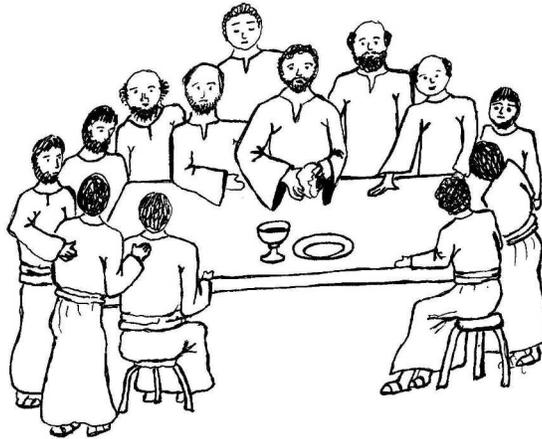


# ***Simple Prayer, Simple Praise:*** **A Worship Service for Maundy Thursday (April 9th)**



## ***Concerning the Service***

*This Maundy Thursday service was designed for use around the dinner table if possible. The table should be set with the best the house has to offer. If your best is a folding table and takeout containers God will be as honored by that as fine silver and crystal. While the service mentions wine, you should use whatever beverage makes sense for you and those gathered. In the ancient world wine was safe (when the water was not) and was a staple. One candle (called the Christ candle) should be placed on the table and lit before the service begins.*

## **Opening Prayer**

Tonight, is a holy night. Tonight, we join with Christians around the world as we remember the last night our Lord spent with his friends. Though we are dispersed, we are together, in spirit and in truth.

Tonight, is about friendship, and love. But not all the stories tonight are happy, because suffering and evil are real. So tonight, we will eat a meal, we will share stories, and we will pray together.

## **Blessing of the Meal**

### ***Blessing the Bread***

On the night that Jesus gathered with his friends he took bread and he blessed it and shared it with his friends, for God who loves us, feeds us. As God's people ate manna in the wilderness and were satisfied, so we share this bread with Christ, and with one another. May it be for us bread from heaven, strength for our bodies, balm for our souls, and may it empower us to be Christ's body in this world.

### ***Blessing the wine [or other beverage]***

On the night that Jesus gathered with his friends he took wine and he blessed it and shared it with them. As Jesus offered the Samaritan woman water that will not fail, so Jesus offers us the same. May this be for us the holy drink of heaven, and may quench the thirst of our souls.

### ***Blessing the rest of the meal***

Holy and life-giving God, we thank you for the bounty of your Creation laid before us. We ask you to bless it, that it may be to us a holy meal. We give thanks for all those who labored so that it might

sustain us, and we ask that through it you would give us the strength to be your good stewards; to care, and tend your creation, and to care especially for our siblings, all the people of this world. Tonight, be with all the members of our community who we love and miss, those who cannot be here with us to share this meal. We ask these things by the grace of Jesus Christ our Brother and the Holy Spirit our friend and guide. Amen.

*The following story is to be read during the meal.*

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

*(John 13.1-17, 31b-35)*

*As the meal is concluded and the dishes are still on the table the following is read*

### **The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus**

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "For whom are you looking?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he", they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "For whom are you looking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that

I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.” This was to fulfil the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?” (*John 18.1-11*)

Our dinner is over, the waiting begins. Tonight, Jesus was alone, under arrest, and awaiting his death. Tonight, his friends were alone with their guilt, shame, and fear.

Tonight, we are missing our normal routines, our communities, and friends. Many are alone, isolated and afraid, Jesus waits with us all tonight, even as we wait with him. Jesus knows what loneliness feels like, what fear tastes like. Jesus knows the heartbreak of being alone when you want most to be with people you love. Tonight, we hold vigil with the sick, the fearful, the lonely, and with all who risk their own lives to protect and care for ours.

*We are invited to clear away the dishes, and clean up the remains of our meal in silence, and with prayer. Read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm while the table is cleared, and table cloth or decoration removed.*

*1 The LORD is my shepherd; \**

*I shall not be in want.*

*2 He makes me lie down in green pastures \**

*and leads me beside still waters.*

*3 He revives my soul \**

*and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.*

*4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; \**

*for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

*5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; \**

*you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.*

*6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, \**

*and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*

*(Psalm 23 from the Book of Common Prayer, 1979.)*

*When the table is cleared gather together for a final prayer and invitation to keep vigil.*

Holy One, draw near to your people this night, wait and watch with us; for our hearts are heavy. Send your holy angels to watch over the sick, and to guide the hands of those who tend to them. And we beseech you, comfort us as a Mother soothes her beloved children. May we watch, and wait, strengthened by your presence. **Amen.**

Simple Prayer, Simple Praise is produced for The Episcopal Dioceses of NWPA and WNY by the Rev. Steve Lane and the Rev. Claudia Scheda. April, 2020. Adapted from a Service by The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA.