

## Maundy Thursday Order of Service

### SECTION 1: Before Serving the Meal:

"As we prepare to eat this meal that symbolizes the shared life we enjoy together as the people of God through Jesus, I'd like to read a call to worship:

"He was always the guest.  
In the homes of Peter and Jairus, Martha and Mary,  
he was always the guest.  
At the meal tables of the wealthy,  
where he pled the cause of the poor,  
he was always the guest.  
Upsetting polite company,  
befriending isolated people,  
welcoming the stranger,  
he was always the guest.

But here, at this table, he is the host.

Those who wish to serve him  
must first be served by him.  
Those who want to follow him  
must first be fed by him.  
Those who would wash his feet  
must first let him make them clean.

For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished;  
this is the time when Christ can make us new.

So come, you who hunger and thirst for a deeper faith,  
for a better life, for a fairer world.  
Jesus Christ, who has sat at our tables,  
now invites us to be guests at his."

• **Pray:** *(Give thanks for the food, the people who are present and the evening you'll share together)*

• **Eat!**

- **Possible discussion questions:**

- *Where have you seen new life in the last year?*
- *Where do you long to/hope to see new life break out in your life (different contexts)?*
- *How has God made himself known (been present) to you recently?*

**SECTION 2: After the meal has been eaten, clear table, and set up your footwashing station; put dessert out BUT DON'T EAT YET.**

*(If possible invite different people to read this account from John 13)*

**(Let them share this sheet)**

**Reader #1:**

“It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”

**Reader #2:**

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

Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”

“No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.”

Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”

“Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”

Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.”

**Reader #3:**

“When 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. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”

● **Framing comments:**

“During the meal, Jesus again showed his followers what it looks like to practice love: He showed a *humble* love that's willing to give up rank and status prized by the Roman culture. He was willing to take on a servant's task and wash feet. In doing so, he showed a love that uses power to serve instead of using power to demand that others serve you.

Tonight we will do the same. We'll wash feet as an act of humble love.”

● **Instructions:**

“While dessert is being served and shared together, we'll use this time to wash each other's feet. Take turns leaving the table and going to the footwashing area.

Wash each other's feet (splashing water, not scrubbing!) and dry with a towel. Pray a blessing on that person (for God to use them, protect them, give them wisdom in life, cultivate healthy relationships, etc.).”

**SECTION 3: After everyone has washed feet (and hands!) and returned to the table: (dim lights/light candles?)**

● **Framing comments:**

“During the meal, Jesus took bread and cup and said: “This is my body, which is given *for you*. ... And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out *for you* is the new covenant in my blood.” (Luke 22:20–21)

At the heart of celebration of the bread and cup is the fact that Christ's body and blood *were gifts to us!* In this act, we see another facet of Jesus' love: *it's a love that's willing to be consumed for the sake of others!* Jesus gave himself away for the sake of humanity—letting himself be broken.

**Instructions:** *Pass the bread for each person to take a piece. Be sure that everyone has either wine or grape juice in their glass.*

“In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians we read,

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, He broke it, and said, “this is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

**(Say before eating together):** “His body, broken for us, let us take together...”

**(Pause for a brief moment for people to reflect)**

“In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

**(Say before drinking together):** “His blood, shed for us, let us take together...”

**(Pause for a brief moment for people to reflect)**

**Prayer of thanks to close the evening.**