

Maundy Thursday service for households and small groups (kid-friendly)

Maundy Thursday is the remembrance of the institution of the Lord's Supper at the Last Supper before Jesus' crucifixion. ("Maundy" comes from the Latin "mandatum novum", a new commandment.) Jesus started the evening by washing the disciples' feet. Households are encouraged to re-tell and re-live Jesus' acts of service as a way of saying that we want to be like Jesus together. Kids are invited to participate.

WARNING: you will get wet! Well, maybe not a lot, but this isn't meant to be a quiet, solemn time. It should be lively and interesting. Get fully involved in the experiences that Jesus and his disciples had in the upper room. God will use your active, bodily participation to say something to you that you may not be able to talk about right away but that will stay in your hearts. Pay attention to everything that happens and to each person who participates. Let Jesus be incarnated in your time together.

Preparation

Before you start the meal or dessert prepare a foot washing station with a chair, a wash tub, a pitcher of warm water, and towels. On the table along with the food place a small loaf of bread (e.g., a Kaiser roll) on a plate, and a cup of grape juice or apple juice. The "Gloria Patri" is available online at GraceConnections.com/resources.shtml.

Start by having a meal or dessert together.

Jesus washes the disciples' feet

After eating, read the following. Pause to allow participants to answer the questions.

- Jesus and his disciples were about to eat together. But they wore sandals and didn't have paved streets: their feet were dirty. It was the custom in those days that someone was supposed to wash the dinner guests' feet. Who do you think usually did this? (A servant.)
- But on that first Maundy Thursday there was no servant available and no one wanted to wash feet. So who do you think did it?

Have someone read John 13:1-5

Foot washing

- Have the oldest person "wash" the feet of the person to his/her right at the foot washing station. Simply pour a little water from the pitcher over the person's feet and then towel them dry.
- Proceed clockwise around the table so that each person who has washed someone's feet then has her/his feet washed.
- When everyone's had their feet washed, ask: Why do you think Jesus did this?

Have someone read John 13:12-17, 33-35

The instituting of the Lord's Table

After the meal, what was going to happen to Jesus? (He was going to die on the cross.)

To prepare the disciples for his death, Jesus took food that was at the table and made it into something important for all of Jesus' followers. It became a way to remember his death.

At each table, have the youngest person at the table who can read be the questioner.

- Pass the loaf of bread around the table. Each person tears off a piece.
Questioner: What does the bread represent?
When the question has been answered, the questioner chooses someone to read 1 Peter 2:21-24.
- Pass the cup around the table and have each person dip her/his bread into the cup and eat the bread.
Questioner: What does the cup represent?
When the question has been answered, the questioner chooses someone to read Col. 1:15-20.

Closing

Closing prayer: Say 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.

(from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

Sing or say together the Gloria Patri or "Father, I adore You"

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
And to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

1. Father, I adore You; lay my life before You; How I love You
2. Jesus...
3. Spirit...

The following page can be printed as a handout so that no one's Bible gets wet.

John 13

¹It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

²The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

¹²When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

³³"My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

³⁴"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

1 Peter 2

²¹To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

²²"He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Colossians 1

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

¹⁷He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.