

## **Hands-on Learning with Family: Last Supper and Hand Washing for Maundy Thursday**

Consider taking advantage of being home with the family by having an intimate Maundy Thursday. Experiencing both the last supper and the hand washing (which replaces the foot washing this year) is a great way to fall naturally into deep and meaningful conversation with those in your family or to have powerful reflection and self-examination if you are on your own. Either way, it will be a meaningful time.

### **SETTING UP YOUR SPACE**

It's important to have your space set up before you start; whether you're with your family or on your own, you'll want things to flow smoothly once you get started.

Decide if you want to have your supper picnic style on the floor, sitting on pillows or at a table with simple place settings. There isn't a wrong way to do it, whatever is the best fit for you is fine, but do consider doing something different that you usually do so it doesn't feel like any other meal. Take your time to make the space sacred and set apart. If you have kids, think about letting them choose where they would like to eat and have them help you set the space up.

You will want to seamlessly transition from supper to hand washing. Make sure you have a tub or bowl and a few towels set aside where you can easily grab them. You can either slip away near the end of the meal to fill your tub or bowl with warm soapy water so you aren't doing the hand washing in cold water or start by filling your tub/bowl with very hot water so it has a chance to cool down over the course of the meal, but not get too cold.

### **THINK ABOUT YOUR MENU**

Prepare your bread Thursday morning. Making bread together is a great time to read the Passover story from Exodus and talk about how that story ties in with Maundy Thursday.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=exodus+12&version=NIV>

<https://motherwouldknow.com/passover-miraculous-unleavened-rolls-html/>

<https://cathfamily.org/unleavened-bread-recipe/>

Besides your Passover bread, other ideas for your menu include but are not limited to: boiled egg, roast chicken, lamb, bitter herbs like horseradish, brown gravy/stew, sweet potatoes and carrots, applesauce and walnuts and cinnamon, fruit and cheese, matzah ball soup (<https://www.budgetbytes.com/matzo-ball-soup/> )

### **BIBLE READINGS**

While you are eating your last supper make sure you read the story.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+22&version=NIV>

As you transition from supper, begin by reading the foot washing story, normally you would then transition to washing each other's feet, but this year we will practice hand washing instead. It's nice for parents to wash their kid's hands and have the kids wash their parent's hands. If there are giggles or tears, let it happen, both are okay. If you are on your own, you can easily sit with your hands in a tub of water as you read and reflect on the passage.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+22&version=NIV>

Following is a prayer and explanation of why we will be hand washing this year.

## **Oblation Rite for Maundy Thursday**

### *A Rite of Self-Offering in Times of Pandemic*

Leader:

On this night, we recall the night that Jesus, at supper with his disciples, poured himself out as an oblation, a complete self-offering of love and service through the humble act of washing the disciple's feet.

In these days of pandemic, we continue to offer ourselves in love and service as Jesus did, for the sake of the most vulnerable among us. And so, in an act that we may formerly have been undertaken as a self-protective and antiseptic act, we open ourselves to the transforming power of God in what is now for us a sacred act of handwashing. We do this not for ourselves, but in love and self-offering to every person we meet and especially for the most vulnerable among us.

We begin by washing, as we were washed in our baptism. We cleanse our hands as we were cleansed in the waters of new birth. We do this not because we are afraid, but because we were commanded to love, and to cleanse our hands, and gather in spirit. This how we love the vulnerable, whom Jesus loved. May we be instruments of love. May the sacrifices we make be for the good of our human family near and far.

*One by one, each person present prayerfully washes their hands thoroughly and intentionally, with soap and water, not for themselves but sacrificially for the sake of every vulnerable person. Once washed each should help with setting the table as they are able.*

Leader: Blessed be our God.

All: For ever and ever. Amen.

*Adapted and expanded from a ritual by The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA and the Rev. Joseph Peters-Mathews, St. Hilda St. Patrick, Edmonds, WA*

## **REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS**

Jesus and his disciples had supper together for the last time. The disciples didn't understand that this would be the last time they were all together. Many of us went through a similar situation recently; not knowing it would be your last day at school, work, getting to see other family members and friends as we went into social distancing.

- What did it feel like to experience something for the last time and not know it was the last?
- How do you think the disciples felt during that supper? How do you think they felt after when they realized it would never happen again?
- What do you think it felt like to have supper with Jesus?
- If you could have supper with Jesus now, what would you ask him?
- How can you make the most of every moment you are in?

After supper Jesus washed his Disciples feet. It was a gross job as people in Jesus' time did not have paved roads and sidewalks; the roads were often very messy, and your feet would get very gross and dirty. This is something that was done by servants, not by the master.

- How did it feel to have your hands washed?
- How did it feel to wash someone else's hands?
- How do you think the disciples felt having Jesus wash their feet? How would you feel if Jesus washed your feet/hands?
- In this time of social distancing, what does it mean to you to touch someone or to be touched?
- What does it mean to wash someone's hands? How can you symbolically wash people's hands now?
- How can you serve others at this time?