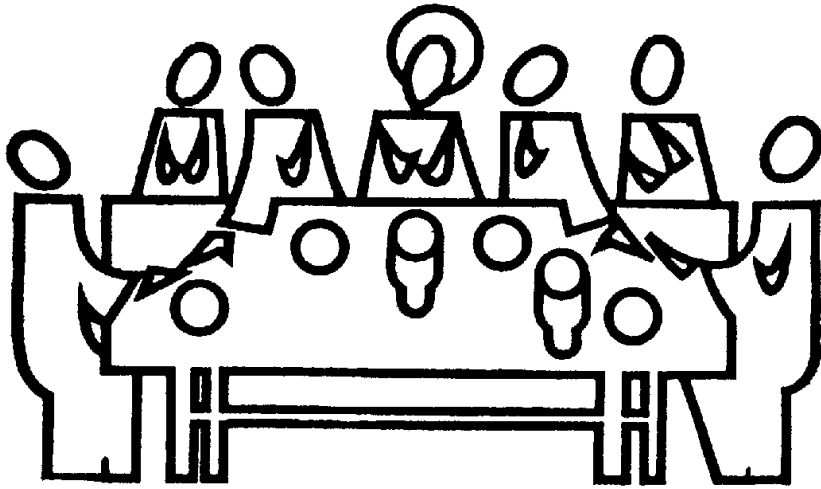


Agape Meal for Maundy Thursday



Maundy Thursday, April 18, 2019
6:30 p.m.

At
St. John's Lutheran Church
Warren, Pennsylvania

Also Participating:
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Warren, Pennsylvania
&
Bethany Lutheran Church
Sheffield, Pennsylvania

NOTES

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day are three episodes in one great celebration by which we die and rise to new life with Christ.

In other words, immersion in this journey is life-shattering and life-creating, an experience of faith like no other.

Here we touch the very heart of the Christian mystery.

Easter is time for feeling – for looking, for listening, for touching – a time for all the senses to come alive.

Maundy Thursday brings us to the supper table in the dark, but what should happen here on this night – the night of betrayal?

Some, with the best intentions, have chosen to celebrate a Passover Seder, but the Seder is a Jewish ritual which should not and need not be appropriated by Christians.

The Easter experience – Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day – forms the Christian Passover.

Our Seder is the Eucharist, with its twin tables of word and sacrament.

Christianity and Judaism have developed into two quite different living faiths, called to reverence and respect one another's integrity.

For these reasons, an Agape Meal (or Love Feast) is a better choice than a Passover Meal.

The early Christian custom with guests seated at table can be eucharistic or non-eucharistic.

In reciting the words of institution, it is traditional to say 'On the night he was betrayed – this very night—he took bread' or 'On the night before he died – this very night – Jesus took bread'.

Footwashing may take place after the scripture readings and before the Greeting of the Peace.

The food is very simple and served in two parts – for example, soup and bread, followed by cheese and fruit. Water and/or fruit juice is on every table. Tables are laid with a white cover, decorated if possible with real green vine leaves and lighted candles.

Scripture is heard sitting around the table at the appropriate time, the reader (standing or sitting) in her/his place.

The washing of feet begins with designated leaders taking bowls and towels and beginning with those closest to them. People need to be reassured that footwashing is entirely voluntary.

During the meal normal everyday conversation takes place. People chat, laugh, make as much noise as they like, in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

This convivial mood naturally becomes more serious when the Eucharist begins, or as the meal gives way to meditation and intercession.

Greeting

Presider

The Lord be with you.

People

And also with you.

Presider

Our Lord Jesus Christ said

The first commandment is this:

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

People

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Meal – First Course

Table by table, people come forward to be served.

Confession of Sin

Presider

God so loved the world as to give the only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Let us confess our sins and failures in love, asking the Lord to cleanse us.

Reader

Lord Jesus Christ, we confess we have failed you as did your first disciples; we ask for your mercy and your help; our selfishness betrays you.

Lord, forgive.

People

Christ have mercy.

Reader

We fail to share the pain of your suffering.

Lord, forgive.

People

Christ have mercy.

Reader

We run away from those who abuse you.

Lord, forgive.

People

Christ have mercy.

Reader

We are afraid of being known to belong to you.

Lord, forgive.

People

Christ have mercy.

Reader

May the servant Lord who loves us even to death on a cross, have mercy on us and deliver us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life.

People

Amen.

Scripture

Reading: John 13:1-17

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. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him.

And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then 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.

⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me."

⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"

¹⁰Jesus 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." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After 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? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

Silence

Reflection: "The Wheat and the Tares"

Excerpted from *The Way of the Wolf* by Martin Bell

Silence

Reading: John 13:31-35

³¹When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.

³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Silence

Meal – Second Course

Intercession

Presider	Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and for all people according to their need.
Intercessor	Father, on this, the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet. We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service. Lord, hear us.
People	and humble us.
Intercessor	On this night, he prayed for his disciples to be one. We pray for the unity of the church. Lord, hear us.
People	and unite us.
Intercessor	On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through their message. We pray for the mission of your church. Lord, hear us.
People	and renew our zeal.

Intercessor	On this night he commanded them to love, but suffered rejection himself. We pray for the rejected and unloved. Lord, hear us.
People	and fill us with your love.
Presider	As our Savior has taught us, so we pray.
People	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.

Footwashing

The footwashing is done in silence.

After each person's feet have been washed and dried, the washer may say ,

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "Love one another as I have loved you."

Hymn 765 [With One Voice] will be sung softly, unaccompanied.

**[Chorus] Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.**

**Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
Master who pours out himself for them. [chorus]**

**Neighbors are wealthy and poor,
varied in color and race,
neighbors are nearby and far away. [chorus]**

**These are the ones we will serve,
these are the ones we will love
All these are neighbors to us and you. [chorus]**

Greeting of Peace

Presider Christ is our peace. He has reconciled
us to God in one body by the cross. We
meet in his name and share his peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with
you.

People **And also with you.**

Eucharist

Wine and bread are placed on each table.

*All remain seated while the Presider (standing) offers the eucharistic
prayer.*

Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and
delight. You have given it to us to care for, so that all your
creatures may enjoy its bounty.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent
Jesus to live and work as one of us, and bring us back to
you. He showed us how to love you, and set us free to love
and serve one another.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and praise you, saying,

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed, (*-- this very night --*) he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, "This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

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

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us.

Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honor and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

The pastor breaks the bread. The following may be said.

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered and made one bread, so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Those seated at each table communicate each other.

The sacrament is given with the following words, after which the communicant responds: Amen.

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

Leftovers are reverently consumed.

The following prayer is said:

Presider Father of all, we give you thanks and
praise that when we were still far off you
met us in your Son and brought us
home. Dying and living he declared
your love, gave us grace and opened
the gate of glory. May we who share
Christ's body live his risen life, we who
drink his cup bring life to others, we,
whom the Spirit lights, give light to the
world.

People **Keep us in this hope that we have
grasped, so we and all your children
shall be free, and the whole earth live
to praise your name.**

The candles are extinguished.

All move into the sanctuary. The lighting is dim.

The stripping of the altar takes place in silence.

Psalm 22 is read.

*The people are invited to remain in silent prayer and
meditation.*

The people depart in silence.

**Adapted from "Agape Meal for Maundy Thursday",
published by the Anglican Diocese of Perth; and
from *A Prayer Book for Australia*, pp. 139-141.**