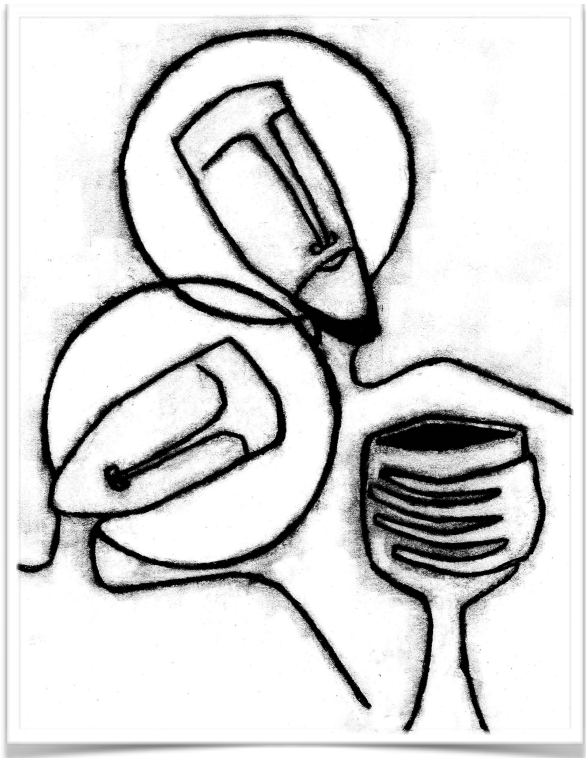


MAUNDY THURSDAY



I raise the cup of freedom
as I call upon God's name.
Psalm 116.13

9 April, 2020

key time: 6.30 - 9 pm.

image: Jan Richardson

<https://www.janrichardsonimages.com/>

This year, we have to keep Holy Week and Easter differently - unable to gather, each finding our own ways to pray at home. For the great three days of the Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, & Easter) we are offering some ideas on how to structure time and keep these holy days. Each day, we invite you to take the key hours of prayer away from computers, telephones, sound and screen. Seek a quiet place to immerse yourself in sacred story.

Please read through the suggestions the day before or in the morning, so that you are ready to pray at the key hours. Adapt this however you wish. Share as you wish. There will also be links on our webpage (walthamgroupchurches.co.uk) and facebook page (facebook.com/walthamgroupchurches). We wish you a blessed Triduum in this difficult year.

PREPARING TO PRAY

On Maundy Thursday we remember the last night of Jesus's life: the night he chose to spend with his friends. In John's gospel, it is the night Jesus teaches and prays for his disciples, and prays for the world. In Matthew, Mark & Luke, it is the night of the Last Supper. Therefore, tonight's prayers begin with a meal. We suggest you time this to be able to join in the 8 pm 'clap for the NHS' before returning to pray for the vigil.

You will need:

- ♦ things to set the table – this is a special meal
- ♦ dinner
- ♦ a bible or a print out of the key passages (links on our web page)
- ♦ candles
- ♦ a chair for the garden or a quiet place to pray in the house

AFTERNOON

Set the table for a special meal. Even if you live alone, create a good space for yourself. Prepare a meal. You might even want to make bread (if so, get started in the morning or choose a quick bread). There are some recipes on the web page. Choose a place to pray the vigil: set up a chair, a candle or a small lamp.

6.30 – 8 PM

Turn off all the electronic devices that might distract you. Gather for dinner.

Once all is ready, and everyone is at the table, you may wish to say a prayer of blessing. This or some other:



'Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe, creator and maker of all. By your goodness we have this food to offer.

Blessed be God forever.'

After the prayer, read aloud the gospel story of the Last Supper: Mark 14. 12-26.

(or John 13:1-17, 31b-35 if you prefer)

Enjoy the meal, talk, laugh, share stories. If you are eating alone, try to slow down and enjoy the food. Remember meals with friends or family who make you laugh. Consider what it was like for Jesus and the disciples that night.

8 PM

Head outside to clap for the NHS.

It's OK if you just leave things on the table and walk away – that is what happens in the story, and that is what we normally do in church.

8.15 – 9 PM

This is the time of the watch. If it is warm enough, you may wish to sit outside in the garden. Otherwise, find a quiet place inside where you can sit in candlelight.

- ♦ Read the Gospel of the Watch. Luke 22.31-62.
Imagine yourself there with Jesus.
What can you see, hear, touch, feel, smell as you imagine Gethsemane?
- ♦ Stay with the story as long as you can.
- ♦ When you sense that your prayer with scripture is complete, use the rest of the time to pray for people who have prayed with you on Maundy Thursday over the years. If this is your first Maundy Thursday, pray for your closest friends.

Call them vividly to mind and hold them in the presence of God.