



St Stephens Williamstown Uniting Church in Australia
Service of the Word at Home - during Coronavirus Lockdown
Maundy Thursday Evening 9th April 2020

Prepared by Rev S. Juliette Maua'i



Place a cross and Bible on a table (if possible). Prepare reflective music, hymns, songs to play as you feel prompted. Dim Lighting.

You may want a piece of paper and pencil to jot down a word or two... if you visual, sketch or draw what comes to you this evening.

Readings: Exodus 12:1-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-7, 31b-35

Call to Worship

The Israelites cried out to God in their maltreatment
Today the world cries out to God in our time of corona virus crisis.
Their voices, our voices, echo around the globe.
O God, hear the cries of suffering, and deliver those who wait on You.
All who suffer, who die, who are alienated, are precious to God!
Let us love the Lord who restores freedom, and gives us hope for peace in our time.
Today, we remember the One who gave himself for us, Jesus the Christ!
Let us join together in the Spirit, before God!



Opening Prayer

Jesus, Lamb of God,

we bless you today as we face tomorrow, remembering what you are about to do for us.
You poured out your life to show us the love of God.
We celebrate your gift of life as we sombrelly recall your death and rejoice in your resurrection to come.
Amen.

Prayer of Confession

O God of Life, from time immemorial you call us to yourself.
But in so many ways too numerous to mention, we fail to respond.
Forgive us, we pray.
Our limited understanding of culture gets in the way of fellowship with those different from ourselves.
Our limited vision of being in community though we are limited to our homes gets in the way of your call to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to seek justice, to find peace for all and ourselves in our physical distancing.
Replace our worries, our limited vision, and frustrations to face our situation, O God of mercy.
And grant us the humility, the caring service and courage, Jesus modelled,
for truly we are not greater than our Teacher and Saviour. **Amen.**

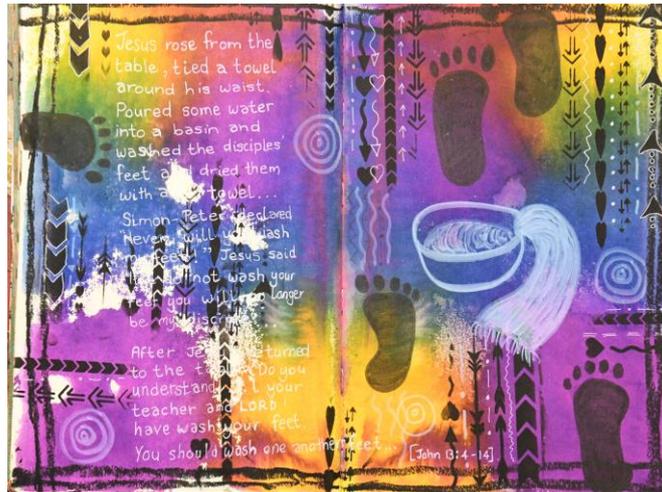
Words of Assurance

Friends, as isolated as we all are in this season,
God gives us grace upon grace.
Be assured of this truth, that in Christ you are forgiven!
Thanks be to God!

Listening for God in the Stories of our Tradition:

Recalling the Passover - Read...Exodus 12:1-14 The Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread
Imagine yourself and your family in this text, among the Israelites who were enslaved and desperate.

What thoughts might
 mind as you follow
 and prepare this
 Where do you
 for freedom in your
 isolation from our
 world where others
 situation as you, and
 Coronavirus deaths?
 freedom?



go through your
 these instructions
 meal?
 experience the need
 life? in this time of
 community? in our
 are in the same
 facing the reality of
 What is the cost of

A New Commandment from Jesus: Servant Leadership - Read... John 13:1-17, 31b-35 Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

Imagine yourself in this upper room with Jesus and his friends.

With whom do you identify? How do you feel? Would you resist Jesus' service of foot washing like Peter?

Would you include Judas as Jesus did? What would it take to offer a service of love to someone who hurt or betrayed you?

(Credit: Rev Linley Liersch Art Journal – John 13:4-14)

Community and Communion: God in Our Midst - Read... 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 Correcting an Abuse of the Lord's Supper

This commemorative act, central to our tradition, comes alive for us each time we gather at the Communion Table.

In re-enacting this event in the Upper Room, what is it that we receive from the Lord and pass on to future generations?

At this table, and especially on this night, we stand remembering our past, faithful in our present and hoping in God's future, proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes again. (1 Cor 11: 26)

Certainly, we remember Christ's death when we gather, but we cannot physically gather because we are restricted.

But our isolation should not prevent us from being the People of God! What does a future rich in grace and hope look like, when Christ will come again? What does this moment feel like, entwining memory, faith, and hope?

Do you welcome Christ when you sit down to break bread with those in your household?

Whom does Christ call you to invite to join you at the Lord's table?

Sharing the Meal – Can we share the Meal without being able to physically gather?

The Communion Table presents an opportunity for reconciliation in the community; to give and to receive forgiveness and service; to hear anew our beloved story and to re-tell it for this moment; to enter the new covenant through the Lifeblood of Christ.

Benediction

Go forth towards tomorrow contemplating what Jesus faced on that fateful Good Friday.

Make note of what you experienced this evening.

And may you be continually transformed into the image of Christ.

Just as Jesus honoured God by placing God's will above his own,

I pray dear friends that together in spirit:

God be glorified through your lives!

Be of good courage!

And trust in God in whom we have salvation and hope. **Amen!**

