

## CELEBRATING MAUNDY THURSDAY AT HOME

On Maundy Thursday we remember the night when Jesus gathered with his disciples in an upper room where they celebrated the Passover meal. Jesus instituted what we now know as Communion and told his disciples to eat and drink of this meal of bread and wine to remember him. Then in a radical act of love and service Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and commanded his disciples and us to love others in the way that Jesus loved us. This is where we get the name for today- the word Maundy comes from a Latin word meaning "commandment." Today we reflect on how Jesus has loved and served us and how we can do the same for others.

We invite you to engage with any or all of the following practices as a way of remembering and reflecting on Maundy Thursday. Read through this and decide which parts of this will be meaningful for you and/or your family and then gather all the supplies you will need.

### **Before the Meal**

Before you begin our meal, **light a candle** so everyone knows this isn't just any meal. Something special and holy is about to happen. With this candle, we remember and are aware that Jesus, the light of the world, is present with us here and now.

**Read *Luke 22: 1-27*** You can read it from your Bible, or here:

**22** "Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. **2** The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

**3** Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; **4** he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. **5** They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. **6** So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

### **The Preparation of the Passover**

**7** Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. **8** So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." **9** They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" **10** "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will

meet you; follow him into the house he enters **11** and say to the owner of the house, “The teacher asks you, “Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”” **12** He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there.” **13** So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

### **The Institution of the Lord’s Supper**

**14** When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. **15** He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; **16** for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” **17** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves; **18** for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” **19** 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.” **20** 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. **21** But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. **22** For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!” **23** Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.

### **The Dispute about Greatness**

**24** A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. **25** But he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. **26** But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. **27** For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.”

### **Foot Washing**

If you’re adventurous (and I hope you are), and you have someone else living with you, pour some water in a basin, get out some towels and wash one another’s feet. Be careful, though. This experience might transform you! As you wash each other’s feet, reflect on what Jesus’ disciples might have felt as Jesus humbly washed their feet. How does it feel to have your own feet washed by someone else?

### **Hand Washing**

Hand washing has become an integral part of trying to stop the spread of COVID-19. We wash our hands to get rid of germs, but what if we thought of washing our hands as an act of love and care for ourselves and others. Ultimately washing our hands is a way of serving, protecting, and loving our neighbor. Go to a sink or gather some soap and a basin with water. Remember the gracious love and care that Jesus shows us as you slowly, gently and intentionally wash your hands.

**Wash My Hands**, by Lucy Nanson

Wash my hands on Maundy Thursday not my feet  
My hands peel potatoes, wipe messes from the floor  
change dirty diapers, clean the grease from pots and pans;  
my hands have pointed in anger and pushed away in tears.  
In years past they've smacked a child and raised a fist  
fumbled with nervousness, and shaken with fear.  
I've wrung them when waiting for news to come  
crushed a letter I'd rather forget  
covered my mouth when I've been called out;  
my hands have touched forbidden things...  
childhood memories do not grow dim.  
These hands have dug gardens, planted seeds  
picked fruit and berries, weeded out and pruned trees;  
found bleeding from the rose's thorns...  
dirt and blood mix together  
when washed before a cup of tea.  
Love expressed by these hands  
asks for your respect  
in the hand-shake of warm greeting,  
the gentle rubbing of a child's head  
the caressing of a lover, the soft touch upon a baby's cheek;  
sounds of music played by them in tunes upon a flute.  
My hands have held a frightened teenager,  
touched a mother in her death;  
where cold skin tells the end of life has come  
but not the end of love...  
they've comforted a sister losing agility and health.  
With my hands outstretched before you  
I stand humbled and in awe  
your gentle washing in water, the softness of the towel  
symbolizing a cleansing  
the servant-hood of Christ.

Wash my hands on Maundy Thursday  
and not my feet.  
I offer them to you.

**Sing The Valley Song with Will** as you wash feet (or if you choose not to wash)  
(Go to [peacelutheranbillings.com](http://peacelutheranbillings.com) for the link.)

