

Paper Church



MAUNDY THURSDAY 2020

Maundy Thursday gatherings are often a time of quiet reflection, a time when we remember Jesus sharing the Passover meal with his friends, before his betrayal and death on the cross.

The resources offered here include a Bible reading (Matt 26:17-30), and a poem of love for Holy Thursday.

As you prepare to enter a space of reflection, you might like to consider doing one or more of the following, to create a sacred space for this time:

- Set a table – this may include some simple elements, such as a bowl of water, bread and wine to represent the group Jesus shared a meal with. You could include an empty chair, inviting the presence of Jesus during this time.
- Share in the simple meal of communion.
- Light a candle.
- Memories – the poem focuses on memories of Jesus' own journey of faith and love. Consider your own memories of times when Jesus has met with you on your faith journey. There may be particular people who have also been significant to the development and growth of your faith.
- Sit with an image or line from the poem which resonates with you. How does it speak to you at this time?
- Use a bowl of water to wash hands or feet. As we continue in a time where much attention is paid to hand washing, consider making this a prayerful ritual in the days leading up to Easter Sunday, and in the weeks and months ahead.

Bible Reading

Matthew 26:17-30 (Read by Marg Kittelty)

Click here for video of the bible reading – rngwd.com/94b

The Last Supper

¹⁷ On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

¹⁸ He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” ¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

²⁰ When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. ²¹ And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

²² They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?”

²³ Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

²⁵ Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?”

Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

²⁷ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ This is my blood of the ^[a] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

³⁰ When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

A Poem for Love on Maundy Thursday

by Shannan Vance-Ocampo

Click here for video of poem - rngwd.com/94v

Holy Thursday
Tomorrow is about death,
The death of Jesus on the Cross.

But tonight, tonight is about love

The love of Jesus for the disciples, his friends
The love of Jesus for the community he was a part of
The love of Jesus for the only community he knew
that would grow
from the little one gathered around him
into the communities of the last 2000 years
even the one we share tonight.

Tonight, tonight is about love.

What does Jesus' love look like?

It looks like a group of friends gathered around a table,
sharing laughs and drinks
It looks like Jesus washing the feet of feet of people who would betray him
Getting close to them, touching their feet
Looking into their eyes, while kneeling below them
It looks like a cup full of wine
And a loaf of bread on a table

The love of Jesus looks like Memories of love that created who he was.

Memories of being a baby at Mary's breast.
Memories of learning how to carve wood with Joseph.
Memories of Wise Men who pointed his family in the direction of safety.
Memories of God his loving Parent who called him on the journey of a lifetime.
Memories of John the Baptist his childhood playmate
and the one who dipped him into a river for baptism.
Memories of the wilderness where he spoke with his God.
Memories of his disciples who he called his friends and partners.
Memories of women who along the way reminded him of God's call
in the midst of his social situation.
Memories of children he loved and cared for
and of one special little boy

who helped him feed thousands.
Memories of sailing on the Sea of Galilee, and then taking his first steps
out into the water,
hoping that God wouldn't let him fall.
Memories of speaking truth to power
Even when the power was demonic
And pleaded for a new life.
Memories of anger that others didn't love the way he did.
Memories of teaching, talking and helping anyone who came his way.
Memories of healing
And the wonder and amazement that others had
And even Jesus did
when the healing took shape.
Memories of stories
That made sense to some
Stumped others
Changed lives
and angered some so much that this would be the last night.

All of these memories were at the Table that night in the Upper Room.
Mixed in with the water used to wash feet
Sweet and sour like the wine
Nourishment like the bread.

Tonight is not about death.
Tonight is about love.
Tonight is about the passing of the torch.
And the mystery of faith in a community of friends and neighbours.

So let us now prepare to gather around the Table
To remember that tonight is about Love
And to see Jesus in the face
Of one another.

Amen.