

Rev. John Hogue “A Way of Life” April 1, 2021 Maundy Thursday Sermon

Jesus says, “I give you a new commandment” (13:34). That’s where the word Maundy comes from. Comes from the Latin meaning - command. The new commandment, Jesus says later is, “Love one another as I have loved you.” Except the new commandment wasn’t new, not really. Jesus had already acted it out in front of them. “As I have loved you.” By serving, by getting on his knees, by bending to a task that even fishermen thought was beneath them, Jesus acted out that commandment. “Love like I loved,” says Jesus.

It wasn’t supposed to be a once-a-year command. The church turned Maundy Thursday into quite a ritual over the years. The Pope would find some beggars—or shall I say his people would find some beggars—and then very publicly would wash their feet. The monarch of England would do the same, until it got too uncomfortable. Now, they hand out some money. Maundy Money, it’s called. **Once a year.**

But it was never supposed to be a ritual. **It was supposed to be a way of life.** Oh, foot washing isn’t a part of our culture is it? That isn’t necessarily what is supposed to be carried on. It is the willingness to serve that is the command.

This Maundy Thursday, we remember what Jesus did; we go back to that moment
Tonight we remember the story of Passover where home was not a place of safety where at any moment you might have to up and flee.

For tonight we remember the story of Passover where home was not a place of safety. Let us remember as we pray for those today who have to grab what they can and go for those fleeing war and violence only to arrive at closed borders.

Let us remember as we pray for those today who have to grab what they can and go for those making treacherous journeys carrying children and plastic bags.

Let us remember as we pray for those today who have to grab what they can and go for those who are out in the cold making their home in a city of tents.

Despite the reality of human nature can be dark, still, still light shines in the darkness.

Consider Leigh Rosanoski chose to write a short, one-off post about kindness on her Facebook page on January 2014. By dawn she had designed a 'miraculous circle' meme and decided to post about kindness every Thursday. Six months later, inspired by the transformational power of kindness and her vision of a kinder world, she launched a kindness movement with 1,000 kindness cards and her can-do attitude.

With a core value of unconditional kindness (being kind without judgement or expectation), and her belief that a kind heart beats within us all, Leigh created the Kind Hearts Movement to inspire an international momentum to do what we can, where we can and how we can to make a difference.

She enacting on Jesus love commandment because love is foundation of kindness. In order to encourage our commitment to all forms of kindness:

Be kind to ourselves first and foremost; receive kindness with gratitude; pay it forward with random acts of kindness; be unconditionally kind to people we know; connect with strangers through a warm smile, kind words, a moment of our time.

Every day is kindness day and brings infinite possibilities to change lives and create a more kind world.

In July 2018, having achieved her goals of launching a global kindness movement, driving its growth and momentum, and bringing on board Kind Hearts who shared her vision and passion, Leigh resigned as CEO of Kind Hearts Trust, passing it on for generations of Kind Hearts to bring new energy and ideas to this continuing journey.

She is sponsored in the book- HumanKind: Changing the World One Small Act At a Time.

The author of this book believes in 3 principles- **Giving back**: One hundred percent of author royalties are going to nonprofit Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Positivity: The book provides a much-needed focus on the positive and practical ways we can all contribute to a better world.

Social good: HumanKind highlights incredible people and organizations that are doing good in our communities. For example-

The books you can fund a surgery to cure someone's blindness with donations of less than \$200.

Organizations through which you can provide a birthday gift for a child who otherwise wouldn't receive one.

Multiple places where you can send letters of encouragement to support hospitalized children, lonely seniors, refugees, veterans and others in need.

Author provides more than fifty other ways that you can change a life. Why not turn a page towards kindness and love -now and every day?! Not once a year.

Remember me – words that plead for our attention. Remember me. Care about me. Don't forget me. Let me know that my life has meaning. God also says remember me. Remember The Passover when God spared the faithful huddled behind bloodstained doors. Remember that God hears our every cry and pities every groan. Remember that Jesus led by serving others, even if it meant washing dirty feet. Remember that on the night that he was betrayed Jesus gave thanks, broke bread, and said, "Eat, this is my body, do this in remembrance of me." And he poured a cup, a new covenant paid for with his blood. He said drink it in remembrance of me. We come today to remember. Remember what God has done, what God is doing and what God promised to do, what God will continue to do. Tonight, we set aside sacred time to remember God too and ask God to remember us and those around us.