

The Gathering

Welcome [KELVIN]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Welcome to this service from St Mary's Cathedral for Maundy Thursday. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I'm the provost here.

Dear Friends in Christ - this service is the beginning of the great triduum service - the three days in which we mark the events that unfolded before and after the death of our Lord.

In keeping these three days, we hear of the greatest love that is possible and we encounter also the reality of human betrayal.

We gather in this service as Jesus gathered with his friends long ago meeting with one another as Jesus has gathered with his friends ever since. We come to this meal bearing the dust and anxiety of our everyday lives. At this meal we who have been so long deprived of physical closeness meet with a Saviour who not only offers to wipe away our tears but offers to wash the feet of his friends too. In this meal, heaven and earth are joined as one.

Summary of the Law [OLIVER]

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Collect for Purity [BETH]

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Confession

[OLIVER] God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Silence

**God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members
in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word
and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry.
Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for
the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

[KELVIN] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free
you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and
raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria [ROBERT]

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give thanks for your great glory.
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father,
Lord Jesus Christ, only-begotten Son,

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
You take away the sins of the world: receive our prayer.
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Collect [KELVIN]

O God, in the fullness of time you revealed your love in Jesus the Lord. On the eve of his death, as a sign of your covenant, he washed the feet of his disciples and gave himself as food and drink. Give us life at this sacred banquet and joy in humble service, that, bound to Christ in all things, we may pass over from this world to your kingdom, where he lives with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Ministry of the Word

GOSPEL: John 13: 1-17, 31b – 35 [DAVID McFADYEN]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to Christ our Saviour.

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe

them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.'

When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

Praise to Christ our Lord.

ANTIPHON [MAGNUS]

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.

Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.

Exultemus, et in ipso iucundemur.

*Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.*

Where charity and love are, God is there.
Christ's love has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.

Sermon [OLIVER]

Imagine turning on your television to watch an electoral debate and hearing a candidate say, 'If successful in my bid for this office, I intend to pass legislation that will benefit my interests and my interests alone. I have no desire to serve anyone else.' While this would perhaps be refreshing in its honesty, I don't know that a speech like this would win many votes. Most people seek an elected official who'll be a servant of the public—someone who'll put others' needs above private gain, who will represent them.

Putting people ahead of power isn't some new-fangled idea, of course, nor is it a message heard only in politics. Business training institutions have been teaching potential executives this for years. New models of governance and organisation focus on the needs of team members. Management researcher Robert K. Greenleaf popularised a phrase in the 1970s that shaped an entire business landscape: servant leadership. Seeking to dispose of autocratic styles of direction and to foster an atmosphere where a leader's own desires and ambitions are less of a driving force, a servant-leader values others' perspectives, makes decisions as a group, and builds a community of support, allowing members to set and meet personal goals.

So, what we hear in this Gospel isn't shocking to most of us. This business about serving one another is something we're probably quite used to. We've come to esteem and respect qualities of empathy, security and loyalty in our leaders. We want bosses who listen and value the people they work with. Who among us says they want a manager who doesn't care a thing about them?

Servant-leader or servant leadership has become a catchphrase, a buzzword. It's an organisational hack—ubiquitous in public discourse and culture ... so much so that it might make some suspicious of this kind of talk when they hear it. Too many times, it has lured us in. Vocabularies of servant leadership have been used to pacify workers' unions, gain votes in elections and re-orient businesses for profit, without any real intention of benefiting employees. Many have come to recognise these voluble tactics for what they often are: empty promises.

One might wonder if we're in danger of making or sanctioning some empty promises at this service. Because current restrictions do not permit us to do it, we are conducting a Maundy Thursday liturgy with no foot washing. Normally in this Cathedral, I would not be preaching in this slot. Instead, I, along with other priests, would be down at the front on my knees re-enacting the command, pouring water over people's feet and drying them, one by one. But now this all must seem like lip-service. Jesus tells us how to serve one another, and the priest isn't even going to get his hands wet.

That's why I think it especially important this year to make sure we don't simply hear this Gospel as an ancient, well-known story—something we know all about. We may understand good leadership. We may know what we want our org style to be. The idea of serving others probably seems obvious—especially in this place, the Church. We are encouraged and comforted by this Gospel because these are sound and familiar principles.

