

Thursday 28 March 2024

Maundy Thursday



The Liturgy of the Passion comprises ‘one service in two instalments’: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, usually with a vigil (or vigils) between. That’s why the Maundy Thursday series does not close with a blessing. We must wait till the end of the Good Friday service for that.

The altar is stripped as the service ends and a metrical version of [Lamentations](#) is read aloud. Traditionally, we leave the Maundy Thursday service in silence or remain in the Church for a vigil which lasts until Midnight—the time Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The English word *Maundy* comes from the Latin word *mandatum*. At the Last Supper Jesus washed his disciples’ feet and gave them his New Commandment in response to their alarm and horror at his doing such a menial task. In Latin, he said, ‘*Mandatum novum do vobis ...* (‘A new commandment I give you ...’), see John 13:34. So ‘Maundy’ derives from the wording of the New *Commandment*.

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The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

HYMN 1 I am the bread of life (HTW hymn 261)

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says:

‘If you love me, keep my commandments.

Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.’

Let us confess to almighty God our sins against his love:

All **Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry 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 grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

There is no Gloria during Lent

The Collect for Maundy Thursday

Let us pray that we may love one another as Christ has loved us:

God our Father,
you have invited us to share in the supper
which your Son gave to his Church
to proclaim his death until he comes:
may he nourish us by his presence,
and unite us in his love;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

First reading

A reading from the Book of Moses called Exodus

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it.

This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the Lord. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Broken for me; broken for you (HTW hymn 66)

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All **Glory to you O Lord.**

Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' He knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he 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. When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." 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.'

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

Look closely at the altar during the liturgy of the Eucharist and you'll see a very highly choreographed series of actions. That action is fourfold: the priest will take, bless, break, then share the bread. At the culmination of that fourfold action, s/he says 'This is my body' which identifies the bread with Jesus. I suggest the fourfold action also follows Jesus' movements during the Passion as recorded in the Gospels; but they also suggest something of what happens to us as well, if we are obedient people.

As the passion unfolds—we read some of it just now—we see Jesus moving from active protagonist to almost passive. That transition was quite deliberate: it is unwise to regard him here as a victim but as willing the progression. If anything, he knows it has been pre-ordained this way and he welcomes it as a means to the desired end: think of it as a play in four acts:

Jesus is taken: he goes to Gethsemane and thereby makes himself available; he is taken before Pilate; he is taken to be presented to the people; he is taken to the barracks of the Roman soldiers; he is taken to Gehenna the rubbish dump outside Jerusalem; and is then taken to a tomb. In every case here that 'taking' is a physical movement but also a willed action.

Jesus is blessed: clearly, Jesus' entire life was a blessing from annunciation through to ascension, but the principal blessing during the Passion narrative occurs in Gethsemane where he prays for the 'cup'; Jesus seems to bless his mother and John 'the beloved disciple'; his death is a blessing for all humankind.

Jesus is broken: that breaking occurs in stages through psychological (he almost rebels against God in Gethsemane when he prays 'not my will but yours', which clearly tells us that he was tempted to act otherwise; and of course his body was reduced to a grisly wreck because that's what crucifixion was intended to do.

Jesus was shared: through the Eucharist, we share Jesus—that's why the priest says, 'the body of Christ' when distributing the bread; and he is shared when, at Pentecost, his spirit re-enters human history and the Church is born: from now on the world has many mini-Jesuses as Jesus shares himself among every generation, every race, in every age.

We see this same pattern being played out during the Eucharist: the elements are taken to the altar; they are blessed by God (through the priest who leads the prayers of those present, visible and invisible—present in the church building but there in spirit such as the household and, the church teaches, through the communion of saints; it is no coincidence that the phrase 'body of Christ' is ambiguous for it means the bread at the altar but also the entire collective of the faithful, living and departed);

the bread is broken in a very public way as the wafer is snapped in two, often elevated high above the altar; and the elements are then shared among the faithful.

In a very real sense we, the faithful, participate in that same four-fold action.

We are taken: all the faithful are disciples and are taken on a spiritual journey, from wherever we happen to reside. That 'taking' might include a physical journey because all of us are called to be missionaries although God calls only a fraction to different lands.

We are blessed: the word simply means God does something in us, participates in us, and we benefit. Stated otherwise, we receive fruits from God as he dwells in us. That blessing might include comfort from the promises of our faith; it could include an intimate consolation from God's presence within our soul. Some of these blessings will be personal and given in response to need and circumstance. But the blessings will certainly conclude at the end of the earthly phase of our lives with the gift of eternity with God.

We are broken: Jesus said 'unless a grain of wheat to the ground *and dies* it will never bear fruit' but also told us to take up our cross and follow him' he spoke of second birth which clearly implies a death of sorts between the first and second. Most of us will be broken on the anvil of temptation, or at least feel broken. The Christian who has never felt broken by temptation has not yet been tempted to the uttermost but has succumbed—think of Hebrews 12:4 'you have not yet been tempted to the point of drawing blood'. This teaching is not popular but it is kinder to warn of impending commitment than to pretend it will not occur, for it always does if we take our faith seriously.

