



‘Worship at home’ Holy Week Monday



As we move through this Easter week, you are invited to spend some time each day in worship, reflecting more deeply on the last week of Jesus’ life and on your own discipleship.

Before you sit down and make yourself comfortable, **find a coin** from your purse, wallet or piggy bank. You might also like to bring a **piece of paper and pen/pencil** to aid your prayer time.



Consider your coin and think about your financial priorities:

what do you spend your money on?

You might like to write a list, using broad categories such as food, living expenses, work expenses, travel, treats, etc.

How do you choose how much you spend on each?

Matthew 21:12-17

Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. “It is written,” he said to them, “ ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’”

The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful

things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant.

“Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him.

“Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, “From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise’?”

And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

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The money changers and stall holders were a normal part of temple life: they converted the many different currencies into Jewish shekels and sold doves and other animals to be used for temple sacrifices, as required by Jewish law. Jesus' action of cleansing the temple could be seen as a rejection of Jewish traditions and was possibly a significant trigger for his arrest. Money and Jewish law had taken priority over prayer and worship in the temple system. This might prompt us to consider our priorities.

**Think about your spiritual and emotional priorities:
what do you spend your time on?**

You might like to write a list, using broad categories such as worship, prayer, reading, connecting with others, acts of service; you might also include worry, watching the news, spending time on games/technology.

How do you choose how much time you spend on each?

There are times in our lives when not only the tables but the whole of our lives feel like they are being overturned. Sometimes these times become prompts for us to reassess our priorities, and what is really important to us.



Prayer

Gracious God, confront us with your truth.

This Holy Week, open our eyes

to see what we might not wish to see about ourselves.

Overturn our inner tables of judgement and rejection,

of pride and greed, of fear and defensiveness.

Then gently pick up the pieces,

help us reassess and realign our lives,

that we might find ourselves made whole again,

in your love. Amen

Closing

As you consider your priorities, you might choose to set aside a small amount of money or time each week to do something new, to give or invest in a new outreach or project that aligns with the priorities you have identified.



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As you sit down and make yourself
comfortable, bring with you a piece of
writing paper and pen/pencil.

Consider your writing paper.

Letter writing has become a lost art,
in these days of email
and social media.



**Recall a time when you have unexpectedly received
in the post a letter or card from a friend.**

What was your response?

Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, “As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.” Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.

“But not during the festival,” they said, “or there may be a riot among the people.” Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

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Reflection

The temple leaders had enough, and were plotting to arrest Jesus. Despite the best theological expertise of commentators and scholars all over the world, we can only guess at Judas' motivation for betraying Jesus. Was it greed for money or power? Did he disagree with Jesus' actions? Who or what made him turn against goodness and love so completely? Was he a scapegoat in order to fulfil the scripture?

It is so easy to get caught up in something bigger than yourself, and not realise its significance until it is too late. Thirty pieces of silver, and the deed is done: a friend betrayed.

**Reflect on a time when you have felt let down,
or betrayed, by a friend.**

**Reflect on a time when you have let a friend down
yourself.**

Prayer

Name out loud as you pray for:

- Your friends, those who you love.
- Each person you have been in contact with this week.
- Friends you have not seen for a long time.
- Someone you feel the need to forgive.
- Someone you have wronged or let down.

Ask God for forgiveness and peace.



Closing

Today, you might like to write a letter or send a card to someone you have not been in touch with for a long time. Let them know that you have been thinking of them and praying for them. Continue to pray for them throughout the week.



‘Worship at home’ Holy Week Wednesday



As we move through this Easter week, you are invited to spend some time each day in worship, reflecting more deeply on the last week of Jesus’ life and on your own discipleship.

Today, you are invited to sit at your kitchen/dining room table for worship. Get yourself a cup of coffee or a glass of water, and make yourself comfortable.



For many thousands of years, people have been gathering together to share food. Hospitality is an important part of who we are, individually and as the church.

Reflect on a variety of meals you have shared with others over the years.

You might think about weddings and family celebrations, romantic dinners, and meals in other cultures or unusual situations.

What has made them significant for you?

Shared meals are significant because of who is present with us.

They bring a sense of connection and belonging with a particular group of people. Imagine Jesus sitting at the table across from you, having a cup of tea with you.

We are reminded that Christ IS present with us, at this time and always.

Matthew 26:20-30

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.” They were very sad and began to say to him one after

the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?”

Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe

to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "You have said so." While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup,

and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

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This scripture tells of the institution of our church's foundational practice, Holy Communion. The disciples gathered together for the Passover meals, but this year something was different. Confusion and uncertainty intermingled with promise and hope. In this meal, Jesus renewed the ancient covenant between God and God's people, then went on to fulfil it, bringing the Easter promise of new life.



**Reflect on the times you have shared in Holy Communion.
What makes it significant for you?**

The celebration of Holy Communion is God's gift, through which we remember and participate in this last supper of Jesus and his disciples. In this holy meal we are nourished and sustained in our Christian walk, and we find forgiveness and wholeness. Our participation also affirms our sense of connection and belonging to God's people, the body of Christ.

Closing:

After you have drunk your cup of coffee or glass of water, think about and pray for a friend or family member who you have not seen for a while. You might consider inviting them for a meal or afternoon tea.





‘Worship at home’ Maundy Thursday

As we move through this Easter week, you are invited to spend some time each day in worship, reflecting more deeply on the last week of Jesus’ life and on your own discipleship.

Today, you are invited to **sit in your garden** for worship. If this is not possible, collect something that reminds you of a garden – a flower, a leaf, a twig or a potplant – to aid your prayer time.



Matthew 26:36-46

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled.

Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter.

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

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Reflection: Read the passage again to yourself. You might like to read it out loud, imagining that you are in that garden with Jesus and the disciples.



During an extended time of prayer, how often do you find your attention straying, your mind wandering, your eyelids drooping? *“The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* Imagine Jesus’ anguish, as he realises what is to come. *“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.”*

When have you felt overwhelmed about what might lay ahead for you?

The uncertainty in our world may at times feel overwhelming. We fear for our family, our friends, our society, our world, ourselves. *“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”*

Such is the faith Jesus shows, as he commits himself to continuing to walk God’s ways. To trust and to follow, no matter where it leads. We do not know what lays ahead of us in our lives. However, we do know, that in Christ, we can continue to walk God’s ways for us. We can trust and follow, knowing that God is faithful, and will give us the strength to endure whatever we may face.

Prayer: Loving God,

When we feel sorrowful and troubled... you are with us.

When we feel overwhelmed with uncertainty...you give us peace.

When we feel tired and weary... you sustain and support us.

When we falter in our walk with you... you gently guide us through.

When we feel ill-equipped... you strengthen us.

Gracious God, may your will be done, in our lives, in our world, in our church. May we endure with hope, awaiting the Easter promise of new life that is to come. Amen.

Closing: Spend some extra time today in prayer, reflecting on Jesus’ sacrificial love, in preparation for Good Friday.

