

Maundy Thursday Service 2023

Welcome - Tonight is Maundy Thursday, the night on which Jesus shared his last supper, a Passover meal, with his friends and disciples. Imagine they have all gathered here, at these table beside us, to eat and drink together with their Lord. We will together partake in this meal, remembering that night so long ago.

We will take some time to eat our meal together, but it's not only the meal that we remember, or the elements that we will share together later, for this is also the night in which Jesus was betrayed and arrested.

Let us begin with eating and fellowship, just as Jesus and his disciples did the night before Jesus was arrested.

Grace & Sharing the Meal

Intro- As the darkness of this night descends, we are led into the shadows of Good Friday and its cross. Tonight we will listen to a series of scriptures and readings from the Gospels that announces the gathering darkness leading up to this night and into tomorrow.

Jesus knew what was coming, but so often his followers could not understand. So often we do not understand. With each reading, a candle on each table will be extinguished and the darkness will grow deeper. We will end the evening in near darkness. For the light yet shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

1. Jesus' ministry began with God claiming Jesus as his Son and Beloved, equipping him with the Spirit, so that when we was immediately drawn to the dessert he would not fall to temptation.

Mark 1: 9-13

Extinguish Candle

Hymn STS #80 – "Jesus walked this lonesome valley"

2. Jesus knew what was what lay in his future, and foretold of his death more than once, and yet we didn't understand.

Luke 9: 21-27 (speaking to his disciples) (1st Foretelling of death)

Extinguish Candle

3. Luke 9: 43-45 (2nd Foretelling of death)

Extinguish Candle

4. Luke 18: 31-34 (3rd Foretelling of death)
Extinguish Candle

Hymn STS #81 "When we are tempted"

5. Jesus' ministry meant, he traveled from place to place, teaching, preaching, telling stories about forgiveness, justice, and love. He demonstrated God's power and God's love for the marginalized through many healings. He demonstrated to us how to live through sharing food, sitting at the table of others as he taught about hospitality, relationship and love. And yet there were still those who hated him, who feared him, who despised him -those who felt threatened and challenged by all that Jesus taught and did. And so his ministry could not go on.

John 11:45-57 (Plot to kill Jesus from John)
Extinguish Candle

6. The days before Jesus' entry into Jerusalem for the last time, as a symbol of devotion, honour and preparation for what was to come Mary anointed Jesus' feet

John 12: 1-8
Extinguish Candle

Hymn MH #265 "My Jesus, I love Thee"

7. Then Jesus rode into Jerusalem, as the crowds cheered and called him king, all the while bringing him ever closer to his death.

John 12: 12-19
Extinguish Candle

8. Ever closer to his death Jesus walked.

Luke 22: 1-6
Extinguish Candle

Hymn MH #170 "Alas, and did my Savior bleed"

9. As the day of Passover drew near, Jesus and his closest disciples gathered together in a borrowed room to eat. When they had gathered there, he got up from the table, took off his outer coat and tied a towel around himself, poured water into a basin, and began washing their feet. Through protest and misunderstanding, Jesus demonstrates humble self-giving love. Jesus then said to them.

John 13: 12-17
Extinguish Candle

10. They ate together in this borrowed room. Jesus knew that there was suffering to come, and he knew that the kingdom of God was already among them. Jesus took the unleavened bread, as if, like the ancient Israelites, they needed to hurry toward liberation.

Voices Together 0939

Leader: The table has been prepared,
as Jesus requested,
and we are invited to the meal.

People: Come to the table—

Leader: like Peter, with more enthusiasm than resolve,
like James and John, dismayed by the priorities of God's reign.

People: Come to the table—

Leader: like Martha, hosting and leading with confidence,
like Mary, full of love and grief.

People: Come to the table—

Leader: like Judas, disillusioned and rebellious,
like Mary Magdalene, faithful to the end.

People: Come to the table—

Leader: Jesus offers the bread and the cup.

People: Come to the table of Christ!

Luke 22: 19 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."
(Bread is distributed around each table.)

Jesus took a cup of wine, as if, it was any other meal and any other night. "This cup is the new covenant that will be recognized in my blood," Jesus said, "this covenant will be poured out for many."

(Tables pour each other cups of juice and drink.)

Extinguish Candle

Hymn STS #77 "Here is the bread"

11. At the end of the evening, Jesus goes to the garden along with his disciples. He invites them to join him in prayer for his time of trial is nearly here, but they were too tired to stay awake.

Luke 22 :39-46 (Jesus prays at Mount of Olives)

Extinguish Candle

12. The teacher vigils alone, in tears and agony until soldiers come with swords and clubs to take him away.

Luke 22: 47-54 (Jesus arrested)

Extinguish Candle

Hymn HWB #242 "Stay with me"

Leave 1 candle still lit.

Prayer:

God of washbasins and towels,
God of dirty feet made clean by loving hands,
God of bread and wine, body and blood
God of remembrance and Covenant.
Jesus, after that dinner together
you prayed in the night alone
as death and suffering loomed large.
Yet throughout it all, you did not run,
You did not spit out fear, or anger or words of retribution.
May your example be a Spirit that can live in us.
Meet us here in this darkness, God.
For the light yet shines in the darkness,
and the darkness does not overcome it.