|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The Lessons Appointed for Use on** | **http://www.lectionarypage.net/Art/Newshield.gif** |
| Maundy Thursday |
| All YearsRCL |

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Psalm 116:1, 10-17

**The Collect**

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**Old Testament**

**Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14**

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. [Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.] This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the Lord. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

**The Response**

**Psalm 116:1, 10-17**

***Dilexi, quoniam***

1 I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, \*
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.

10 How shall I repay the Lord \*
for all the good things he has done for me?

11 I will lift up the cup of salvation \*
and call upon the Name of the Lord.

12 I will fulfill my vows to the Lord \*
in the presence of all his people.

13 Precious in the sight of the Lord \*
is the death of his servants.

14 O Lord, I am your servant; \*
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.

15 I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving \*
and call upon the Name of the Lord.

16 I will fulfill my vows to the Lord \*
in the presence of all his people,

17 In the courts of the Lord’s house, \*
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

**The Epistle**

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**The Gospel**

**John 13:1-17, 31b-35**

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.

Jesus said, "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."

"You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” Lord, help us to understand. *Amen*

There is so much we don’t understand, and yet this night with the readings from Exodus explaining the Passover meal, and the reading from Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, the earliest recorded version we have the story of what became the Eucharist, and John’s Gospel with the foot washing, all of these tightly and succinctly give us the cornerstones of what makes up our faith.

I was having lunch with a friend the other day, and we were swapping stories. Her father was a priest, her husband and father in law are priests. She is a safe space, if only because she understands “church stories.”

So, my friend and I were there last week on a spring morning outside at a cafe while my car was getting serviced. I proceeded to tell her a story about one of the Tran boys. A couple of months ago, after communion one Sunday, one of the boys said to me, “Mother Sarah, I don’t get it, why do we say, Blood of Christ, cup of Salvation?”

What I said to the boy is the following, “You can think of Salvation as having a good relationship with God. Jesus taught us how to have a good relationship with God. And he told us to remember him by have bread and wine and remembering him each time. Because we don’t EAT Jesus.” [He laughed and said, ‘no, we don’t eat Jesus.’]

But even for adults, rituals are complicated, there is no doubt. The Passover marks one covenant between God and Israel ;and Jesus gives us a new covenant. We may understand on a very deep level, but not be able to explain either covenant sufficiently, but we know that we come closer by remembering, by ritualizing, by doing. Explanations seem insufficient, saying something is a “mystery” only goes so far, and yet often it is words such as that which capture remembering. It is not a re-enactment.

If it were a re-enactment, it would be that Jesus was a really good guy., but in Jesus, God does something fantastic. God both stands in for us on account of our sins, and in the Eucharist we remember that he both died and rose for us, ending the power which sin and death possess over us. This was God of redemption in Exodus and this is God of redemption in the new covenant in Jesus.

But the other narrative of tonight is this: that our God is also one who serves. This is the other main theme of the night… We are to remember the words of the Eucharist as we see them in the lessons for the night, but we are also truly to embody what it means to remember Jesus. Well, it just doesn’t mean that he was a really good guy who did neat stuff… what it means is that we are to do as told. Very simply, but not necessarily easily, God in Jesus wants us to love one another, I would challenge you that that doesn’t mean we are to be polite Episcopalians and “like” them, but we are truly to love each other.…

As weird as foot washing can seem, and I think it can seem pretty weird for this day and age. … I, for one, have incredibly ticklish feet. Foot washing best exemplifies the type of love Jesus is talking about… We don’t expose our feet for everyone, except at the pool, or on the beach of an ocean, or lake or river. Feet in Jesus’s day were hard worn. Feet now our confined and may stink a little. In biblical times, it was the slave or servant who had to wash the master’s feet. And unlike a slave or servant to others, the tasks which we are being commanded to do are not to be done out of a sense of obligation, but out of love… Other than this once a year thing, generally we don’t wash other people’s feet, but metaphorical we should. Washing someone’s feet could be seen metaphorically as caring for them in a way they don’t expect, caring for them above and beyond the call of duty. This is how God in Jesus wants us to love each other. And our commandment, because Maundy means mandate for commandment, from Jesus is to love each other. Try to envision all the ways you could and will love others above and beyond the call of duty. The most effective way to preach the Gospel is not by words which on some days may feel empty, but by doing what we are called to do time and time again. Radically love people. They don’t deserve it, I don’t deserve it, you don’t deserve it, love them anyway, love them because they don’t deserve it. There is no deserving when it comes to love.

Lord, help us be closer to you, remembering and embodying you, help us to understand, help us to love through our lack of understanding, help us to love as you love us… Radically, when we don’t deserve it.