

# Passover Meal

Service

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### **Introduction**

*Many years ago the Egyptians took the Jewish people from their home country into captivity in Egypt, so they could be their slaves.*

*God promised to free them.*

*When the time was right, Moses lead them out of Egypt and into the promised land.*

*The festival or celebration of passover reminds us of their last meal in Egypt before they escaped into Gods promise of a new life.*

*As their final meal in Egypt, they drunk wine, and ate lamb and flat bread without yeast.*

*Today we remember that final meal, it is the celebration day, when we remember passover.*

We are having this Passover Meal in the context of a **service**.

Therefore, we will not be doing the dishes.

We will all do the dishes together at the end of the evening once we have finished

Rather than washing up,  
please join us for the full experience

## **Welcome**

Welcome, as we come into Holy week we remember the passover like Jesus' disciples did.

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## **Mark 14:12-16**

*It was the first day of the Festival of Thin Bread, and the Passover lambs were being killed. Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal?"*

*Jesus said to two of the disciples, "Go into the city, where you will meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him, and when he goes into a house, say to the owner, 'Our teacher wants to know if you have a room where he can eat the Passover meal with his disciples.' The owner will take you upstairs and show you a large room furnished and ready for you to use. Prepare the meal there."*

*The two disciples went into the city and found everything just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover meal.*

*Following the custom of the Jewish people at their Celebration Meal, the women will light the celebration candles.*

## **Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has made us right with you through your words, and who has instructed us to light the lights of celebration.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe,  
who has kept us alive and sustained us, and brought us here today,  
may our gathering be set aside for your work in our lives O God,  
by your light and favour shining upon us,  
bless us and bring us peace. **Amen.**

### **Traditional Passover Prayers**

In the first act of the Jewish Passover, we take a cup of wine as the head of the household prays the traditional blessing (benediction). It's called the Kiddush:

*Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,  
Creator of the fruit of the vine,  
Blessed are you O Lord our God, King of the Universe  
who has chosen us among all your peoples and made us right,  
with you, through your words.*

*In love you have given us, O Lord our God, days of joy,  
and celebration days of gladness.*

*On this day of the feast of flat bread,  
we gather together as your people,  
to remember the departure from Egypt.*

*You have chosen us for your service and share with us your blessing  
and celebration on this day.*

*Blessed are you O Lord our God, who has preserved us,  
sustained us and brought us to this celebration day.*

*Hand around the grape juice trays, each person takes a sip.*

In the next act of the Jewish passover we eat greens, a symbol that nature comes to life in spring.

Following Jewish tradition, we dip the greens into salt water and pray.

**Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,  
Creator of the fruit of Earth.**

*We all dip the parsley in salt water and eat it.*

Another action of the Jewish passover is the breaking of the flat bread, the Jewish people called this Matzah.

*The leader lifts the bread saying:*

*Look this is the bread of affection which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.*

*Let all who are hungry come and eat.*

*Let all who are in need come and celebrate the passover with us.*

*May it be God's will to save us from all trouble, and from being slaves.*

*Next year at this time may all the Jewish people be free.*

*Place the bread on its plate*

## **Questions**

AN ADULT

At the ancient passover meal, the son asked the Father four traditional questions about the passover. In time, in order to carry on a discussion about the symbolic foods other questions were asked about their meanings, the father replied in such a way that the son could understand, so if he was young, the answer was simple, as he grew, the answers became more detailed.

A YOUNG PERSON

Why is this night more different to all the others?

AN ADULT

The Israelites, who we now know as the Jewish people, had been in Egypt as slaves for 430 years, at the end of 430 years, on this night, all the tribes of the Lord came out of Egypt.

This was a night of waiting (vigil) as the Lord waited to bring them out of Egypt.

It is God's night.

All Israelites keep this vigil and wait, on this night, generation after generation.

This is recorded in Exodus 12, verses 40 to 42.

*The Lord's people left Egypt exactly four hundred thirty years after they had arrived. On that night the Lord kept watch for them, and on this same night each year Israel will always keep watch in honor of the Lord.*

A YOUNG PERSON

On all other nights we eat bread either with yeast, or without yeast. Why on this night do we eat only thin bread without yeast?

AN ADULT

*Hold up the bread showing it to everyone*

It is because the Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry that there was no time for the bread to rise.

As the book of Exodus tells us: *“The dough which they brought from Egypt was used to make loaves of flat bread. The dough had no yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt, and did not have time to prepare food for themselves for the entire journey.” (Ex 12:39)*

Let us then share in the custom of the Israelites.