But servant leadership isn't just a principle. It isn't simply a euphemism for universal sensitivity and kindness, nor is it a programme of self-improvement. Being a servant-leader isn't a strategy to make others feel valued. It isn't about building trust in relationships. Servant leadership is actually uncommon and uncomfortable. Serving others is an extremist practice, not the quiet soulful backing track to Christian living.

After over a year of not being able to do a lot—where words and plans have had to suffice—we may find that, like politicians, some of our well-intentioned promises will be difficult to deliver on. But

the real danger is that we actually believe we're delivering on the promises of servant leadership simply because we've said we would, because it is part of our everyday language, woven into the values of our culture.

When we examine the command that Jesus has given, we see it must be accompanied by action. And even though we're missing it this year, we have to remember what servant leadership action looks like: hard work on the floor, with dirty hands.

Intercessions [SISTER HELENA]

Father, on this, the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet. We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service.

Lord, hear us and humble us.

On this night, he prayed for his disciples to be one. We pray for the unity of your Church.

Lord, hear us and unite us.

On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through their message. We pray for this mission of your Church.

Lord, hear us and renew our zeal.

On this night, he commanded them to love, but suffered rejection himself. We pray for the rejected and unloved.

Lord, hear us and fill us with your love.

On this night, he reminded them that if the world hated them, it hated him first. We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith.

Lord, hear us and give us your peace.

Father, your Son Jesus Christ taught us that what we do for the least of our sisters and brothers we do also for him: give us the will to be the servant of others as he was the servant of all, who gave

up his life and died for us, yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Communion

Offertory [KELVIN]

It was out of love and affection for the Lord that the disciples gathered all that was needed for the meal with him. It is out of the same devotion that people still give money to enable the church to gather together and go on proclaiming his message of love.

If you would like to make an offering to enable the worship of this congregation the please do so. You can find details of how to do that online at thecathedral.org.uk. And thank you for making your offering.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made:
it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands;
it will become the cup of our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer [KELVIN]

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you,
maker of light and darkness.
Your wisdom draws beauty from chaos,
brings a harvest out of sorrow
and leads the exiles home.

In Christ your Son enemies are reconciled,
debts forgiven
and strangers made welcome
Your Spirit frees us to live as beloved children
in our Father's house.

We who by Christ's power follow the way of the Cross,
sharing the joy of his obedience,
now offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS [ROBERT]

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,
most loving Father,
for Christ in whom the world is reconciled.
Lifted on the Cross,
his suffering and forgiveness
spanned the gulf our sins had made.
Through that dark struggle
death was swallowed up in victory,
that life and light might reign.

Before he was given up to suffering and death,
recalling this night of Israel's release,

the night in which the sons of Egypt died,
your Chosen One, himself the First-Born,
freely offered his life.

At supper with his disciples
he took bread and offered you thanks.
He broke the bread,
and gave it to them, saying:

“Take, eat.

This is my Body: it is broken for you.”

After supper, he took the cup,
he offered you thanks,
and gave it to them saying:

“Drink this, all of you.

This is my Blood of the new covenant;
it is poured out for you, and for all,
that sins may be forgiven.

Do this in remembrance of me.”

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,
and send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;
may we grow together in unity and love
until at last, in your new creation,**

**we enter into our heritage
in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you,
Lord of all ages,
world without end.
Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.
Lord, unite us in this sign.

Lord's Prayer [OLIVER]

As our Saviour has taught us,
so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Do not bring us
to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Communion [KELVIN]

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.

Amen.

Music at Communion [MAGNUS]

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui:
Præstet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et Jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio.
Amen.

Hence so greatly the Sacrament let us venerate with heads bowed, and let the old practice give way to the new rite; let faith provide a supplement for the failure of the senses.

To the Begetter and the Begottee, be praise and jubilation, hail, honour, virtue also, and blessing too: to the one proceeding from both let there be equal praise.

Amen.

Post Communion Prayer - [BETH]

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment to love one another as he loved them. Write this commandment in our hearts; give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, who gave his life and died for us, yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Stripping of the Church

A hymn is available on the online worship page at www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship.