



Maundy Thursday

WILLIAMSBURG COMMUNITY CHAPEL
DEVOTIONAL

Introduction

Maundy Thursday marks the day that Jesus shared the Last Supper with His disciples. This meal, and the time leading up to the meal, serve as a powerful reminder of Jesus' life as a humble servant. In fact, Jesus was willing to serve to the point of suffering and death, "even death on a cross" for our sins (Philippians 2:8).

Jesus' life of service and suffering was the ultimate expression of His love – a sacrificial love that He invites all of His followers to embrace in their lives as well. In fact, the word "Maundy" in Maundy Thursday comes from the Latin word *mandatum* or "commandment." In *John 13:34-35*, Jesus says, "A new *commandment* I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

This evening, as we spend time eating together as families and households, our prayer is that we will all be reminded of the incredible love that Jesus has for us, knowing that He calls us to love each other with this same kind of love. The following plan is intended to lead us through a "liturgy of loving one another." As we worship together around our dinner tables, may we obey Jesus' commandment to love another another just as He has loved us.

Before Dinner (John 13:1-5, 12-15)

Prior to sitting down to eat, have someone in your family read the words of John 13, verses 1-5 and verses 12-15. In ancient times, washing feet was one of the lowest acts of service anyone could do. When John mentions the "towel" that Jesus tied around His waist, have a member of your family hold up the towel as a visible reminder of Jesus' humility.

After reading from John 13, take turns and wash one another's hands (you are welcome to wash one another's feet if you would like!) as you prepare to eat. After washing someone else's hands, take the towel and dry their hands. As you do so, look them in the eye and say: "As Jesus washed His disciples' feet, so I have washed your hands – because I love you."

Dinner Discussion

When everyone has had a turn washing the hands of another, sit down and pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His Son, Jesus, expressing praise for His great love for us. As you share your meal together, ask and answer the following questions:

- *How did it feel to wash and dry one another's hands?*
- *How did it feel to have your hands washed and dried by someone else?*
- *Does washing feet seem like a strange way to show love to you?*

- Why do you think Jesus chose to show His love for His disciples in this way?
- What kind of attitude does washing feet require?
- What are some ways that we can “wash the feet” of those in our family and community and beyond? (Consider making a list)

The Lord's Supper/Communion (Luke 22:14-16, 19-20)

Jesus gave His disciples (and us) another visible symbol of His sacrificial love: food and drink that represented His death on the cross. In this way, the church continues to celebrate The Last Supper shared between Jesus and His disciples through the continuing practice of sharing The Lord's Supper (or “Communion”) when we gather together. Through the symbolic act of this communion meal, we both “remember” and “proclaim” Jesus' death until He comes again (1 Corinthians 11:26).

During your meal, take a moment to read the words of *Luke 22, verses 14-16* as well as *verse 19*. When you read *verse 19*, take a piece of bread and break it in half and hand it to the family member sitting next to you. As you hand it to them, say “*The body of Christ was given for you.*” That family member breaks off a piece of bread, eats it, and then hands the bread to the next person, also saying “*The body of Christ was given for you.*” Make sure to look one another in the eye as you say these words. You can even mention their name as you say these words. Repeat this until everyone around your table has shared the bread and spoken these words to someone else.

Next, read *Luke 22:20* out loud while holding up a cup or glass holding any kind of drink (water, milk, tea, lemonade, etc.) If you are comfortable, have one family member pass their glass or cup to the person next to them. As that person takes a sip, the first family member says “*The blood of Christ was shed for you.*” The cup is passed to the next person with the same words: “*The blood of Christ was shed for you.*” Again, look one another in the eye and even mention their name as you speak to them. Repeat this until everyone around your table has shared the cup and spoken these words to someone else. If you are not comfortable sharing the same up, simply have each person say “*The blood of Christ was shed for you*” as the person next to them takes a sip from their own cup.

When you have finished celebrating the Lord's Supper together, ask and answer the following questions:

- How did it feel to pass the bread and cup to someone else?
- How did it feel to receive the bread and cup from someone else?
- What do the bread and the cup represent?
- What do you think Jesus' disciples thought when He shared the bread and the cup with them?
- Why is it important that we continue to celebrate The Lord's Supper (or Communion) almost 2,000 years after Jesus died?

After Dinner

Mark 14:26 tells us that Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn when the Last Supper had concluded. Scholars believe that Jesus and the disciples would have sung *Psalms 113 through 118* (also known as the “Passover Psalms” according to Jewish tradition). A repeated refrain in *Psalm 118* is “*his steadfast love endures forever.*”

After you finish your meal, take a moment to express thanks and praise to God for at least one thing. Have each member of your family express something. You may even sing a hymn together as a family. Conclude your Maundy Thursday time of worship by saying together “*God we thank You that Your steadfast love endures forever. Thank You for the way that Jesus loved us. Help us to love one another as He loved us. Amen!*”

**We hope you have enjoyed this guided devotional for Maundy Thursday.
And we hope you will join us online for our Good Friday service on Friday, April 10.
The service will be available at wchapel.org/worship, by 5 pm on Good Friday.**