

Hi Faith Family,

As you prepare for celebrating our Risen Savior this Easter season, I want to invite you to consider participating in a Seder Meal with your family. The Seder is a highly symbolic Passover Meal that is two fold: it remembers back to when the Israelites were delivered from slavery and it also focuses on how Jesus is the fulfillment of the Passover Meal. As we think about taking the Lord's Supper on Good Friday, I would love for you to consider partaking in the Seder Meal on Thursday, and reflecting on the rich symbolism of the Passover Meal.

Here are few items you will need for the meal (substitutions are fine!):

- *Fruit (apples, oranges, grapes)
- *Large lettuce leaf
- *Matzah Bread (or flat cracker)
- *Horse radish
- *Parsley
- *Boiled egg
- *Dried fruits and nuts
- *Salt water
- *Grape Juice
- *Lamb (another type of meat if you can't find lamb)

Please feel free to reference the first Passover meal in Exodus 12 and look for the many ways that this meal is a foreshadowing of Jesus.

Below are instruction for the Seder that both follows Jewish tradition and recognizes the fulfillment of Jesus as our Passover Lamb. This is borrowed with from Jennifer Dukes Lee.

She provides an excellent script that can be followed as you go through the Seder.

Researched, written and compiled by Jennifer Dukes Lee

We participate in this meal on what is known in Christian tradition as "Maundy Thursday," or the day before Good Friday.

Decorate your table with a white cloth, candles, Palm Sunday's leftover palm branches and baskets of flatbread or Matzo crackers (available at most large grocery stores). For each place setting, set out a cup and a plate. No utensils are needed. Around the table, have a few small bowls of salt water.

On each plate include the following: one boiled egg with the shell on; a few nuts; fruit, such as strawberries, apple slices, orange slices and grapes; and a bit of horseradish in a small cup.

Set an extra place to represent Jesus' place at the table.

Nearby, have a bowl of warm water for foot washing, along with a towel.

Have grape juice and **lamb** ready. (Keep lamb on low in oven).

Before the meal, hide the afikomen. The afikomen is a piece of your matzo, broken off and concealed in a white cloth. Have candy as the prize for the child who finds the cloth-wrapped afikomen. Or have candy for all the children. The afikomen hunt will take place after the meal concludes.

Have your Bible ready. Allow your children to ask questions, and keep the atmosphere light. This is a celebration.

PARENT: Tonight, we take part in the Passover Seder. It is a tradition celebrated by Jewish people as part of the Jewish Passover. The Passover celebrates the time when God, through Moses, led his people out of slavery. The Egyptian pharaoh let the people go after the angel of death killed every firstborn in Egypt but "passed over" the Israelite homes with lamb's blood on their doorposts.

Ask children how they may have felt that night if they were the parent painting the doorpost, or a child inside the house.

PARENT: Tonight, we celebrate a Jewish ritual. But we are not Jewish. We are Christians. So why do you think we should celebrate Passover? (Give children a chance to respond, and be open to their thoughts and questions.)

PARENT: One reason we celebrate is to remember how God helped his people by leading them out of slavery. We remember that God keeps His promises. Can you think of a time when God has kept a promise in your life? (Allow children to respond.)

PARENT: We also celebrate Passover because Jesus did! Remember, when Jesus joined his friends for one last Dinner before he died on the cross? That "Last Supper" was during a Passover celebration. During dinner, Jesus first introduced Holy Communion to the disciples. He took bread, broke it and said "This is my body." He took a cup of wine, lifted it and said, "This is my blood."

PARENT: What do you think the disciples thought when he said his body was the bread and his blood was the wine? (Allow the children to share responses.)

PARENT: The disciples might have been confused. No one ever said anything like that before. With Jesus, this meal was given new meaning. Bread and wine had new meaning, too. Even his very best friends, the disciples, were surprised and amazed!

PARENT: And so, we eat this meal to remember Jesus Christ. We will eat the same kinds of foods that Jesus ate. We will say some of the same words he said. And we can be amazed, too!

PARENT: During the meal, you will be served a drink four times, which is an ancient tradition of the Passover Seder. The four cups are: The cup of sanctification, which reminds

us of God's promises; the cup of deliverance, because God brought (or delivered) his people out of slavery; the cup of redemption, because Jesus died for us; and the cup of praise, because we thank God for what He has done.

PARENT: (Drawing attention to empty seat) And we remember throughout our dinner tonight, that Jesus is always at our table, just like He was at the table with the disciples.

