

## COMMUNAL

# MAUNDY THURSDAY

## *at home table liturgy & practice*

This guide is meant to be used at home, in celebration of Maundy Thursday. This version of this guide is meant to be used if there are two or more people at your table. This is the night we remember the story of Jesus instituting the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion. This is a story we're called to remember, but more than that, it's one we're meant to *practice*. Set an intention here, to let yourself enter into this story.

This is the night where the darkness comes close. It's the night where the altar is replaced by a table, priests are less important than friends, and the rules are rewritten in the name of love. Everything changes here, but not how they - those disciples that night around that table - expected. Things still have the ability to change here, for any time we open ourselves to the Holy, God has a way of breaking apart, pouring into, and showing us new ways to be.

So welcome to Maundy Thursday. *May God be with you there...*

### **Supplies to Gather:**

- A Bible
- A candle, and something to light it with
- Hand sanitizer, or soap and access to a sink
- Crackers or bread, that won't be eaten with the rest of the meal
- Juice or wine

## Prepare

### Practice:

Who is the youngest person at your table? Invite them to be the one who lights the candle, and while they do, say:

*Blessed are you, God of the universe, our Light in every darkness.*

### Examine:

Think back through your day. Where do you now notice the evidence of God? Did you notice it at the time, or only now in hindsight? Contemplate that. Share at least one noticing with those at your table. Once you've all shared, take a deep breath, and invite the Spirit to be close.

### Pray:

Come in peace, Spirit of God, be with us here.

Come in peace, Spirit of God, pray what we forget, into God's ear.

Come in peace, Spirit of God, lift the weight all we've left undone.

Come in peace, Spirit of God, let us notice You, O Holy One.

## Blessing the Hand Washing

### Practice:

What stories from the Bible come to mind when you think of water? Share those, as you intentionally, and slowly, wash your hands. Consider washing one another's hands. (Laughter is welcome.) How does it feel? What is strange or awkward? What is surprising?

### Examine:

Think back through your day again. What do you need to wash away and leave behind? Or, what do you wish had gone differently? Share as you're comfortable.

### Pray:

In the water, wash away the week that was.

In the water, renew us for the week that will be.

In the water, remind us we are named and claimed by You.

In the water, remind us all things can be made new.

## Blessing the Food

### Practice:

Try this if it feels okay with everyone at your table: Swap plates with one another, and fill each other's plates for one another. If your plate is being filled, you can advise, but don't touch. Experience letting your plate be filled for you.

**Examine:**

Notice the food on your table. Each of you pick one thing to focus on. Where did that food begin? In what ground? Who grew it? Who harvested it? Continue through the journey of your food, and consider all the places it's been, and the people who have participated in it being here on your table. Offer gratitude for each step along it's way.

**Pray:**

Holy God, we bless this food,  
confessing we get hungry,  
asking that you fill us here,  
for all that is ahead.

## **Blessing the Eating**

**Practice:**

Eat! Try to eat more slowly than usual. Notice how that feels.

**Examine:**

Think back through your past week. What are you thankful for? Offer up this thanksgiving as you eat. Take turns going around the table, and keep going as long as you're able.

**Pray:**

At the end of each gratitude, say: I thank you, Holy God.  
Everyone else at the table then responds: We thank you, Holy God.

## **Remembering our Story**

*(Do this when the meal is almost over.)*

**Read:**

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

**Practice:**

Find the bread (or crackers, etc.) and the juice (or other beverage) on your table. Remember the story, take turns sharing with each other.

Remember, before this night, the typical way someone came close to God was to make a sacrifice, which involved an altar and a priest (and usually some blood). Jesus overturns the old way here, and shows that God will be close, not over sacrifice, but around a table - not with a priest, but with friends (and enemies) - not with blood, but with *his* blood, now symbolized as wine. This was a radical change. Consider here, where might you need to stop pursuing old ways, and let love pour into you? Only share if you desire. Leave some space for silence here.

As you eat and drink, say out loud, "Love is poured. There is more than enough."

**Pray:**

Bread is broken, juice is poured.  
Love is shared, gratitude adored.

## **Sending to Rest**

**Examine:**

Consider the day ahead of you tomorrow. What are you looking forward to? Where does stress or concern come up? Invite the Spirit to be with you there. Share at least one of each with those around your table, as you do, offer them all to God.

**Practice:**

Who is the oldest person at your table? Invite them to blow out your candle, and as they do, say:

*Journey with us into this night, that we may find rest.*

**Pray:**

We lay down our work.  
We pick up our rest.  
Blessed are you, O God.

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