We are shared: every Christian is called to serve. That serving may be active in and out of church, in and out of the public eye, in and out of the conscious demands of faith. It will generally involve our living for God and for others—think of the commandments to love God and love neighbour. It will therefore include private elements, most obviously through prayer, but also deliberate thinking and deciding how to apportion time, money, and so on. The extent to which we share is a form of spiritual 'litmus test': the Christian who thinks about their faith and finds they are living in an entirely solitary way, living for self and expending everything on self, will need to re-assess and change. Genuine faith is always shared.

In a moment we will share the Eucharist with its four-fold acts of taking, blessing, breaking, and sharing. Let us pray that this Eucharist is the nourishment for that same four-fold action of taking, blessing, breaking, and sharing our Christian lives.

The washing of feet

All God is love. Those who live in God live in love and God lives in them.

Here in Christ we gather, love of Christ our calling;
Christ, our love, is with us, gladness be his greeting;
let us all revere and love him, God eternal.
Loving him, let each love Christ in all his brothers.

All God is love. Those who live in God live in love and God lives in them.

When we Christians gather, members of one Body,
let there be in us no discord, but one spirit;
banished now be anger, strife and every quarrel.
Christ our God be present always here among us.

All God is love. Those who live in God live in love and God lives in them.

Grant us love's fulfilment, joy with all the blessed
when we see your face, O Saviour, in its glory;
shine on us, O purest Light of all creation,
be our bliss while endless ages sing your praises.

All God is love. Those who live in God live in love and God lives in them.

Feet are washed.

At the end:

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters
we do also for you:
give us the will to be the servant of others
as you were the servant of all,
and gave up your life and died for us,
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

All Amen

Prayers of intercession

In the power of the Spirit let us pray to the Father through Christ the Saviour of the world.

Father, on this, the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet.

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

Lord, hear us:

All Lord graciously hear us.

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

We pray for the unity of your Church.

Lord, hear us:

All Lord graciously hear us.

On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through his disciples' message.

We pray for the mission of your Church.

Lord, hear us:

All Lord graciously hear us.

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

We pray for the rejected and unloved.

Lord, hear us:

All Lord graciously hear us.

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

We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith.

Lord, hear us:

All Lord graciously hear us.

On this night, he accepted the cup of death and looked forward to the new wine of the kingdom.

We remember those who have died in the peace of Christ.

Lord, hear us:

All Lord graciously hear us.

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 Do not be afraid (HTW hymn 115)

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right to give you thanks,
it is fitting to give you glory,
Father most holy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
For on this night he girded himself with a towel
and taking the form of a servant
washed the feet of his disciples.
He gave us a new commandment
that we should love one another as he has loved us.
Knowing that his hour had come,
in his great love he gave this supper to his disciples
to be a memorial of his passion,
that we might proclaim his death until he comes again,
and feast with him in his kingdom.
Therefore earth unites with heaven
to sing a new song of praise;
we too join with angels and archangels
as they proclaim your glory without end:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

All **Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ

which he gave for you,

and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,

and feed on him in your hearts

by faith with thanksgiving.

All **We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.**

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus Christ,
we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament
you have given us the memorial of your passion:
grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries
of your body and blood
that we may know within ourselves
and show forth in our lives
the fruit of your redemption,
for you are alive and reign, now and for ever.

All **Amen**

All **Almighty God,**
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.

HYMN 4 **O sacred head sore wounded** (HTW hymn 520)

Stripping of the altar

The altar is stripped and a bare cross placed against it. This metrical version of Lamentations is read aloud at the same time.

How lonely sits the city that once was full of people!
How like a widow she has become, she that was great among the nations!
She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks;
among all her lovers she has no one to comfort her.

R **Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!**

The roads to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the festivals;
all her gates are desolate, her priests groan;
her young girls grieve, and her lot is bitter.
Her children have gone away, captives before the foe.
Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?

Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.

R Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

From on high he sent fire; it went deep into my bones;
he spread a net for my feet; he turned me back;
he has left me stunned, faint all day long.
For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears;
for a comforter is far from me, one to revive my courage;
my children are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed.

R Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

All who pass along the way clap their hands at you;
they hiss and wag their heads at daughter Jerusalem;
'Is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth?'
The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall!

R Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.'
The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.

R Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth,
to sit alone in silence when the Lord has imposed it,
to put one's mouth to the dust there may yet be hope),
to give one's cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults.
For the Lord will not reject forever. *Based on Lamentations*

R Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God!

A cross is placed on or against the altar.

The Dismissal

When the disciples had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus prayed to the Father, 'If it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me'.

He said to his disciples, 'How is it that you were not able to keep watch with me for one hour? The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners.' Christ was obedient unto death. Go in his peace. *Mark 14:26,27*

All Amen

All leave in silence