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EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



# ADVENT HOUSTON

**Maunder Thursday**

MARCH • 28 • 2024

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## CALL TO WORSHIP

From reformedworship.org, “Maundy Thursday Service”

**Leader:** In the past God spoke through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

**People:** **but in the last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.**

**Leader:** Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name.

**People:** **Praise the Lord!**

## FIRST READING

## Psalm 116

Psalm 116 is one of the Egyptian Hallel Psalms, traditionally sung during Passover. It is reasonable to assume this was one of the psalms Jesus chanted or sang with his disciples on the night that he was betrayed.

- [1] I love the LORD, because he has heard  
my voice and my pleas for mercy.
- [2] Because he inclined his ear to me,  
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.
- [3] The snares of death encompassed me;  
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;  
I suffered distress and anguish.
- [4] Then I called on the name of the LORD:  
“O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!”
- [5] Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;  
our God is merciful.
- [6] The LORD preserves the simple;  
when I was brought low, he saved me.
- [7] Return, O my soul, to your rest;  
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.
- [8] For you have delivered my soul from death,  
my eyes from tears,  
my feet from stumbling;
- [9] I will walk before the LORD  
in the land of the living.
- [10] I believed, even when I spoke:  
“I am greatly afflicted”;
- [11] I said in my alarm,  
“All mankind are liars.”
- [12] What shall I render to the LORD  
for all his benefits to me?

- [13] I will lift up the cup of salvation  
and call on the name of the LORD,
- [14] I will pay my vows to the LORD  
in the presence of all his people.
- [15] Precious in the sight of the LORD  
is the death of his saints.
- [16] O LORD, I am your servant;  
I am your servant, the son of your maidservant.  
You have loosed my bonds.
- [17] I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and call on the name of the LORD.
- [18] I will pay my vows to the LORD  
in the presence of all his people,
- [19] in the courts of the house of the LORD,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem.
- Praise the LORD!

## PRAYER

## MEAL

## ORIENTATION

Adapted from Two Rivers United Methodist Church, Illinois

- Reader 1: We gather on this night to remember Jesus' last night with his disciples. Friday is a day of mourning, reflecting on the death of the Messiah. Saturday is a day of waiting, pondering the mystery of a tomb that is soon to be empty. Sunday is a day of joyful excitement, proclaiming the Resurrection, and telling the story of what has been done for us in our union with Christ.
- Reader 2: Today is Thursday; a day to remember what Jesus lived for. It is a day to remember how he loved, what he taught, and how God's steadfast love was revealed through him.
- Reader 1: Today is Maundy Thursday. Maundy comes from the Latin "command." So today we remember what Jesus commanded us to do. As we enjoy this dinner together, we will recall Jesus' words and deeds. We will recall the response of the disciples, who all fell away, and we will leave with a prayer for us all to remain awake through the very end.

## OPENING QUESTION:

1. What was one of the best or most memorable meals that you've had with family or friends?

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

Exodus 12:1-14

“On the night Jesus was arrested, with the threat of death hanging in the air, he gathered his disciples to share a meal. According to tradition, it was during the feast of Passover, causing Paul (1 Cor. 5:7) and John to consider Jesus to be the Lamb of God, sacrificed so that death and destruction would ‘pass over’ us.” - CHRISTINA BRAUDAWAY-BAUMAN

[1] The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, [2] “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. [3] Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household. [4] And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. [5] Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, [6] and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

[7] “Then 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. [8] They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. [9] Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. [10] And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. [11] In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover. [12] For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. [13] The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

[14] “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. (ESV)

## READ & DISCUSSION

## NEW TESTAMENT READING

John 13:1-17; 31-35

[1] Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. [2] During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him, [3] Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, [4] rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. [5] Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. [6] He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you

wash my feet?" [7] Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." [8] Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." [9] Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" [10] Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." [11] For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

[12] When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? [13] You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. [14] If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. [15] For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. [16] Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. [17] If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

...

[31] When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. [32] If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. [33] Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' [34] A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. [35] By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (ESV)

### **DISCUSSION:**

1. What do you think Jesus is really trying to teach his disciples the night before he goes to the cross?
2. How does the love and service of Jesus' disciples testify to the fact that they are his?
  - a. How have you seen that work in your life?
3. A part of this passage, and a part of being a Christian, is learning to receive or "embrace" the love of Christ. Peter reacted very uncomfortably. How, if at all, do you identify with Peter's reaction?
4. Jesus washes the feet of EVERYONE at the Passover meal – including Judas. What does that tell you about His love for people like us?

### **AFTER DINNER**

## DRAMATIC READING OF MATTHEW 26:30-56 (ESV)

3 Readers: 1) Narrator, 2) Jesus, 3) Peter/Judas

Narrator: And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

Jesus: You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

Narrator: Peter answered him,

Peter: Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.

Narrator: Peter said to him,

Peter: Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!

Narrator: And all the disciples said the same.

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples,

Jesus: Sit here, while I go over there and pray.

Narrator: And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them,

Jesus: My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.

Narrator: And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying,

Jesus: My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.

Narrator: And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter,

Jesus: So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Narrator: Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed,

Jesus: My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.

Narrator: And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again. Then he came to the disciples and said to them,

**Jesus:** Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.

**Narrator:** While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying,

**Judas:** The one I will kiss is the man; seize him.

**Narrator:** And he came up to Jesus at once and said,

**Judas:** Greetings, Rabbi!

**Narrator:** And he kissed him. Jesus said to him,

**Jesus:** Friend, do what you came to do.

**Narrator:** Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him. And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,

**Jesus:** Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?

**Narrator:** At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,

**Jesus:** Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.

**Narrator:** Then all the disciples left him and fled.

## **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

**Reader 1:** It was on this night that Jesus was betrayed. Our Lord suffered, died, and was buried.

**Reader 2:** But on the third day he arose again.

**Prayer:** Our God and Father, your son Jesus did not hesitate for our sake to give himself up to suffer and die upon the cross. His sacrifice has become your victory for he now lives and reigns with you, in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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ADVENT HOUSTON EXISTS TO EMBRACE,  
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