

# MAUNDY THURSDAY | 2026

## PREPARATION

### Dinner & Communion:

- For home gatherings, plan to have a meal together with your small group. Potluck style is recommended.
- Bread and wine (or juice).

### Craft Supplies:

- Construction paper, three colors (yellow, light blue, purple)
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Pens

### Foot Washing Supplies:

- Basin or bowl of warm water
- Towels, two per person. One to wash, and one to dry.

# GATHER

*People wanted to meet with Jesus, they thought he would be a King.*

## READ

### Matthew 21:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

"Say to Daughter Zion,  
    'See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
    and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"  
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"  
"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

## QUESTION ONE - HOPE & JOY

*Imagine you were in the crowd, as Jesus entered, being welcomed as a King. What would you want Jesus to do for you? For the world? What Hopes would you have?*

*Have one person capture everyone's response- you'll use them as prayers later.*

## DINNER

When your table has finished discussing the first question, please go serve yourself dinner and then return to your table to read the scriptures and discuss the second question while you eat.

## READ

### Matthew 26:1-13

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, "As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. "But not during the festival," they said, "or there may be a riot among the people."

While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked. "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."

Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

## QUESTION TWO - GRIEF & FEAR

*Sacrifice by its very nature is costly, and some sacrifices that Jesus calls us to make for the sake of love look foolish in the eyes of the world, but are only vindicated in view of Jesus' resurrection. What sacrifice do you find most challenging to make when it comes to your apprenticeship to Jesus? What fear keeps you from moving forward in faithfulness?*

*Have one person capture everyone's response- you'll use them as prayers later.*

## READ

### JOHN 13:6-8, 12-17

When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me."

After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

## FOOT WASHING

*You may choose to wash each other's feet at this time. Take turns washing and drying each other's feet, and offer a blessing- "God sees all of you and loves you. I see you and love you, too."*

*Make sure everyone washes their hands afterward before you move on.*

## DESSERT

*Once everyone has dessert, take turns reading these Scripture passages and reflections. Then, ask everyone at the table to answer the question and record their answers.*

## **READ**

### **Matthew 26:14-30**

Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?” He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover. When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely you don’t mean me, Lord?” Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, “Surely you don’t mean me, Rabbi?” Jesus answered, “You have said so.”

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

# COMMUNION

*As Jesus' disciples, we too are commanded to love one another because Christ has first loved us. We remember this through the sharing of Christ's body and blood through the sacrament of communion. Jesus gave his life out of love for the world. He freely gave his body and blood for the forgiveness of sin- to reconcile the world back to God, and to create pathways for reconciliation between us all.*

Take time to serve one another bread and wine or juice. Give each other the elements and say, "this is Jesus' body, given in love for you", and "this is Jesus' blood, shed for the forgiveness of your sins."

## QUESTION THREE - THANKSGIVING & PRAISE

*Despite the fact that Judas was about to betray Jesus, and the rest of the Apostles would soon abandon him, Jesus still broke bread with them and gave thanks for it. Even in the midst of difficult circumstances, we too can give thanks because we know that Jesus provides for us, and that we live on more than bread alone. What are you thankful for tonight?*

# ASSEMBLE YOUR PRAYER CHAINS

- Write your prayers on the corresponding color strips of paper.
  - **Hopes & Joys** on your warmest color paper (red/orange)
  - **Grief & Fears** on the coldest color paper (dark blue/purple)
  - **Thanksgiving & Praise** on the medium color paper (light green/light blue)
- Have them write a specific prayer on each strip according to its color and prayer type. For example: "I am grieving poverty", or "I am sad about this relationship in my life." "I am hoping for peace in Sudan", or "I am hoping for healing in my marriage." "My kids remind me of God's love, so I try to love them", or "The sunrise reminds me of God's love, so I try to bring love to other people's days."
- Once you've written out your prayers on the strips of paper, write your name on the back of the strip.
- When everyone is finished, place your prayers in the center of the table and jumble them up.
- Each person will then take a handful of prayers (but don't take your own), mindful to keep a balance of hopes & joys, fears & griefs, and thanksgiving & praise.
- Make Loops: Take one strip of paper, curl it around to make a loop, and secure the ends with glue or tape.

- Form the chain: Take another strip, slide it through the first loop, and then secure it to form a second loop. Continue this process to build the chain.
- Carry each other's prayers over the next weekend (at least).
  - On Good Friday, pray for each other's "Thanksgiving & Praise." In gratitude for all that Jesus sacrificed for us, we give thanks and praise, as we remember that Jesus bore the burden of sin for the whole world.
  - On Holy Saturday, pray for each other's "Grief & Fears." The first Holy Saturday was a dark day, filled with uncertainty, and it appeared as if all hope was lost.
  - On Easter Sunday, pray for each other's "Hopes & Joys." Because of Jesus' resurrection, we know and trust that our hope is not in vain. The ultimate victory over sin and death has been won. A light has shone in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. *Love wins.*
- You can continue to pray these prayers after Easter, and could add on to your prayer chain when new prayers pop up!

## **BENEDICTION**

*Take whatever time you want to be together, but before you leave, have one person read this aloud to bless your gathering.*

Go now in the name of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit: not tentatively, but boldly; not cynically, but hopefully; not sadly, but joyfully—because tonight we have met again with the One who creates, forgives, and redeems.

Amen.