

Maundy Thursday – Year B
Thursday, April 1, 2021
St. John's Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas

Yet Christ Moved Forward

Imagine how Jesus was feeling on this night
Knowing he would be betrayed by his disciples
Knowing that the local authorities wanted to get rid of him because he healed people
 wherever they were and whenever they needed it
He healed people on any day of the week
He was not a collaborator with the Roman Empire,
He spoke of the Kingdom of God being here and now
He spoke of the Kingdom of God being available to anyone
He was humble and yet he was a threat to the status quo
He knew that he was facing death
Yet he moved forward

He knew that he did not have much time
He knew that death, a painful death was ahead.
He knew that it was time to prepare his disciples for the inevitable.
He knew that his message needed to be clearly restated in a way that it could not be
 forgotten
He knew that he did not have much time
He knew ... all the signs were there
Yet he moved forward

The disciples were willing, but their flesh was weak
Judas Iscariot had already accepted money to betray him to the authorities
Peter objected to having his feet washed
Peter, John, and James fell asleep while he was praying
 Just like they did at the top of the mountain during the visitation from Moses
 and Elijah
Peter denied being his disciple three times
All the disciples ran away and abandoned him in fear
The disciples were willing, but their flesh was weak.
Yet he moved forward

He knew this would be his last celebration of the Passover
Yet, he gave this meal a new meaning
A new knowledge of the meaning of his death
The bread became his body ... given freely
The wine became his blood ... shed freely
Yet he moved forward

He knew this was his last chance to speak of God's love
He gave a new commandment
A commandment that summarizes the Law and the Prophets
Words that can be easily remembered and repeated
Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and spirit
Love your neighbor
Words that expressed the Grace of God, ... given freely
Words that spoke of his love for his disciples

He showed his disciples a simple way to express this love
He washed their feet
He knelt down at the feet of those who would abandon him
 And he washed their feet
He came to the one who would betray him for a fee
 And he washed his feet
He came to Peter, who objected to Jesus' humble act
He said to Peter, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me"
 And he washed Peter's feet

A Passover meal to give thanks to God for the blessing of salvation
An offering of body and blood - to fulfill the thanksgiving sacrifice
A commandment to love
A humble gesture of that love
A vow to not turn away
A vow to be an instrument of God's promise of hope and salvation
A vow to move forward

Amen