



Maundy Thursday Liturgy for At-Home Worship

Join us on Zoom for dinner and reflection together at 6:30pm. Bring your own food and we'll begin at the Scripture reading below.

This liturgy begins with a washing of hands and then moves into dinner and conversation.

Supplies

- Two Bowls with water
- Soap
- Clean dry towel
- Bread
- Oven
- Dinner table
- Candle
- Lighter/matches
- Optional for children: Markers and printed copies of this [Lord's Prayer Coloring Sheet](#)

Preparation

- Bake Homemade Bread, buy a frozen bread to warm up or use whatever you have around the house that goes with your dinner, it could even be a dessert.
- Who will light the candle?
- Who will read the scripture if you aren't joining the zoom gathering?

Preparing for Worship and The Meal

Gather those participating in the worship at your table. Bring with you the bowls of water, soap, a clean, dry towel and your bible(s).

Read John 13:1-17.

Jesus washed the feet of his disciples to show those who claim life abundant in him, that being a disciple requires being humble and serving others. Sometimes, even those who we know don't align with who God has called them to be. Jesus serves everyone and calls us to do the same. Today, before you prepare to have a meal together, recall Jesus' service to those with whom he gathered, by washing the hands of the person next to you in an act of service or if you don't have others with you recall a time someone served you or you served others as you cleanse your hands.

Apply water to the hands from the first bowl, wash the hands with soap, and scrub them. As you wash: study the persons hands. Do they tell a story of love, care, compassion, service? Who do those hands help? Who do those hands care for? How can hands show love?

As you feel the coolness of the water, may it be like a spring in the wilderness, a reminder of baptism, the assurance that no matter what happens, God will provide what you need. As you feel the touch of your hands or the person washing your hands, pray that your hands might be the hands of Christ—comforting, healing, and supporting all those you meet.

Poem: "Bread" by Sarah Are

*Read the following poem a few times through as a centering prayer.
Pay attention to what visuals come to mind.*

"After he had washed their feet . . . [Jesus] returned to the table." (John 13:12)
Jesus returned to the table, that simple common space,
Moving from water and undeserved grace
To bread that nourishes and sustains our place—
Two simple elements, no time to waste.

I should have known there would be water,
But of course there would be bread.
From the start of creation, God has tried to keep us fed—

Fed on bread and roses and love we don't notice.
I should have known there would be water,
But of course there would be bread.

I should have known there would be space
At the table for grace—
Space for nerves, and questions, and absent confessions;
Space for me and Elijah and Judas, without question.

I should have known there would be space,
But of course there would be bread—
For it started with manna, and all must be fed.

“This is my body, broken for you. For you, five thousand;
For you, Israelite nation;
For you, child of the covenant; Judas and Peter,
This is my body broken for *you*.”

That simple phrase, paired with the food of the day,
Makes me human again—nourishes weak spots within.
It lifts me up and draws me back in—
Breathing life into bones that were weary and thin.

For it's easy to be so hungry for God
That God must appear in the shape of a meal,
Countering frailty, allowing me to heal.

So maybe that's why I come back to this space,
Because I know God will be here, offering grace.
And I need that bread in order to feel—
In order to see the kingdom revealed.

I should have known there would be water,
But of course there would be bread—
For I am hungry, and all must be fed.

Listen: Enjoy these two anthems by the GFPC choir from Maundy Thursday 2009.

[“Christ Hath A Garden”](#) [Gerald Near](#)
[Sanctuary Choir](#)

Christ has a garden walled around, a paradise of fruitful ground,
Chosen by love and fenced by grace from out the world's wide wilderness.
Like trees of spice His servants stand, there planted by His mighty hand;
By Eden's gracious streams, that flow to feed their beauty where they grow.
Awake, O wind of heaven and bear their sweetest perfume through the air;
Stir up, O south, the boughs that bloom, till the beloved Master come:
That He may come, and linger yet among the trees that He hath set;
That He may evermore be seen to walk amid the springing green

“Ave Verum Corpus” Edward Elgar
(Jesu, Word of God Incarnate)

Ave verum corpus, natum ex Maria Virgine,
Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine.
Cujus latus perforatum vero fluxit sanguine;
Esto nobis progustatum, mortis in examine.
O Clemens, O pie, O dulcis Jesu, Fili Mariae.

(Jesu, Word of God Incarnate, of the Virgin Mary born,
On the cross Thy sacred Body for us all with nails was torn.
Cleanse us by the blood and water streaming from Thy pierced side;
Feed us with Thy body broken, now and in death's agony.
O Jesu, O Jesu, hear us, Son of Mary.)

Listen: Scripture Reading ****The online zoom call will begin with this reading**

Read Luke 22:7-23 out loud. As you read it, pick out a word, phrase, or emotion that stands out to you. Share that word, phrase, or emotion with those around you, or jot it down in the margins in your bible.

Reflect: The Meal is Served

Once your bread or baked goods are prepared, gather around the table for a meal. Light a candle in the center of the table as a reminder that this is a space set apart. This meal is a reminder of the promises made to us in the sacrament of Communion—that all belong to God, that God's love is stronger than death, and that one day, all will be fed.

During your meal, reflect on the following prompts. You can either jot these down in a journal, mull them over in your mind as the bread bakes, or discuss them with family members present.

- 1) Reflect back to past meals and moments around table. What meals have been memorable? What gatherings made you feel welcomed? Have you ever had a memorable Communion experience? What made it memorable?
- 2) How does it make you feel to know that Jesus fed and shared a meal with all of his disciples, even Judas who would soon betray him? What does that teach us about God?
- 3) Jesus gives thanks for the bread before breaking it. What things do you give thanks for in your life? Make a quick mental list of 5-10 things you often forget to thank God for. Jot them down or share them with those gathered at the table.
- 4) Food is a common love language. Think back to a time when someone offered or prepared food for you as a sign of love. Do you think that Jesus was trying to express his love for his disciples in this last meal? How does that layer add to the story?

Tip for young families: Invite each child at the table to reflect on their favorite dinner blessing and sing/say it together. Point out that Jesus also offers a blessing to God for the bread before he and his disciples eat, so when we say grace, we are being like Jesus.

Peace: The End of the Meal

Tonight we celebrated Jesus' last meal with his disciples before he was betrayed and handed over to the Roman authorities to be executed. Tomorrow we will remember Jesus' death.

Mark the ending of this time together by listening to this postlude and then offer peace to one another by saying, "The peace of God be with you." If you are worshiping alone, offer a prayer of peace for someone you love.

[Postlude:](#)
["O Sacred Head"](#) [Johannes Brahms](#)

This liturgy was written in part by Sarah Are of A Sanctified Art and adapted for your use by Ashley Drake Mertz.