, I put my trust.  
In you, O Lord, I put my trust.

Anonymous Based on Psalm 46:10-11

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PP9BjKnDaFk>

**N°62 – Our God is an awesome God**

Our God is an awesome God,  
who reigns from heaven above,  
with wisdom, power and love,  
our God is an awesome God!

Rich Mullins © 1989 Edward Grant Inc / BMG Music Publishing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MblrWZDpPQ>

**StF N°266 – All the room was hushed and still**

<sup>1</sup> All the room was hushed and still,  
and when the bowl was filled  
he stooped to wash their feet.  
And when it was complete,  
he said, this is what I'm asking you to do,  
this is why I'm kneeling here beside you.  
This is what I want my Church to be,  
this is what I want the world to see –  
who it is you follow.

*Love each other,  
one another.  
Love each other  
in the way that I have loved you.  
Walk together,  
and whatever comes,  
love each other in the way that I have loved you.*

<sup>2</sup> Let the room be hushed and still,  
let us go to where he kneels  
and join him as he serves,  
and learn his ways of love.  
He said, this is what I'm asking you to do,  
this is why I'm kneeling here beside you.  
This is what I want my Church to be,  
this is what I want the world to see –  
who it is you follow.

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950) © 2009, Graham Kendrick / Make Way Music Ltd

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0A5T9sD8Ug>

**StF N°242 – A new commandment I give unto you**

A new commandment I give unto you:  
that you love one another as I have loved you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.  
By this the world shall know that you are my disciples,  
if you have love one for another.  
By this the world shall know that you are my disciples,  
if you have love one for another.

Anonymous © Paul Ledington Wright

## **A towel, a basin of water, these simple things made extraordinary by the love of God.**

Jesus washes the Disciples' feet. Jesus the Son of God washes the Disciples' feet. Wow, it hits home every time, walking humbly with God means living the way Jesus showed us. Jesus tells the disciples, 'For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.' I believe those words of instruction and example set by Jesus stand for us today.

Foot washing of other people's feet is something less common, most do not have servants in households who would carry out this task. Most kick-off our shoes at the door of our homes or remove them out of politeness when being a guest to show consideration to our host. We have socks of various types and colours which come in matching pairs or proudly worn as odd socks. Maybe sock washing could become a thing that Christians offer others. I can just see the sign outside churches and homes alike, 'Bless your cotton socks' free sock washing here.

Perhaps we could liken better cleaning other people's shoes. Maybe we should be found knelt at a footstool like those seen in the old films with the 'well heeled' sat reading their newspapers whilst getting their shoes finely polished. During my time as Padre in the Air Cadets, shoe polishing was always an interesting time. It often showed the caring and generous spirits of the cadets who had mastered the technique of getting the perfect polished shoes. They would offer help to those who were still struggling.

I have only washed people's feet a few times during a Maundy Thursday service. It is not always easy to find willing victims; sorry I mean volunteers, to be on show getting their feet washed by the Minister. It's something I personally would find awkward, so have always understood people hesitating to volunteer their feet.

Last year I met the Archbishop Of Canterbury, The Most Revd Justin Welby when he visited Dogsthorpe in Peterborough. I did have a short conversation with him, mainly about our previous meeting when he was the Bishop of Durham. During his short address he spoke about the difference between the Maundy Thursday service

held in Canterbury Cathedral and his experience washing the feet of the homeless in London.

In the Cathedral were the most well pedicured and freshly washed feet he'd ever seen. Belonging to those who had been specially chosen to take part in the service. Hence not actually needing washing at all

He compared that Cathedral experience to going out and offering foot washing to the homeless in London. This was real, the feet really needing washing and those being offered foot washing puzzled in their responses. Why...? And perhaps the language used wasn't what you would usually hear spoken in a Cathedral, but it was honest.

Simon Peter struggled with Jesus taking the role of the servant kneeling before him saying 'You will never wash my feet.' However, when 'Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter responds wanting more washing saying my hands and my head as well.

What follows is a word of common sense and knowledge. If you've had a bath then you don't need to wash again, your already entirely clean, but your feet are exposed to the dirty roads and streets. But Jesus speaks of more than that of our feet needing washing. It is the washing of our souls, our very being. Jesus knew who was to betray him, who wasn't clean. Jesus knew whose feet having just been washed would carry the betrayer in leading those who would arrest him. It is by the blood of Jesus shed on the cross that we receive forgiveness for our sins, for the blemishes of our souls.

Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly as King, and now we are met again by Jesus taking the role of a servant. Taking a towel and a basin of water, kneeling to wash feet. Jesus our servant King says, be my servants, live out servanthood as my disciples. To conclude, let us consider this, are we prepared to share with Jesus, to have our sins washed away, to become servants and to love each other as Jesus has loved us? Will we take up the towel and basin of water?

