



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Do Justice · Love Kindness · Walk Humbly

Maundy Thursday

A Liturgy for Individuals at Home – April 9, 2020

If you are alone and would like to “meet” with others to worship and commune together via Zoom, you can join Marietta virtually. We’ll share a simple meal together (be sure yours includes some sort of bread), and work our way through the liturgy, reflection questions, and prayer time.

Topic: Maundy Thursday at Home

Time: Apr 9, 2020, 6:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/646062861?pwd=UUdaWFYrZUFHSEVGSWJTb0g2RTRsZz09>

Meeting ID: 646 062 861

Password: 044786

Or you may dial in using one of these numbers: 1-253-215-8782 or 1-301-715-8592; Meeting ID: 646 062 861

ABOUT THE LITURGY

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter. “Maundy” means commandment, referencing the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples on this day; for it was on this day that Jesus had his last meal with his disciples. Jesus broke bread, washed the disciples’ feet, and hinted at his coming crucifixion and betrayal. At the time, the disciples did not realize the significance of this moment, but now we recognize how powerful and special this last supper was. As a result, it is our Christian tradition to celebrate this evening with the gift of worship and the sacrament of Communion, just as the disciples did on that night.

This year, many of us are unable to gather together in person to share in Communion, so we are offering this at-home liturgy to serve as a reminder that God meets us at every table. Every meal we share is a reminder of the holy meal we share during Communion. May this liturgy be a source of reorientation to the sacredness all around us.

A WORD ON WORSHIPPING ALONE

Scripture provides many examples of the people of God worshipping in solitude. The Prophet Elijah was alone when he saw God at Mt Horeb. Likewise, Moses was alone when he saw God in the form of the burning bush. In the Gospels there are numerous examples of Jesus retreating into solitude to pray and fast. The Old and New Testaments speak with a single voice when they assert that God shows up in surprising ways to the solitary worshipper.

As you pray through this liturgy, we encourage you to take your time. Go at your own pace. Try praying aloud and then try praying silently. Do what comes naturally to you. However you choose to pray, know that while you are physically by yourself you are spiritually accompanied by the Church in what we reformed Christians like to call the “Communion of the Saints” and by the Holy Spirit. In that way, we are never truly alone.

SUPPLIES

- Bread recipe and needed ingredients
- Oven
- Dinner table
- Candle, lighter/matches
- Bible
- Youtube links for music (optional)
 - “Bless the Lord” - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4Svh-9ohg4&t=4s>
 - “Jesus Remember Me” - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VpsZNrdO7Xk>
 - “Goodness is Stronger than Evil” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1ydJ4JTEYw>

PREPARATION | Bake Homemade Bread

On Maundy Thursday we remember Jesus' last meal by sharing Communion as a community. In this season, since we are not able to celebrate with Holy Communion, we invite you to do the next best thing: prepare a loaf of bread at home. The options are endless: Have a sourdough starter? Make sourdough! Missing yeast? Make muffins or scones! Have a sweet tooth? Make cookies! Make biscuits! Make cornbread! Have 24 hours you can give to the bread making process? Try this recipe: <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/11376-no-knead-bread>.

Don't go shopping – just use whatever ingredients you have. It doesn't have to be perfect. God will show up anyway. The point of this exercise is to be in the kitchen, to put your hands to work, and to allow your preparation process to be a prayer. So let's get to baking!

BLESSING | A Prayer to Bless the Bread

Before putting your bread or baked good into the oven, say this prayer:

Holy God,
Your last meal was an ordinary meal—
Simple bread and juice, nothing fancy;
And yet, it was holy.
It was holy because all were welcomed at your table—
Even the one who would betray you.
So today we prepare our own bread as a form of prayer.
And in our kneading and mixing,
In our measuring and waiting,
In our recipe-card-reading and taste-testing,
We remember you.
As these ingredients mix,
May our hearts mix with yours.
And as this bread rises,
May our awareness of you rise.
And as this bread is shared,
May your love be shared.
With hope and gratitude we pray,
Amen.

THE MEAL

Once your bread has been prepared, set the table for a meal along with your Bible and a candle.

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.

SONG | A Prayer to Welcome Light

To begin the meal, light the candle. As you do so, sing "Bless the Lord my Soul," our Lenten prayer for Illumination.

Hymn 544: *Sung three times*

Bless the Lord (Taizé)

**Bless the Lord my Soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord my Soul, who leads me into life.**

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PRAYER | A Litany to Begin the Meal

After the candle is lit, pray this prayer to bless the meal.

**Blessed are you Lord God of All.
Maker of Heaven. Maker of Light.
As you came in body to your friends the Apostles,
Come in Spirit to this gathering.
You are the light that shines in darkness,
And the darkness will never overcome the light.
Amen.**

ATTEND | Scripture Reading

Read Luke 22:7-23 aloud.

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there." So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal. When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" Then they began to ask one another, which one of them it could be who would do this.

REFLECT | The Meal is Served

Now that the bread is baked, the candle is lit, and the Scripture has been read, the meal can begin. During your meal, we invite you to reflect on the following prompts:

- Reflect back to past meals and moments around the table. What meals have been memorable? What gatherings made you feel welcomed? Have you ever had a memorable Communion experience? What made it memorable?
- 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?
- 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.
- 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?

PEACE | The End of the Meal

Once you have finished eating and reflecting, you may choose to sing another song. Some good choices might be: "Jesus Remember Me," "Goodness is Stronger," or whatever you would like to sing.

Close the time with these words: **"The peace of God be with us."**



* This liturgy was heavily adapted by our Westminster Presbyterian Church staff for our use from one composed by Rev. Sarah Are and distributed by Sanctified Art LLC*