



Dear St. James's Families,

With nightfall tonight, our Lent comes to an end, and we join Christians around the world in celebrating Jesus' death and resurrection. This is one of the most intimate days of the church year, as tonight we remember Jesus's last supper, washing the disciples' feet, and giving us the commandment to love one another. My heart and my prayers are with you as you keep Maundy Thursday at home.

This evening, set aside some time to gather together around the dinner table. Set the table and make it feel warm and welcoming. *Choose a meal that can stay warm until you are ready to serve it.* The order of worship for families is below.

The peace of Christ, who loves us to the end, be with you this night and always.

+Pastor Neil and Carol

What you'll need to get ready:

- This order of worship
- Candle and matches
- A dinner that can keep warm
- Bowl or sink with some water
- Towel
- Be ready to clear the table after dinner
- Choose someone to be the leader (this person will read the leader parts)
- Everyone will say the **bolded words**

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP AT HOME

GATHERING

Begin by lighting a candle. If you have a cross, place it on the table. Something special and holy is about to happen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Leader:

On this Holy Thursday night let us confess our sin against God and against one another.

Silence to think about what we have done wrong.

All: Dear God please forgive me for all the bad things I have done. I am very sorry. Amen

Leader:

Almighty and merciful God grant you forgiveness of all your sins. Amen.

Reading One:

Before the reading, the leader says:

A reading from the Jesus Storybook Bible: The Servant King. The Last Supper, from Mark 14 and John 13-14.

You can either read this or watch it here: [dhttps://vimeo.com/32098046](https://vimeo.com/32098046)

It was Passover, the time when God's people remembered how God had rescued them from being slaves in Egypt. Every year they killed a lamb and ate it. "The lamb died instead of us!" they would say.

But this Passover, God was getting ready for an even Greater Rescue.

Jesus and his friends were having the Passover meal together in an upstairs room. But Jesus' friends were arguing. What about? They were arguing about stinky feet. Stinky feet? Yes, that's right. Stinky feet.

(Now the thing about feet back then was that people didn't wear shoes; they only wore sandals, which might not sound unusual, except the streets in those days were dirty – and I don't mean just dust dirty – I mean really stinky dirty. With all those cows and horses everywhere, you can imagine the stuff on the street that ended up on their feet!)

So, anyway, someone had to wash the dirt, but it was a dreadful job. Who on earth would ever dream of volunteering to do it?

Only the lowliest servant.

"I'm not the servant!" Peter said.

"Nor am I!" said Matthew.

Quietly, Jesus got up from the table, took off his robe, picked up a basin of water, knelt down, and started to wash his friend's feet.

"You can't." Peter said. He didn't understand about Jesus being the Servant King.

"If you don't let me wash away the dirt, Peter," Jesus said, "you can't be close to me."

Jesus knew that what people needed most was to be clean on the inside. All the dirt on their feet was nothing compared to the sin inside their hearts.

"Then wash me, Lord!" Peter said, tears filling his eyes. "All of me!"

One by one, Jesus washed everyone's feet.

"I am doing this because I love you," Jesus explained.

"Do this for each other."

FOOT WASHING

The leader says:

We have heard Jesus's commandment to love one another. Jesus asks us to be servants to each other as Jesus became our servant. Our commitment to this loving service is shown in the washing of feet, following the example that Jesus gave us on the night before He died.

- *Take turns washing the feet or hands of the people in your house. You can do this at the table or at the sink or tub. Pour water gently over the feet and dry with a towel.*

Reading Two:

Before the reading, the leader says:

A second reading from the Jesus Storybook Bible: The Servant King. The Last Supper, from Mark 14 and John 13-14.

Now, one of Jesus' friends had made a bad plan. No one else knew what the bad plan was. But Jesus knew – and so did Judas. Judas was going to help the Leaders capture Jesus – for 30 pieces of silver. "Go on, Judas," Jesus said. And Judas got up from the meal, left the room, and walked out into the night.

Then Jesus picked up some bread and broke it. He gave it to his friends. He picked up a cup of wine and thanked God for it. He poured it out and shared it.

"My body is with this bread and, like this bread, it will break," Jesus told them. "This cup of wine has my life-blood with it and, like this wine, my blood will be poured out."

"But this is how God will rescue the whole world. My life will break and God's broken heart will mend. My heart will tear apart – and your hearts will heal. Just as the Passover lamb died, so now I will die instead of you. My blood will wash away all your sins. And you'll be clean on the inside – in your hearts."

"So, whenever you eat and drink, remember," Jesus said, "I've rescued you!"

Jesus knew it was nearly time for him to leave the world and go back to God.

"I won't be with you long," he said. "You are going to be very sad. But God's Helper will come. And then you'll be filled up with a Forever Happiness that won't ever leave. So don't be afraid. You are my friends and I love you."

Then they sang their favorite song and walked up to their favorite place, an olive garden.

MEAL

The leader says:

Let's go around the table and share our prayers with God. First, we'll go around the table and each person will say, "We thank you, God..." and then they'll add something we're thankful for. Each one does this. Then we'll go around again, but this time each person will say, "We ask you, God..." and then they'll add something we want to ask God for.

We thank you God...

We ask you God...

Amen. **Amen.**

PEACE

The leader says:

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Before you start eating, pray this table blessing:

Lord Jesus, on this holy night you washed the feet of your friends, and you shared your last meal with them. Bless this meal that we share tonight. Help us to remember that whenever we eat, you are here at the table with us, teaching us to love one another the way you have loved us. **Amen.**

Then pray the Lord's Prayer together:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done
on earth, as it is in heaven:
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those that trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

Enjoy your food and drink!

As you eat together, think about some of the special meals that you have shared with the people you love. What made them memorable?

CLEARING THE TABLE

After eating, read aloud:

On many other years, when we have had Maundy Thursday worship in the church, we've ended the service with **'the stripping of the altar'**. Usually the altar has such beautiful things on it, but when we strip it (i.e. when we take away the candles, altar book, communion ware, linens and paraments) it looks terribly bare. This reminds us of how Jesus, just a few hours after His meal with the disciples ended, was arrested, abandoned, then stripped of His freedom, His clothes, and finally His life. All this He endured for us so that we can never be separated from God's love.

So as we clear the table, we are getting ready for the rest of the Holy Week story.

- *Remove all items from your table so it's completely empty and thoroughly wash it so it is both cleared and cleaned.*
- *Leave your table bare until Easter morning. Dim the lights and leave the room in silence.*

The worship service is over for tonight, and will continue tomorrow night at 7 pm with Good Friday service where you can worship in person or watch a live streamed version at home.