

Dear everyone,

Here are some thoughts on Easter week focusing on the events of Thursday - which we know as Maundy Thursday. We would normally be meeting in Tayvallich Church this evening for a communion service - but not this year.

the Rev Scott Burton of West Kintyre and Isle of Gigha Church of Scotland is holding an "on line" communion for today, so. if you have the opportunity please join with this anytime:

West Kintyre and Gigha – Rev Scott Burton <https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=ZxCTBJMvJck>

OR,

Rev Owain Jones is also sharing a communion service from the Church of Scotland on Bute at 7pm:

The United Church of Bute – Rev Owain Jones - <https://www.unitedchurchofbute.org.uk/>

This is certainly a time when we are being asked to reconsider how we can worship together and yet be actually apart from one another. It is common place for many people now to speak to friends and family on "face to face" technology like Facetime, Skype and Zoom, and I hope we can explore this for our fellowship together in North Knapdale.

For now however, here are some written thoughts on the Thursday of Holy Week:

Maundy Thursday: 9.4.2020

As we progress through Holy week, it seems like a long time since Palm Sunday and the excitement of the crowds welcoming Jesus, the praise and the adoration which so quickly evaporated as God's plan was so different to the people's plans for Jesus.

This is Maundy Thursday. We consider Jesus and his disciples, meeting together in uncertainty. The disciples waiting expectantly for Jesus to announce his plans for revolution, for uprising, for the launch of His mission.

Together, they celebrate the Passover, the feast of remembrance of the Hebrews escape from Egypt, when the angel of death "passed over" God's people marked by lamb's blood on their doorways.

Jesus lifts up bread and wine – and says, look this is my body, this is my blood given for you – do this and remember. This is a new sign of Passover – my blood

and body saving God's people from death, my blood and body bringing in new life, a new Kingdom – a different kind of revolution.

So Jesus launches His "way" – His gospel – by taking a towel and serving His disciples, by kneeling before them and serving His people in a lowly act – welcoming, caring, washing their feet to bring comfort and peace. In fact cleaning and refreshing, in symbol cleansing and forgiving – welcome to my Kingdom of service and love.

You can read this in Matthew's Gospel Ch 26 from v 26 and in John's Gospel Ch 13 from verse 1 to 20.

The Psalm for today is Psalm 116 and it begins:

I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice and my supplication,
Because He has inclined His ear to me
Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live.

This is a wonderful reminder that our God responds to our cries, He turns His head to acknowledge our calls. Hold on to that image of our Father in Heaven, turning towards us as we pray.

And in Jesus we have the perfect image of the Father.

Here is a recent hymn which has been shared with us from the Episcopal Church:
A hymn written by R G Huff during the Corona Virus lockdown spring 2020 when people were worshipping together, separately online
To the tune Hyfrydol (Love Divine)

In our homes we meet to worship, far away from sacred place
By the Spirit, Christ is with us making this a holy place
In these days of secure distance, we are called to meet apart
Still we pray for one another, hold each other in our heart

If indeed this time is holy, we must keep it truly so,
Even in our isolation, God's rich blessings overflow
We avoid the world's distractions, set our minds on things above
Patience, kindness, goodness mercy, faith, joy, peace, abiding love.

May we all know God's rich blessings as we are called to meet together - apart.

tomorrow, we will be contemplating Good Friday

David