

Maundy Thursday: Remembering Jesus' Last Supper

Guide for At-Home Worship

This worship guide is appropriate to use as part of, or before, your evening meal on Thursday, April 9, 2020. It is designed to be used by single person or by a household of two or more people, including school-aged children ages 8 and up.

You will be feeding on the word of God before you actually eat dinner, so you may want to sit down a half hour sooner than you normally eat. Feel free to add other songs you all know by heart.

Beforehand, prepare your table:

- Set a place for every household member, with a place for Jesus at the head of your table
- Set out a candle, a Bible and a worship order
- Communion elements: A piece / loaf of bread and a cup (Ribena, grape juice or wine)
- Footwashing elements: bucket of warm water, basin, cup to dip water, towels, empty bucket

Worship service

Light your candle, saying, "Lord Jesus, be present at this table."

Sing a hymn or chorus of praise that you can sing by heart. For example:

- God is so good (Mungu yu mwema...)
- Father (Jesus / Spirit) we adore you, we lay our lives before you. How we love you.
- The doxology: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow..." with the extra verse:
"Be present at our table, Lord. Be here and everywhere adored.
These mercies bless and grant that we may feast in Paradise with Thee."

Pray: Holy Spirit, help us to remember well the last supper of our Lord Jesus. Help us to feel that Jesus is near. Help us to see and understand the deep love of Jesus for all of us as we read your living word. Amen.

Open your Bible to [John 13:1-17](#)

We will be reading John 13:1-17 three times. Different members of the household might read each time. Each time, you will be invited to observe something different.

1. As you read John 13:1-17 slowly, fix your eyes on Jesus. Notice every detail.
Now, after reading, take a few moments of silence. Then, if you are by yourself, you might want to write in a journal. If you are with others, consider these questions aloud:
 - How do I picture Jesus here?
 - What details about Jesus do I notice?
 - Is there anything about Jesus that surprises me?
2. Now, picture yourself being one of the disciples. Read John 13:1-17 again.
Reflect: As one of the disciples, how do I feel about Jesus?
 - How does Jesus feel about me?
 - How does this story help me love Jesus more?
3. Now, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you in your life now. Read John 13:1-17 one more time.
Reflect: What does it mean, to wash one another's feet?
 - What acts of service seem too difficult or humiliating for me to do?
 - What is Jesus asking of me? How do I need to think differently or act differently?

Experiencing the Sacraments: Foot washing and Communion

You may have medical or physical reasons for not practicing foot washing. It's OK!! You might substitute handwashing instead. Or you might choose to use your imagination and simply meditate on the experience of foot-washing.

Read John 13:31-35

"Jesus showed them the full extent of his love." Jesus washes his disciples' feet first. Then he commands them to wash one another's feet. We will practice this sacrament of foot washing now.

If you are by yourself	If you are with others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pour warm water into a basin on the floor by your chair. Have a towel nearby. • Sit and soak your feet in the warm water. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you imagine that it is Jesus, kneeling in front of you, washing your feet. • Take time to absorb what it means that the God of the universe, maker of heaven and earth, is willing to serve you in this way. Draw strength from this contemplation. • Ask Jesus to show you what it means to follow in his example of loving and serving. • As you dry your feet, pray for strength to do the acts of service Jesus invites you to do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your bucket of warm water and basin ready, with a towel(s) • The oldest member or head of the household will be the first to wash the feet of another. Dip warm water out of the bucket and pour it over the feet of the seated person. When the seated person's feet are washed, s/he washes the feet of the next person. Continue foot washing around the circle of your table, until everyone has participated. (You may want to pour out the dirty water into an empty bucket each time) • As your feet are being washed, imagine that it is Jesus, kneeling in front of you, washing your feet. Take time to absorb what it means that the God of the universe, maker of heaven and earth, is willing to serve you in this way. Draw strength from this contemplation. • As you wash the feet of another, try to love that person in the same way that Jesus loved his friends. • As you watch others having their feet be washed, ask Jesus show you what it means to follow in his example of loving and serving.

You might choose to sing another chorus that you all know.

Or sing along to this song, ["An Upper Room did our Lord Prepare"](#) (tune: *O Waly, Waly*)

An upper room did our Lord prepare
for those he loved until the end:
and his disciples still gather there
to celebrate their risen friend.

And after supper he washed their feet,
for service, too, is sacrament.
In Christ our joy shall be made complete:
sent out to serve, as he was sent.

A lasting gift Jesus gave his own:
to share his bread, his loving cup.
Whatever burdens may bow us down,
he by his cross shall lift us up.

No end there is! We depart in peace,
he loves beyond the uttermost:
in every room in our Father's house
Christ will be there, as Lord and Host.

When you are finished, be sure everyone has washed his or her hands thoroughly. Then return to your seat(s) at the table. Contemplate this: In his last hours of life, our Lord Jesus served his friends and then explained what it meant that he was about to die for them.

You will celebrate the communion supper together—something you might never have done before outside of a church, or without a priest or minister to lead you. But remember, this is the Table of the Lord, and Jesus is both your guest and your Host at this meal. We trust that Jesus welcomes to his table all who love him and wish to follow him. So celebrate this holy meal in faith that Jesus will bless it.

Read [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)

Pray: O Lord, we eat and drink in memory of Jesus and His great love, and in this simple meal we proclaim His death and resurrection, giving life to all people.

Share the bread, with each breaking off a piece, saying to each other, “The body of Christ, given for you.” Hold your piece of bread.

Share the cup, saying, “The blood of Christ, poured out for you.” Dip your piece of bread in the cup and eat. Then share the cup with the next person.

After you have eaten, take time to pray:

- Offer thanksgivings to God for who he is and all that he has done for you
- Offer petitions, calling out to God to have mercy on people who are sick, suffering, alone, jobless and in need of God’s care. Pray for friends and relatives you are separated from.
- Pray for leaders of nations and cities, for Christ’s church around the world, for your own church and its leaders – all need wisdom.

Close by praying the Lord’s prayer together.

Your formal worship service is over, but you may now continue to eat your evening meal in a way that honors God. As you eat your ordinary food, share your thoughts with Jesus. If you are with others, share good conversation including your thoughts about being a servant to others and what that might mean practically at this time in history. Be always mindful that Jesus is still sitting with you at your table, to love you, encourage you and call you to follow his example.

As you close your meal, you might want to remember how Jesus finished his last supper. He had spent that time, loving his friends deeply. And now he was about to go into a long night and day of intense suffering, ending with his crucifixion. So he and his friends departed from the table, singing a hymn as they went to the garden of Gethsemane. Sing a hymn you know or sing the following hymn, “Go to dark Gethsemane” (or read the text):

Verse 1:

Go to dark Gethsemane
All who feel the tempter’s pow’r
Your Redeemer’s conflict see
Watch with Him one bitter hour
Turn not from His griefs away
Learn from Jesus Christ to pray

Verse 2:

Follow to the judgment hall
View the Lord of life arraigned
Oh, the wormwood and the gall
Oh, the pangs His soul sustained
Shun not suff’ring, shame or loss
Learn from Him to bear the cross

Verse 3:

Calvary’s mournful mountain climb
There, adoring at His feet
Mark the miracle of time
God’s own sacrifice complete
“It is finished” hear Him cry
Learn from Jesus Christ to die

Verse 4:

Early hasten to the tomb
Where they laid His breathless clay
All is solitude and gloom
Who has taken Him away?
Christ is ris’n! He meets our eyes.
Savior, teach us so to rise

Amen.

Prepared by Rebecca Mosley, April 6, 2020, for Arusha Community Church