



Maundy Thursday – Agape Meal

We have a tradition at Good Shepherd of gathering in a special way on Maundy Thursday. Youth and parents help prepare a Middle-Eastern meal for all to share in the Parish Hall. We eat together as we listen to the story of Jesus with his disciples sharing a

meal together the night before he died. (John 13-17:26)

After dinner, we listen to the story of the foot-washing. Jesus surprised his disciples, Peter most of all, by washing their feet (John 13). As he was doing this Jesus said, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (13:34)

We then process with the choir to our church. The priest holds a piece of bread and cup of wine from dinner and then places it in our baptistry. The font and the baptistry is filled with plants, rocks and greens symbolizing the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus went there with his disciples to pray. We listen to the story of Jesus in the garden. (Matthew 26:36-46)

Finally, the priests strip the altar of all the usual adornments: the hangings; the cushions in front of the rail; the books and kneelers; the candles. Now that the altar is bare and the bread and wine have been moved to the symbolic garden, the candle that burns day and night above the ambry is extinguished.

The church becomes the cross and the empty tomb. And we wait.

No matter how many are in your household on Maundy Thursday, I invite you to set aside time for this service, an abridged version of what we do as a church family that I hope is a source of strength and hope for you and your family on this most holy night.

Blessings and Peace, Arianne+

Agape Meal/Dinner

Invite one person to prayer before the meal saying, The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

God our Father, you have invited us to share in the supper which your Son gave to the Church to proclaim his death until he comes: may he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Set aside one piece of bread and a cup of wine or grape juice. Before the meal is complete, one person leads this prayer over the bread and cup,

When we eat this bread and drink this cup we remember how much God loves us. We lift up our hearts and give thanks to God, the source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

On this night Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it and shared it with his friends.
On this night Jesus took a cup of wine, blessed it and shared it with his friends.
On this night Jesus asks us to remember that every time we eat this bread and drink this cup we remember we are forgiven, healed, renewed and proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Through Christ, and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory and praise, for ever and ever. AMEN.

After the meal, we gather at the foot washing station to hear what Jesus did after dinner with his friends. One person reads or share in the reading:

Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing. But when he came to Simon Peter, that disciple asked, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't really know what I am doing, but later you will understand."

But Peter didn't want him to, "You will never wash my feet!" So Jesus said, "If I don't wash you, you don't really belong to me." Peter still didn't like it, "Lord, don't wash just my feet. Wash my hands and my head."

Jesus explained, "People who have bathed and are clean all over need to wash just their feet. And you, my disciples, are clean. Do you understand what I have done? You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same for each other. I am giving you a new command. You must love each other, just as I have loved you. If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples."

All members of the household are urged to wash hands or feet, either one another's or one's own. Have a conversation around these questions:

- What are some personal, household and family rituals that are an important part of your routine?
- What is helpful about rituals? What is hard about the change to our routines right now?
- Hand-washing has taken on new significance, it's taking care of ourselves, but it's also a way we take care of others, even strangers. How does this connect with the new commandment Jesus left us on that night?
- Take a moment to give thanks for doctors, nurses, emergency professionals, grocery clerks, delivery persons – the many hands who are working on this night for the benefit of the common good.

After all is finished, you are invited to "strip the altar" – either the altar in your sacred space at home, or the table where you ate. Take everything away so your altar or table is bare, wiping it down with a clean cloth.

Concluding prayers,

Invite everyone to say prayers of intercession and thanksgiving.

Pray together 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

And close with this concluding collect:

Let us pray,

God our Father, you have invited us to share in the supper which your Son gave to his Church to proclaim his death until he comes: may he nourish us by his presence, and help us love one another as he loved us; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. **Amen.**

You may also want to [listen/watch this recording of "Ubi caritas"](#) which our choir sings on this night. The translation is – where true charity and love are, there God is.