



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.



*'The Washing of the Feet' by Ghislaine Howard (1953-)
acrylic on canvas, 2004.*

John 13: 2b-5 'Thanksgiving for those who Care'

And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

I write this, 400 years to the day that the 'Mayflower' set sail from Plymouth with 102 people known as 'Puritans' to colonise North America and seek religious freedom. Thanksgiving Day was celebrated the year after to thank God for the help and gifts

given them by the local people, and continues today.

Perhaps we can think of someone who has gone the extra mile to help us or others. The last six months have been a roller coaster of emotions, and while much has not been good, we have been helped by the many key workers that give different services.

There are the medical staff whether in hospitals, hospices, including ambulance crews, chemists, GPs, who put their own health on the line and deal with our various moods. As do shop and farm workers and deliverers who work through to provide food. Police and fire personnel, postal and refuse collections have been not always been kindly appreciated, as scientists and, yes, politicians, who have had to make difficult and unpopular decisions. I know many of us have got renewed respect for teachers!

Just as the Founding Fathers of North America gave their Thanksgiving, we thank God for providing our harvest, particularly through servants. Jesus gave us the blueprint to follow him from the Passover meal he shared with his disciples. He said: 'If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you, then, should wash one another's feet' (John 13:14).

Prayer:

Lord, we thank you for the gift of love
shown through the many people who support us on a daily basis.
We pray for them and their families,
that they may feel appreciated and valued.

We thank God for the harvests of our servants each day.
Help us, in a weary society, to live out Christ's love to others,
so that we can help to 'bring that glorious harvest home'. Amen.