



Wesley House
Cambridge

Meditation on the Last Supper for Maundy Thursday

This service is being livestreamed on facebook from Wesley House on Maundy Thursday 2020 at 8pm. You can use this order of service to join with the small resident community in Cambridge, or to worship with your household at a time of your choosing.

A table may be set at home as an aid to meditation with a bowl and towel, with candles, with a cup/chalice and plate/paten and with a cross. Youtube links are provided for the suggested songs if you have access to the internet. Otherwise you might substitute things that you know and can sing easily.

Introduction

It has been the tradition of the Church on this night of the year to follow the command of Jesus to eat bread and drink the cup; to remember that on the night in which he was betrayed Jesus shared his last supper with his friends; and that he offers his presence to his followers for all time through his body and his blood.

Tonight, as in other poignant moments in history, we seek to follow this command, yet without sharing bread and wine. Even so, by meditating on the events of the Last Supper and the institution of the Lord's Supper (holy communion), like John Wesley, we trust that if we wait upon God in this way, we shall receive a particular blessing as we experience Christ's presence and as we allow ourselves to be nourished by him.

It has also been the tradition of the Church on this night to remember two other commands of Jesus: that we should wash one another's feet, and that we should love one another. And whilst liturgical foot washing is not appropriate this evening either, now, as much as any other moment in history, is a moment in which to reflect on what it means to serve one another and to love one another and to serve and to receive Christ as we do so.

We remember too, at this time, the betrayal of Christ with a kiss, and the desertion of Christ by his friends in the garden, and the denial of Christ by Peter in the courtyard; acknowledging our own failures in discipleship and our own fears as we face our own times of trial, wishing that this cup of isolation and death would pass from us, and praying for those who, this night, are fighting for their lives, or who watch and wait with loved ones – perhaps – at a distance.

So we come together on this Maundy Thursday, across time and space, to watch and wait with Christ who offered his life for the life of the world, and who, even in darkness, is our light.

A song may be sung or played such as the Taizé chant -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r64qcGMNhDE>

***The Lord is my light, my light and salvation,
in him I trust, in him I trust***

Prayer for the day

Lord Jesus Christ

You commanded us to remember the night on which you were betrayed.

Nourish us, we pray, with your presence

And unite us by your love

In the power of the Holy Spirit

Amen.

Do this to remember me

Reading: 1 Corinthians 11.23-26

A song may be sung such as the Taizé chant – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDqk-DMS4Mk>:

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and you will not thirst.

Time for reflection/sharing

As at other moments in history it is not possible tonight for us to share in the physical elements of bread and wine as one body, yet we are joined in 'mystic sweet communion' to Christ by God's Spirit.

In the poignancy of our inability to share holy communion with those with whom we would expect to share it tonight, what is the gift that we might receive from this moment?

A song may be sung such as the Taizé chant:

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and you will not thirst.

Wash one another's feet

Reading: John 13.1-35

A song may be sung such as the Taizé chant – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJvrAHZ1TU8>

Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord my soul who rescues me from death.

Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's holy name

Bless the Lord my soul who leads me into life.

Time for reflection/sharing

Being commanded to love one another and being shown the physical and intimate way in which Christ showed his disciples how to love is perhaps a hard thing to bear on a night when so many of us are not gathering for Easter with family and friends whom we long to embrace. We are aware too of those who may tonight be separated from loved ones who are ill, or who are facing their deaths alone or amongst strangers.

As Christ signals to his disciples that the hour is coming in which he will go where they cannot yet follow, what gift might we receive in this moment from remembering the times in which our feet have been

washed by others and by Christ? How might we trust that Christ goes with and before us as an intimacy in all human flesh?

A song may be sung such as the Taizé chant:

***Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord my soul who rescues me from death.
Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord my soul who leads me into life.***

Prayers

Let us pray...

Gracious God,

On this night, the night on which he was betrayed,
your Son Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to love one another.

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

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

We pray for the unity of your Church and the solidarity of the whole inhabited earth

On this night, Jesus washed his disciples' feet

We pray for those who this night long for the touch of another human being

On this night, Jesus warned his disciples that his hour was coming

We pray for those who this night will follow him to peace and to glory.

On this night, Jesus wrestled with his own doubts and fears

We pray for ourselves in this time of trial.

Our Father in heaven...

The Gospel of the Watch

A song may be sung such as the Taizé chant

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCr2tn4yYKY&list=RDFCr2tn4yYKY&start_radio=1é

***Stay here with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray! Watch and pray!***

Reading: Luke 23.39-71

The bowl and towel, the chalice and paten, any candles and the cross are removed from the table

Lights are extinguished.