Amen.

Reflection by Revd Gareth Baron

## NOTES

### Using candles

You might want to introduce the use of candles during your act of worship. These can be extinguished one at a time following each part of the prayers of intercession.

Below are some words from The Methodist Worship for 'A SERVICE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS'

\*God is light, in whom there is no darkness at all.

**Jesus Christ is the light of the world.**

And this is the judgement,  
that the light has come into the world,  
**and we loved darkness rather than light.**

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### Holding silence

There is a tradition within the Church of holding silence at the close of a Maundy Thursday service, going out in silence. At the close of your time of worship at home, think about how you will hold silence and how you will go into the rest of your evening with God.

Maybe you will want to sit awhile in God's presence being still.

Or maybe you will decide to walk into your garden in silence before returning indoors. This creates a sense of a different space and gives movement to your worship.

## A Lovefeast

Some might be wanting to join with others over the phone or web for a Lovefeast. There is guidance for a service available on The Methodist Church website. A simple approach to a Lovefeast works well. Possibly sharing a fruit bread/cake and a cup of water.

Recognising the present circumstance of limited food availability, I feel a simple meal would work just as well. For me a Lovefeast is time for sharing testimony and recalling stories of Jesus. This stripped back approach of remembering Jesus with others over a meal is deeply meaningful. Below is a recipe for a Lovefeast cake which was placed on The Methodist Church website. If you are fortunate to have the ingredients, you might want to give it go.

(Why not share a photo on social media)

### A traditional Love Feast Cake Recipe

Adapted from the Middlesmoor Lovefeast Bread used in the Yorkshire Dales at the time of John Wesley

• 1lb (400g) plain flour • 1oz (25g) baking powder • 5oz (125g) butter • 8oz (200g) sugar • 2oz (50g) mixed peel • 4oz (100g) sultanas • 2 eggs • About half a pint (280ml) of milk

• Mix the flour and baking powder together, rub in the butter, then add the sugar, sultanas and peel. • Beat the eggs together with a little milk and add to the dry ingredients. • Add the rest of the milk to make a soft consistency. • Pour the mixture into two loaf tins or a large cake tin.

Cook at 180°C (350°F) or gas mark 4 for at least 45 minutes for the loaf tins, or 1 hour for the large cake tin.

## **Alternative Maundy Thursday Worship – A meditation and footbath**

Sometimes we need to simply be in God's presence. We might feel that we just need to stop, sit and be held by God, having a time relaxing in His presence.

The following meditation is offered to help you sit and talk with Jesus. With it being Maundy Thursday and connecting in with Jesus washing the disciple's feet, you might want to have a footbath to engage another one of our senses with God. Playing gentle music helps to create the right atmosphere. Enjoy sitting with Jesus.

### **Sitting with Jesus Meditation**

As you sit peacefully, focus on your breathing. Notice how you inhale and then exhale. Breathe in slowly through your nose. Feel your stomach fill with air and then breathe the air out slowly through your mouth.

As your breathing becomes relaxed, find a place in your mind that's a place of peace and tranquillity. Visualise a place that you know well. Put yourself in that place right now and allow yourself to be comfortable there. What do you see? What do you smell? What sounds can you hear? Can you feel anything? Wherever you are right now just appreciate what is around you. Take in a 360-degree panoramic view and feel settled.

As you feel settled in that space you notice that Jesus is sitting right next to you. Just for a moment, simply gaze upon his face. Look into His eyes and know of His love. I'm not sure how long it is since you've spent time gazing at Jesus.

For some of you, spending time with Jesus might be a regular thing, for others you may hardly recognise him. Whatever your experience is - in this moment it doesn't matter. Jesus doesn't care if He is a total stranger to you- He is just so pleased that you're spending time with him now. Just spend some moments getting to know him and understanding who he is.

In the minds of each of you there is a situation that you need to talk to Jesus about. It may be that you need guidance and direction in an area of your life. Ask Jesus for that now.

It may be that you feel there is something that is preventing you from truly connecting with Jesus or something that you just need to offload onto Him. Deal with that now.

It may be that you need to bring your own needs to Him. Do that now.

It may be that you need to bring the needs of someone else to Him. Offer that to Him.

And now that we have said what we need to say - Let's listen to what Jesus has to say in response. As you sit and listen to Him, just soak in every word.

What is He saying about you? What is he saying about the situations you've brought before Him? Which direction is he pointing you in?

Ask Him to show you what He wants from you in this coming week. Stay how long you need, give thanks.