

LOVE ONE ANOTHER



Maundy Thursday, or Holy Thursday, is the night of The Last Supper, the meal Jesus shared with his friends before he died. For Christians, this is one of the most sacred nights of the year. Maundy is from the Latin word for command," referring to Jesus' commandment to "Love one another". This is also the night Jesus shares bread and wine with his friends, asking them to do the same after his death: "Do this in remembrance of me". Shortly thereafter, Jesus is betrayed and arrested.

READ:

READ: John 13: 12-17. Accounts of The Last Supper are found in all four Gospels (Matthew. 26:17–30, Mark 14:12–26, Luke 22:7–39, John. 13:1–17:26). The story of Jesus washing his disciples feet and the new commandment to Love One Another appears in the Gospel of John. A portion appears below: After he had washed their feet and had returned to the table, Jesus said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord--and you are right, for that is what I am. 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. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. 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 one another."

WONDER:

The foot washing and the command to "love one another" appear only in John's Gospel. Both call us into spaces of supreme discomfort. We have so many excuses to not participate in the foot washing: it's embarrassing, it's too intimate, your socks have holes, you don't like the person doing it, your toes are weird, you don't want some touching you, you don't have time, that's just for *super* religious people. The reasons it so hard to love one another without condition are much the same: embarrassing, too intimate, we don't even like one another, someone is weird or disagrees with me, we don't have time... Living into this commandment is a lifelong challenge and takes practice. You can practice at home by washing a loved one's feet or soaking your own feet in a basin of warm water. Imagine what it would feel like to have Jesus wash your feet. Imagine what it would be like to truly love one another, as if love were an action not a feeling.

(Adapted from: "Engaging All Ages," Planning for Rites & Rituals: Year A, Church Publishing 2019, p. 150)

PRAY:

Eternal God, by your Word and Spirit, you have given us a new commandment: to love and serve one another in Jesus' name. Let the good news of your liberating love be sealed in our hearts and shown in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Adapted from the Book of Common Worship p.278)

