

Thursday, April 9: Maundy Thursday



Concerning the Gathering

This gathering is intended to be around the dinner table over the evening meal. The meal can be anything, however some kind of bread/flat bread and wine/juice should be on the menu. A Middle Eastern or Mediterranean style cuisine could add to the experience. If possible, five candles should be lit and placed in the centre of your table with a bowl of water placed in the middle. You will also need a drying cloth and soap. The candles should be lit before the service begins.

The readings can be read by one person or shared amongst those present.

This is the day that Christ the Lamb of God gave himself into the hands of those who would slay him.

This is the day that Christ gathered with his disciples in the upper room.

This is the day that Christ took a towel and washed the disciples' feet, giving us an example that we should do to others as he has done to us.

This is the day that Christ our God gave us this holy feast, that we who eat this bread and drink this cup may here proclaim his Holy Sacrifice and be partakers of his resurrection, and at the last day may reign with him in heaven.

Read John 13:1-17 (or listen to the children's Bible version)

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 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. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

Using the bowl of water, the soap and the towel, let one of the household can either wash the feet or the hands of the rest of the household. OR Everyone can wash their own hands.

Things to think and talk about:

Washing someone else's feet is a strange thing in our world, but in the world of Jesus, it was a very necessary service. Sandals and dusty roads make for stinky, dirty feet and it was the job of the lowest servant to wash the feet of guests as they enter the house. When Jesus and His disciples meet for their Passover meal, no one has washed their feet, so Jesus takes the lowest position and does the dirtiest, smelliest job of all. Many times He had tried to teach His disciples that His Kingdom was upside down, but now He showed them. Washing feet is not the same now as it was then, but it is symbolic of taking the lowest position and serving those around you.

IF someone washed others' feet: Did it seem strange to see this person doing this?

How did you feel being served by this person? How did you feel washing others' feet?

Right now washing our hands has become almost a matter of life and death.

How has your attitude about hand washing changed over the past month? What do clean hands mean?

Say the following prayer as your grace before eating.

Father, we spread this table to remember the loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ, your Son. Accept all we offer you this day. Bind us together in his love and in the love he has commanded us to bring one another; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Begin to eat your meal.

If there are children at your table have one of them (otherwise the youngest at the table) ask the question:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

Read Luke 22:14-20 (or listen to the children's Bible version)

When the hour came, Jesus took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

Some things to think and talk about while you eat:

When Jesus had His last supper with His disciples it wasn't part of a church service, it was part of a meal. The Passover meal has a number of elements to it and there are pauses to remember different aspects of the Exodus story, so Jesus pausing during the meal to talk about bread or a cup was not totally unexpected, but He gave new meaning to the elements of the meal. These new meanings had to do with the death He would die the very next day.

As you eat together talk about Jesus sacrifice—how His body was broken and His blood poured out for us. Talk about how connecting these thoughts to an everyday action like eating should help us think about what Jesus did for us more often. It is a great reminder that meal time is a perfect time to talk about how God is at work in our midst.

When the meal is done but before anyone leaves the table.

Read Matthew 26:36-56 (or listen to the children's Bible version)

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." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Together say the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Blow out the candles, clear the table and do the dishes in silence. If you have any icons or crosses in your house, put them away or cover them until the Great Vigil on Saturday night.

Songs:

Humble King www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebnkRveLz4

Remembrance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oCNwIA6xLc>