

What should you expect if you come to church Thursday night in Holy Week?

We will respond to Jesus' injunction that we wash one another's feet.

Everyone will have the option of coming forward, first to have your own feet washed and then to wash another person's feet. Jesus washed the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper and told us that we should do for others what he has done for us (John 13:1-17). Baring our feet and allowing someone else to wash them, and then washing someone else's feet is a remarkable experience in which an ever increasing number of Saint Andrew's parishioners participate each year. Active participation in the foot washing is not mandatory at this service. It is in fact a true blessing just to watch people as they come forward to be washed and to wash. It is a powerful and surprisingly loving moment that fills us with joy and awe.

We will celebrate the Eucharist.

At this service we will the story of the Last Supper and the institution of the Holy Eucharist (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Our participation in the sacrament takes on special significance on this night as we move through the events of Holy week and experience the moment when Jesus gives us the great gift of bread and wine, the symbol and sign of his ongoing presence among us.

We will process the reserved sacrament to the Altar of Repose and begin the "Watch"

After the Last Supper Jesus and his Disciples went out to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus walked away by himself to pray. He returned and "found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour (Mark 14:37)? At the conclusion of the Eucharist we will process consecrated bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Christ, to the Altar of Repose in the Chapel. There we will take turns watching and waiting with Christ in one hour shifts until 9:00 on Friday morning

We will strip the altar and the sanctuary

It was in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus was arrested and taken

from his Disciples. He has been taken into custody by the religious and political powers of his day. Once the reserved sacrament is processed to the Altar of Repose Jesus is beyond our reach. We remove all decoration and adornment from the chancel, the altar linens, the candles, the cross, even the chairs are removed. Only the altar is left, bare, unadorned, almost abandoned in an empty room. The last act of the evening is to lovingly wash the altar, removing all traces of the offering that has been made there and of the sacrament that has fed us as we have sojourned in the wilderness of Lent.

We will leave the church in silence and darkness.

We began the evening in wonder as Jesus washed our feet and we followed his injunction to do for others as he has done for us. We have moved through a joyful celebration of the Eucharist, the sacrament that was given to us at the last supper. We then watched as he was arrested and taken beyond our reach leaving us bewildered, lost, and alone... It is fitting that we leave in silence, for the one we seek is not here.

The Maundy Thursday liturgy starts at 7:30 pm and lasts for almost two hours and is filled with powerful practice, prayer, imagery and song. Please join us at Saint Andrew's as we begin our final journey through the climactic events of Lent and Holy Week. This is where we are shaped and formed. This is where our interpretive lens is ground and polished. These are the stories that will set us up for the new light of Easter which we will celebrate at the Vigil on Saturday and at our Celebrations on Sunday, Easter Day!