

Maundy Thursday
Year A

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14
Psalm 116:1, 10-17
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Shall I Jump?

"Jesus knew that his hour had come." - John 13:1

Tonight Jesus is standing on the brink of everything.

You'd be surprised the emotions that can well up while playing with your children in a swimming pool. Maybe some of you have found yourself there. Standing in the pool a few feet from the edge looking up into the eyes of your little son or daughter, your arms outstretched, your voice speaking in soothing and encouraging tones, letting them know that it is perfectly safe and wonderful to jump from the edge of the pool and into your arms. You, as the parent, know beyond any shadow of a doubt that it will be enjoyable, safe, and like nothing else they have ever experienced before. You would never drop them and you would never let them sink. You are their mother or father and you love them.

From my perspective in the pool the choice is simple. I'm trustworthy. I won't let them down. But it is time for a decision on their part.

But before we forget, what if the child doesn't know how to swim yet? What might they be thinking as they see you standing in water that they know would go above their head if they fell in? They do love their mom or their dad, but that water is pretty deep, and you're standing a little farther away from the edge of the pool than they feel comfortable jumping. They've been having a good time playing in the shallow end of the pool - splashing, jumping, maybe even putting their head under water. Isn't that good enough? Now why did you have to go and change things by asking you to jump into your arms **in the deep end of the pool?!** What if something went wrong?

And it's time to choose, do I stay or do I trust and jump?

Tonight Jesus is standing on the brink of everything.

We like to think of Jesus purely as God, and yet he also was purely man - a man who was facing unfathomable conversations and unfathomable circumstances.

Jesus knows that he is going to have to jump. Jesus knows what he is going to have to tell his disciples about his betrayal and death. Jesus knows the lies that are going to be said about him. Jesus knows what prolonged pain he will have to endure.

But he also knows that it is time.

And knowing that it is time Jesus has one thing to say to his disciples and to us.

"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." (John 13:34-35)

And so that we don't get too passive with a word as familiar as 'love', let's choose another word that Jesus shows us tonight - humility.

Humility - as God kneeling in the dust to wash prideful human beings' feet.

Humility - standing silent when lies about him were accepted as fact.

Humility - forgiving when betrayed by his closest friends.

Humility - trusting in the strength his Father **as he stood on the edge of all human existence** as his own human strength would fade and be extinguished on the cross.

Jesus gives us this commandment, that we humbly serve one another. Just as he humbly serves us, we also should humbly serve one another. By this beautifully baffling humility everyone will know that we are his disciples, if we have wonderfully baffling humility for one another.

It's time to choose, do I stay or do I trust and jump?

Amen.