



St Stephen with St John

Vestminster

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The Liturgy of the Passover



Maundy Thursday



St Stephen's Westminster



ststephensrochesterrow



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Tonight we celebrate our Maundy Thursday liturgy (from mandatum, 'commandment', because of the use of John 13.34 in the Antiphon).

It contains a rich complex of themes: humble Christian service expressed through Christ's washing of his disciples' feet, the institution of the Eucharist, the perfection of Christ's loving obedience through the agony of Gethsemane.

There will be elements of the Passover recalling our Jewish roots of our Christian Eucharist. We will retell the miraculous story of how God brought the people out of Egypt and contemplate how God will redeem Israel by sending the Messiah.

As Christians we believe that Jesus, the Passover Lamb, redeems us from death.

This Maundy Thursday as a symbol of our Christ service the celebrant will symbolically wash hands as a sign of love, as Christ first loved us.

After the feast, the church and altar will be stripped of ornaments in silence and we will recall in silent vigil how Christ endured the agony of Gethsemane. After keeping vigil ('Could you not watch with me one hour?') as Thursday passes into Good Friday

Welcome

The congregation turn to the entrance of the church.

(Mark 14: 12-16)

In the name of God, Source of All Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit
Amen

We meet in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you:

The Love of God dwell in your heart

The Preparation

When all are ready, the upper room is searched by one of the people present,
armed with dust pan and brush to remove any last fragments of leaven bread.

(Exodus12: 19)

Before setting out s/he says:

Blessed are you Lord, God of all creation.

You have instructed us to remove all leaven before Passover,
to teach us that we must cleanse ourselves
from all corruption in order to serve you worthily.

Blessed be God forever.

On their return s/he scornfully throws away any pieces of bread
s/he may have found out of the door.

**Christ our Paschal Lamb, has been sacrificed,
let us therefore celebrate the festival,
not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil,
but the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

Hymn – An Upper Room

The Three Blessings

(1) **The Blessing of the First Cup of Wine**

(President raises the cup)

Blessed are you Lord God of all creation

Through your goodness we have this wine,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.

Blessed are you for choosing us to be your holy people.

Blessed are you for letting us live to celebrate this feast.

Blessed be God forever.

(The wine is drunk after the blessing)

(2) *The Blessing of the Fire*

(The mother of the family lights the candle and prays the blessing)

Blessed are you Lord God of all creation.

Through your goodness you have given us light to lighten our darkness.

Let your face shine on us as we celebrate this Seder in your honour.

(the light is walked around the Altar and lights the rest of the candles)

Blessed be God forever. The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make his face shine on us, and be gracious to us.

The Lord lift up his countenance and give us peace.

(3) *The Blessing of the Assembly of God's Holy People*

Let all God's children sit at table and drink the wine
of liberation and eat the bread of freedom;

Freedom from bondage and oppression,

free from hunger and want,

freedom from hatred and fear,

freedom to think and to speak.

The Collect

Let us pray that we may love one another as Christ has loved us.

Creator God,

you have invited us to share in the supper

which your Son gave to his Church

to proclaim his death until he comes:

may he nourish us by his presence,

and unite us in his love;

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

A little parsley dipped in salt water and eaten.

(This ceremony represents the Hyssop dipped in blood, used for sprinkling the doorposts of the Israelites homes).

The Blessing of the Second Cup

Blessed are you Lord God of all creation

Through your goodness we have this wine,

fruit of the vine and work of human hands.

Blessed are you for choosing us to be your holy people.

Blessed are you for letting us live to celebrate this feast.

Blessed be God forever.

Explanation and Proclamation of the Word

(a) **Questions:** The youngest people present asks the Ritual Questions

1. Why is this night different from all the other nights?
2. Why do we eat only Unleavened Bread?
3. Why the bitter herbs?

