

## ***Maunder Thursday***

At the time of Passover Jesus spent his last meal with his disciples. It has become known as The Last Supper. The disciples had been with him as he taught and healed. They had heard his vision of the coming of the kingdom of God.

His actions would help them understand what kind of Messiah he would be.

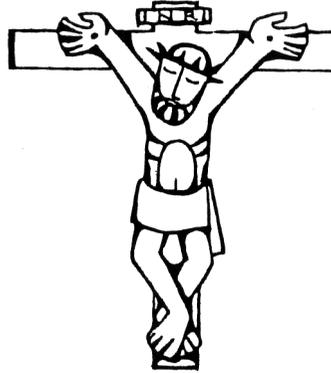
It was around the table that he broke bread and poured wine. Jesus saw this bread and wine as symbols of his life poured out, broken for the life of the world.

John's gospel tells us that it was at this meal that Jesus took a towel and basin and washed the disciples' feet. Some churches include foot-washing in their worship on this night.

It is not appropriate to re-enact Jewish Seder meals. The Lord's Supper is the Christian way to celebrate the drama of Jesus' self-offering.



## ***Good Friday***



There seems to be no limit to the forms of torture that human communities have devised. What does this tell us about the need for human renewal? Is there a people that has abandoned torture?

In going to the cross, Jesus demonstrates his refusal to use the weapons of violence. Jesus refuses to retaliate. In this way he breaks the cycle of violence.

The cross speaks to us of the way God, incarnate in Jesus, absorbs our pain and hurt, our destructiveness and our aggression.

Out of an inexhaustible heart of love, God transforms the possibilities that are present in every situation. The cross is, for the church, the symbol of God embracing this world and opening up a new future.

## ***Easter Sunday***

The church has seen the resurrection of Jesus as a powerful way of proclaiming that light will penetrate darkness, and that hope will be born even in despair. No situation can exhaust God's resources to bring new life.

In raising Christ from the grave God vindicated Jesus' teaching and self-offering.

'Yes,' God says, 'my life has been revealed in Jesus. In fact, Jesus made space in his life for me to dwell and act. In Jesus' love, you see my love: in Jesus' compassion, you see my compassion; in Jesus' suffering you see my suffering.'

It is the Holy Spirit that keeps alive the power of resurrection in today's world. In raising Jesus from the dead, God undermined the very structures of this world. New life is always a possibility. We are never without hope.

Christians are people of the resurrection. This faith that has grasped us enables us to live in hope, look for signs of new life and serve God's new creation.

Cross and resurrection have shown us who God is – the one who loves this world, who embraces this world, suffers with and for this world, and one who has the power to bring new life.

The Methodist Church of New Zealand  
Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

## ***Three Momentous Days***

A warm invitation is extended to you to share in worship at this time of the Christian year.

In our worship we seek to enter again the story of Jesus during his last days.

The story is compelling and helps us to hear what God is saying to us through these events.

We are encouraged to look within, at who we are and who we are becoming.

We are also challenged to look at our society, to see what dynamics are shaping our lives.

If we allow the story to grasp us, we can experience the Spirit of God remaking us, helping us to receive the gift of new life.

These three days, which we commemorate at this time, are days that have power to change our lives, and to transform the world!

This *Little Essay* by Terry Wall is made available within the Methodist Church by The Faith & Order Committee.