

## “Building the Bridge Between A Foot Washing and an Arrest”

I appreciated the Sunday off last week and Chaplain Nancy Breitsprecher sharing the good word.

And the good word involved washing feet. I am not sure if she mentioned this, but the John is the only Gospel to not mention the Lord's Supper. In Chapter 13, which you heard read last week, John only mentions the “table” in saying, Jesus got up from it, stripped down, tied a towel around his waste, and in an act of humble, radical servanthood, began to wash the disciples feet. Peter, being Peter, did not react well to Jesus' doing this.

On a Sunday when we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion, recalling the Lord's Supper, which is one of the two Sacraments in the Presbyterian/Protestant Tradition, it is worth noting that in some churches, there is a third Sacrament, Foot Washing.

Have you ever participated in one? Some churches do so during Holy Week, on Maundy Thursday. Since we wear shoes and socks these days, some churches do symbolic acts like washing peoples hands. It is traditional for the Pope to wash the feet of 12 people during Holy Week. Pope Francis caused an uproar when he washed the feet of women and Muslims. That was a powerful action, in my opinion.

With the foot washing over, Jesus begins to teach the disciples in what is known as the Farewell Discourse covering chapters 13-17. There are many wonderful and powerful teachings in these chapters. “I am the Vine and you are the Branches”. “In my Father's House” “Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” Perhaps the most important teaching is the New Commandment - That you love one another as I have loved you, by keeping this commandment . Jesus speaks of this new commandment to love one another as he loved throughout his teaching in John. It makes it way into the letters of John found in the later part of the New Testament as well.

Following on the, if you will pardon the pun, the heels of Jesus' washing the disciples feet and giving them the new commandment to love as he loved, we move outdoors into the Garden.

The action picks up, as we know what or better yet, who is coming to join Jesus and the disciples. Jesus new commandment to love as he loves will be put to the test. It is night again. Armed guards wielding spears and swords, followed by the authorities, led by Judas approach.

We join Jesus and cast in the Garden. What will happen? Let's find out.