



Holy Week Reflections

Maundy Thursday

Matthew 26:36

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.'

The picture is of trees in the garden of Gethsemane, a place that was not peaceful for Jesus as he wrestled with what lay ahead. The disciples failed to keep watch.

Keeping watch at the heart of our community.
Working with others to notice
who doesn't make their daily walk to the shop;
who is walking past, head bowed down by worry,
or wiping tears away.

Remembering to phone our isolated neighbour,
to wave at the familiar postman.
Praying for our community, for
the faces we see and the names we know.
Holding them before God each day
knowing that we are heard.

The disciples failed to keep watch;
Lord, help us not to do the same.



About these reflections

In January 2019, I was blessed to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to see some of the places where the historical events of Holy Week probably happened. Until I visited, it had never struck me how hard that last week in the city must have been for those essentially rural people. No wonder they walked down the hill from the city and up over the Mount of Olives to the village of Bethany each evening, to be among familiar friends and in a quieter place. No wonder Jesus sought solace and His Father in a garden. Life among stone and brick is hard when trees and soil and water and space are familiar.

Elizabeth Clark (National Rural officer for the Methodist and United Reformed Churches) and I have taken some of the photographs I took on that pilgrimage and reflected on episodes from that last week. These photographs and reflections are what we offer to you now. We are all in unfamiliar territory this week. Our world is changing around us so very quickly. None of us will be quite the same after this experience. We pray that these reflections might help you navigate this challenging Holy Week.

God bless you this Easter.

Revd Claire Maxim, CEO, Arthur Rank Centre

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