They did this “way back then” and still do this today, together let us eat this flat bread.

*Everyone eats bread*

A YOUNG PERSON

On all other nights we eat any kind of herbs, on this night why do we eat only bitter herbs.

AN ADULT

*Hold up the pesto mixture in a glass bowl*

They are eaten to remember how horrible the lives were of the Israelites while they were in captivity in Egypt.

As it says in the book of Exodus:

*The Egyptians put tough slave bosses in charge of the people of Israel and tried to wear them down with hard work. ... The Israelites were mistreated, their families grew larger, and they took over more land. Because (they grew in number), the Egyptians hated them even more than before and made them work so hard that their lives were miserable. The Egyptians were cruel to the people of Israel and forced them to make bricks and to mix mortar and to work in the fields.*

Let us now eat the sour and bitter herbs, remembering the terrible life the Israelites had in Egypt.

*Everyone dips the bread into the bitter herbs (pesto, with lots of lemon in it)*

A YOUNG PERSON ASKS

Why on this night do we eat this sweet mix of nuts and fruit.

ANOTHER ADULT

*Hold up a plate of haroseth*

This is a sweet mix of finely chopped apples, walnuts, raisins and some honey. This is to remember the mortar (cement) that the Jewish slaves used working building houses before they left Egypt.

*Everyone eats haroseth*

A YOUNG PERSON ASKS

Why on this night do we eat Lamb, when on other nights we may eat any meat?

ANOTHER ADULT

*Hold up a plate of lamb*

God saved Israel from Egypt by helping them to escape to another land. On the night before they were to leave for this land, God told them to mark their houses by putting the blood of a lamb on their doorposts. They were to eat all of the lamb, and have a big meal, so that they would have full tummies for their escape. They were to stay in their houses that night so they would be protected.

So tonight we celebrate God's love and protection.

*Everyone eats the main meal of lamb*

A YOUNG PERSON ASKS

Why on this night when we remember sadness do we drink nice sweet grape juice?

ANOTHER ADULT

*Lift up the tray of grape juice*

The Bible speaks of wine and grape juice that makes the hearts of people thankful,  
and we are filled with joy, as we remember God's loving kindness to us,  
the good life he gives us,  
the land full with richness,  
our good food, our good drink, and good friends.

Let us join in the joy of the Israelites who celebrate their rescue by God from the Egyptians, by drinking with them the ancient Hebrew toast.

A toast is when we all raise our glasses together.

The word L`Haiyim means "To Life!"

We raise our cups to make the ancient Hebrew toast together, and we say:

**L Haiyim! - To life!**

## **Communion**

MATTHEW 26:26 - [CEV]

During the meal Jesus took some bread in his hands. He blessed the bread and broke it. Then he gave it to his disciples and said, "Take this and eat it. This is my body."

Jesus picked up a cup of wine and gave thanks to God. He then gave it to his disciples and said, "Take this and drink it. This is my blood, and with it God makes his agreement with you. It will be poured out, so that many people will have their sins forgiven. From now on I am not going to drink any wine, until I drink new wine with you in my Father's kingdom." Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

*Silence is kept*

*The bread is broken*

Christ's body was broken for us on the cross.

***Christ is the bread of life.***

His blood was shed for our forgiveness.

***Christ is risen from the dead.***

*We share communion together*

## **The Garden**

After that time Jesus went to the garden to pray. So now we follow in his footsteps.

*We walk up to church to the "garden" (note some people might need to walk around and enter church by the main door, we should make sure someone is enabling this"*



Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane. When they got there, he told them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”

Jesus took along Peter and the two brothers, James and John. He was very sad and troubled, and he said to them, “I am so sad that I feel as if I am dying. Stay here and keep awake with me.”

Jesus walked on a little way. Then he knelt with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, don’t make me suffer by having me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want.”

He came back and found his disciples sleeping. So he said to Peter, “Can’t any of you stay awake with me for just one hour? Stay awake and pray that you won’t be tested. You want to do what is right, but you are weak.”

Again Jesus went to pray and said, “My Father, if there is no other way, and I must suffer, I will still do what you want.”

Jesus came back and found them sleeping again. They simply could not keep their eyes open. He left them and prayed the same prayer once more.

Finally, Jesus returned to his disciples and said, “Are you still sleeping and resting? The time has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to sinners. Get up! Let’s go. The one who will betray me is already here.”

It was dark and warm. You have followed Your teacher to the garden even though it is late and you are not sure why he wants to go there. You sit down as he moves ahead to pray alone. The scent of the flowers is strong and makes you feel sleepy. Slowly you drift off.