(b) **History:**

Because we were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord, our God, brought us out with a mighty hand and outstretched arm. Therefore it is right for us to tell our story of our departure from Egypt, and recount the wonder of our redemption:

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 12.1-14

Ritual eating of the Passover dishes

1. A piece of unleavened bread:
2. Cucumber or chicory dipped in Haroseth.
3. Cucumber, dipped in Haroseth, and placed between two pieces of unleavened bread.
(This is called "Hillel's Sandwich and is the sop that Jesus gave to Judas)

Hymn – *Do not be afraid*

Gospel Reading: John 13: 1-17, 31-35

The Hand Washing

After the prayer and introduction the president will distribute hand-sanitizer as a symbol of our Lord's command whilst 'Ubi Caritas' is sung.

The Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'

The Peace of the Christ of the Upper Room be with you always.
The Peace of Christ be with you.

Hymn – *My song is love unknown*

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give thanks and praise.

... and with all the company of the saints
who have carried you in their wounds,
that all the pains of humankind
may be fresh-embodied with new life,
we praise you, singing,

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord,
Holy is the Lord God Almighty.
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, Holy is the Lord God Almighty:
Who was, and is, and is to come Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.**

Blessed is our brother Jesus, bone of our bone,
flesh of our flesh, from whom the cup of suffering did not pass,
who, on the night that he was betrayed,
took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said,

Take, eat, this is my body, my Living Presence, given for you.
Do this to remember me,
to bring us together in the world

In the same way he took the cup, after supper, saying,
Drink of this, all of you;
for this is my Blood, my Very Self, spent for you.
Do this to remember me,
to bring us alive in the world.

The cup is the new covenant in the Blood of Christ.
For in the mystery of faith,
**Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ is here, Christ will come.**

... and what is sown in weakness may be raised in power.
Amen.

Prayer in Christ

**Abba, Amma,
Beloved, your name be hallowed,
your reign spread among us, your will be well done,
at all times, in all places.
Give us the bread we need for today.
Forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Let us not fail in time of our testing.**

Spare us from trails too sharp to endure.
Free us from the grip of all evil powers.
For yours is the reign, the power and the glory,
the victory of love, for now and eternity,
world without end.
Amen and Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Jesus of courage and justice, because you broke bread with the poor,
you were looked on with contempt.

Because you broke bread with the sinful and outcast,
you were looked on as ungodly.

Because you broke bread with the joyful,
you were called a winebibber and a glutton.

Because you broke bread in the upper room,
you sealed your acceptance of the way of the cross.

Because you broke bread on the road to Emmaus,
you made scales fall from the disciples' eyes.

Because you broke bread and shared it,
we will do so too, and ask for your blessing.

The bread which we break,
is a sharing in the Body of Christ

The wine which we bless,
is a sharing in the Blood of Christ.

Body and blood of a new humanity,
we shall be transfigured to glory.

Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world,
having compassion upon us

Beloved of God, affirming the world,
accepting us in love for ever

Healing God, bearing the pain of the world,
giving us and all creation your peace

Pour mercy upon us, whisper your love for us,
give us your peace.

Communion

The Body of Christ: **I am.**
The Blood of Christ: **Amen**

Please stay in your seats as the celebrant will distribute the Sacrament.

Organ Music

Prayer after Communion

**Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup
we proclaim the death of Jesus Christ,
even to the day of the fulfilment of his coming,**

**Eternal and ever-loving God,
we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament
you have given us the memorial of the passion
and resurrection of your Dearly Beloved,
Jesus, Messiah, our Servant-Lord:
may we so reverence these sacred mysteries of the Body
and the Blood that we may know within our deep soul-selves,
and show forth in our embodied lives,
the fruits of your redeeming love.
We ask this in the name of the Christ
who in the Upper Room stamped this Eucharistic image
on the Body of Humankind.
Amen.**

The Family songs and Conclusion

In Jewish homes, when the rite of Passover is ended, the family sings a variety of songs. Sadly we are unable to do this together this year, but two songs will be sung as a symbol of this.

Mark 14: 26-32 is read, after the songs.

Then, in silence, the clergy clear up the table, the altar, and cover up any figures or ornaments (a scene of dereliction) ready for tomorrow's service.

We walk in silence to the place of vigil. People are welcome to stay in the chapel for silent prayer until midnight.

Please leave the church in silence.

**May God bring us all to sup with him
in his eternal kingdom**