

## ***Maundy Thursday/ Holy Thursday*** ***Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday***

The word Maundy comes from the Latin Mandatum novum which means “a new commandment”.

We remember how Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as an example of how to build a community of servanthood.

We remember how Jesus took an old and treasured story of his faith and added a new chapter to it, changing perceptions and meaning to make space for God in a new way.

### **Opening Prayer**

Loving God, come and be with us in this time of worship. Comfort us as we remember the discomfort and the challenge of the stories of these days.

**Remind us that,**

**Even as we feel helpless and sad in the stories of this week, you are present with us through it all.**

We worship you in the profound certainty that everything—everything -- is always followed by resurrection...new life inspired and fired by you. **Amen.**

### **The New Commandment:**

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

It was the day before the Passover. We could tell that Jesus seemed distant. We gathered for supper on that night and while we were eating, Jesus got up from the table, took off his jacket and tied a towel around his waist.

Then Jesus poured water into a basin (pour from pitcher into basin). Jesus started to wash all our feet and wipe them with the towel.

Jesus came to me, Simon Peter, and I said, “Wait, what are you doing?”

Jesus said to me, “Simon Peter, I know it doesn’t make sense now, but later you’ll get it.”

I said, “No way; you’re never going to wash my feet. We have servants to do this kind of work for us.” But then Jesus said, “Unless you let me wash your feet, I can’t let you be a part of what we are doing.”

Jesus knew how to get me where it counts. He knew I had given my life to him. Still not understanding completely I said, “Well then, not just my feet, wash my hands and head, too!”

Jesus smiled at me in the way he often did. “Your feet are enough, Peter,” he said, “But not everyone of you is clean. There are some messes I won’t be cleaning up tonight.” Jesus knew that Judas would betray him. Still, he treated us all the same; he loved and served us all to the end.

After Jesus washed everyone’s feet, he sat back down at the table and started teaching. He said, “I’m your teacher and have set an example for you. You should wash each other’s feet. If you know what to do, do it.”

It was difficult for us to understand what he meant at the time. Washing feet is a job for servants. Or, if a servant is not available, it is something we take care of ourselves. But, by his example, Jesus was asking us to serve one another.

That night, Jesus said, “Pretty soon I’ll be leaving you and where I go you cannot come. I give you a commandment: Love each other. As I’ve been loving you, love each other. That’s how people will know that you are my followers: if you love each other.”

We remembered these words and realized their meaning later when we started to become a community living in the Spirit of Jesus.

**Being a Servant:**

We are asked to love as Jesus loved. Jesus washed feet to show care for the weary. Today we are asked to wash our hands to show care for our family, friends and community. In this time of the world, our service is to put ourselves last, and our concerns for others first.

Take a moment to go through the motions of washing your hands as a reminder of the call to care.

***VU 593 Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love***