You hear Your Lord's voice and wake up. His tone is disappointed. You feel embarrassed and guilty as he goes back. You cannot hear his words but he is on his knees, desperate praying, pleading. In spite of yourself your eyes close again.

Again you wake, and again you are embarrassed and chastened. You try to stay awake, moving around, shaking your head but the lateness of the hour takes over and you doze again.

You don't understand what the Lord is trying to tell you, your brain is muddled. Then you see some people approaching. They have swords and they are unfamiliar. You see Judas, one of your brothers, go up to Jesus and kiss him. Then everything changes.

Jesus was still speaking, when Judas the betrayer came up. He was one of the twelve disciples, and a large mob armed with swords and clubs was with him. They had been sent by the chief priests and the nation's leaders. Judas had told them ahead of time, "Arrest the man I greet with a kiss."

Judas walked right up to Jesus and said, "Hello, teacher." Then Judas kissed him.

Jesus replied, "My friend, why are you here?"

The men grabbed Jesus and arrested him. One of Jesus' followers pulled out a sword. He struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.

But Jesus told him, "Put your sword away. Anyone who lives by fighting will die by fighting. Don't you know that I could ask my Father, and right away he would send me more than twelve armies of angels? But then, how could the words of the Scriptures come true, which say that this must happen?"

Jesus said to the mob, "Why do you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a criminal? Day after day I sat and taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But all this happened, so that what the prophets wrote would come true."

All of Jesus' disciples left him and ran away.

You cannot believe it. Fear and sadness fill your heart. You see your Lord being dragged away, tied up. You have seen your friend betray your Lord and you are angry.

While Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, a servant girl came up to him and said, "You were with Jesus from Galilee."

But in front of everyone Peter said, "That isn't so! I don't know what you are talking about!"

When Peter had gone out to the gate, another servant girl saw him and said to some people there, "This man was with Jesus from Nazareth."

Again Peter denied it, and this time he swore, "I don't even know that man!"

A little while later some people standing there walked over to Peter and said, "We know that you are one of them. We can tell it because you talk like someone from Galilee."

Peter began to curse and swear, "I don't know that man!"

Right then a rooster crowed, and Peter remembered that Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will say three times that you don't know me." Then Peter went out and cried hard.

You are cold. You gather by the fire trying to get warm. These people, they keep asking you questions, being nosy and interfering. All you want to know is what is happening yet you can't find out. You are afraid. Afraid that they might do the same. Afraid that you too will be arrested and imprisoned and put to death

We say together "I do not know him"

Everyone say louder "I do not know him"

Everyone shout "I DO NOT KNOW HIM".

*Rooster crows*

A different person then reads.

There are times when we fail God. The disciples found that out this night. One discovered he was able to be bribed and with that, able to betray someone he knew to be God. Others discovered that they could not keep vigil with their teacher and Lord in his final moments of freedom. One resorted to violence when Jesus was attacked. Another discovered he could deny his Lord only hours after declaring that he would follow him forever.

This night, as the disciples did all those years ago, we discover that we often fail. We are often afraid, confused, untruthful and angry. Sometimes our lives deny our faith rather than demonstrate it. In a moment of quiet, say sorry to God for the times that we have made the wrong choice.

This night we discover Jesus. A person who was willing to kneel at our feet to wash them as a servant. A person who was afraid but still asked God for strength to keep going. A person who was prepared to put aside his own life for others. A person who even as he is being arrested spoke against violence and healed someone who had been hurt by the sword.

Tonight we light a candle. This is a candle of hope. We know the end to this story but still we wait to hear the rest. We light this candle to represent the light of hope in the darkness of this time.

O Lord, hear my prayer  
O Lord, hear my prayer  
When I call, answer me

O Lord, hear my prayer  
O Lord, hear my prayer  
Come and listen to me

## **NOTES:**

- Need to use microphone
- Need a tray of item per table
- Colouring pages as place mats
- Grape juice filler - to re-fill cups through out
- Parsley
- Salt Water
- Flat bread
- Pesto
- haroseth
- lamb / dinner
- Bread for communion - or just use flat bread
- Candles and lighter sticks (used 2 tea lights per table and 3 lighters)
- 2017 had 26 adults, 19 children. Painted words with feet in paint, and then cleaned each other's feet after it. Finished at 6:55pm

## **History**

1. **2016** - done as Messy Church BEOFRE Easter
2. **2017** - done on MAUNDY THURSDAY, 5pm, with added bit from Angela on the Garden of Gethsemane and Communion, where we went upstairs for the garden after the communion downstairs.