### **Prayer before the meal**

Lord, Jesus, on this holy night you washed the feet of your friends, and you shared your last meal with them. Bless this meal that we share tonight. Help us to remember that whenever we eat, you are here at the table with us, teaching us to love one another the way you have loved us. Amen.

### **Enjoy your meal**

As you eat together, think about some of the special meals that you have shared with the people you love. What made them memorable? How is this like or different than Holy Communion? What do you miss about receiving Holy Communion in this time when we are not able to meet together physically? As you think about how Jesus loved and served his disciples, what are ways that we can serve others now? In the past couple weeks, how have you seen love in action?

### **After eating, Read Psalm 22**

You can read Psalm 22 in unison, as a leader and response, or have individuals around the table each take a verse in turn.

<sup>1</sup>My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?  
<sup>2</sup>O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;  
and by night, but find no rest.  
<sup>3</sup>Yet you are holy,  
enthroned on the praises of Israel.  
<sup>4</sup>In you our ancestors trusted;  
they trusted, and you delivered them.  
<sup>5</sup>To you they cried, and were saved;  
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.  
<sup>6</sup>But I am a worm, and not human;  
scorned by others, and despised by the people.

<sup>7</sup>All who see me mock at me;  
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;  
<sup>8</sup>"Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver —  
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"  
<sup>9</sup>Yet it was you who took me from the womb;  
you kept me safe on my mother's breast.  
<sup>10</sup>On you I was cast from my birth,  
and since my mother bore me you have been my God.  
<sup>11</sup>Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near  
and there is no one to help.  
<sup>12</sup>Many bulls encircle me,  
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;  
<sup>13</sup>they open wide their mouths at me,  
like a ravening and roaring lion.  
<sup>14</sup>I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint;  
my heart is like wax;  
it is melted within my breast;  
<sup>15</sup>my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;  
you lay me in the dust of death.  
<sup>16</sup>For dogs are all around me;  
a company of evildoers encircles me.  
My hands and feet have shriveled;  
<sup>17</sup>I can count all my bones.  
They stare and gloat over me;  
<sup>18</sup>they divide my clothes among themselves,  
and for my clothing they cast lots.  
<sup>19</sup>But you, O LORD, do not be far away!  
O my help, come quickly to my aid!  
<sup>20</sup>Deliver my soul from the sword,  
my life from the power of the dog!  
<sup>21</sup>Save me from the mouth of the lion!  
From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.  
<sup>22</sup>I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters  
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:  
<sup>23</sup>You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;  
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

<sup>24</sup>For he did not despise or abhor  
the affliction of the afflicted;  
he did not hide his face from me,  
but heard when I cried to him.

<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the great congregation;  
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

<sup>26</sup>The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek him shall praise the LORD.

May your hearts live forever!

<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember  
and turn to the LORD;  
and all the families of the nations  
shall worship before him.

<sup>28</sup>For dominion belongs to the LORD,  
and he rules over the nations.

<sup>29</sup>To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;  
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,  
and I shall live for him.

<sup>30</sup>Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the LORD,

<sup>31</sup>and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,  
saying that he has done it.

### **Sing Bind Us Together, Lord with Will**

(the link is on [peacelutheranbillings.com](http://peacelutheranbillings.com))

### **Stripping of the Altar**

On Maundy Thursday we remove everything from the altar as a way to remember the humiliation Jesus experienced and as a visual reminder of the way life was taken away as Jesus was crucified.

If you choose you can gather any faith related items you may have in your house -- icons, statues, religious art and symbols that can be easily removed. Pack them away somewhere, in a storage bin or a bag. (You might also cover any large items with a cloth.) Remove all items from your dining table so it's completely empty and thoroughly wash it so it is both cleared and cleaned. Leave your table bare until Easter morning.

**Questions for Journal Reflection or Conversation:** So much of our lives has been "stripped away" in this time of pandemic. What has it been like to lose so much of your

“normal” life? What has been opened up to you because of this stripping away of activities and normalcy?

Parents: on Saturday night when everyone has gone to bed, unpack and uncover the religious items and decorate your dining room table with Easter joy so your family can awaken to a day of celebration!

*Service adapted from Pastor Nancy Kraft.*