CHILD READER (or parent): Read from Mark 14:12-16. Discuss briefly. Note how the Bible says that Jesus was celebrating the Passover feast on the night before he died on the cross.

CHILD READER (or parent): Read Luke 22:14-15. Discuss briefly. Ask the children what they think Jesus meant when he talked about suffering. Ask them how they think the disciples might have felt. How might Jesus have felt?

PARENT: We begin tonight with our first cup — the cup of sanctification and freedom. Pour small amount of grape juice in each goblet. Wait to drink.

PARENT, you may try to say this: Baruch atah adonai, elohay numelech hadlam boray pree hagafen. (Otherwise, use the English translation): Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.
Everyone drinks first cup.

PARENT: In the traditional Seder, the first cup was followed by the ceremonial washing of hands. During the Last Supper, this might have been when Jesus washed his friends' feet. (Read John 13:3-5, 14-15 .)

At this time, you may choose to wash the feet of your children. And they may also wash yours.

Wash hands.

PARENT: At this point in the Passover meal, the first "dipping" took place. This is represented tonight by the parsley and salt water. You will dip the parsley in the bowl of salt water. The parsley reminds us of the Hyssop which applied the Lamb's blood to the doorframes of the homes. The salt water reminds us of the tears shed while in slavery and of the waters of the Red Sea. God parted the waters so the people could pass through to safety and freedom.

All dip twice and eat. Encourage children to taste the salt and remember the tears.

Pour second cups. Do not drink yet.

PARENT: After the dipping, the host of a Passover Seder pours the second cup but the participants did not drink yet. The next step was the asking of questions, usually by the youngest.

CHILD: Why is this night different from all other nights?

PARENT: Because we were once slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

CHILD: On this night, why do we eat only unleavened bread?

PARENT: Biblical tradition says that the people had to leave Egypt so quickly that they did not have time to let the bread rise. So they made dough without yeast.

CHILD: On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs, but this night only bitter herbs. Why do we dip them?

PARENT: Because this reminds us of the bitterness of slavery. On this night we dip into salt water to remind us of the tears.

Explain each element of the Passover meal. Explain how some of the food might taste different from what they normally eat. Encourage your children to be willing to try new things, and to remember that each part of the meal has special meaning.

The unleavened bread, or Matzo, reminds us that the Jewish people did not have time to let their dough rise when they made their bread, so they did not use yeast. They had to escape quickly.

The horseradish represents bitter herbs – or moror — to remind us of the bitterness of slavery.

The egg represents offerings that were brought to God in the Temple of Jerusalem in ancient times. You may also tell them that the empty shell of the egg can remind us of the empty tomb.

The lamb symbolizes the Passover sacrifice.

The fruit and nuts – served tonight separately — were often combined into a coarse, sweet mixture called charoset. This represents the mortar the slaves used in their work. (You may choose to make charoset. Many recipes available online.)

PARENT: You may now drink from the second cup – the cup of deliverance.

PARENT may say: Barach atah adonai, elohay numelech hadlam, boray pree hagafen. (And/or) ... Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes the fruit of the Vine.

Parent or child or whole family may say grace before the meal is eaten.

Serve lamb at this time. (We do not use utensils.)

EAT MEAL.

After the meal, you may say this blessing: Blessed are you our God, King of the Universe, who feeds the whole world, with your goodness and with grace, kindness and mercy, for your mercy endures forever.

At this time, the third cup, the cup of redemption is served. Depending on your religious traditions and beliefs regarding communion, you may serve communion around the table at this time. Otherwise, you may simply note that this is when Jesus would have served communion, and you may drink your third cups of juice individually.

PARENT: (Modify, if your children do not yet take communion): We will now be serving the third cup – the cup of redemption – as part of our communion service around this table. Jesus would have done this on the night of the Last Supper, when he celebrated Passover with the disciples in the Upper Room. In Jewish tradition, the cup of redemption recalled God’s promise to Moses: I will redeem you with an outstretched arm. Imagine the surprise of the disciples when Jesus suddenly gave this cup of redemption a whole new meaning. During the third cup, Jesus took the cup and gave thanks, saying: Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my father’s kingdom.

He also took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, saying, “This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Pray the Lord’s Prayer.

We serve communion, one to another, around the room. You may offer both the bread and grape juice or wine to the person beside you, saying: “(Person’s name), this is the body of Christ, given for you. This is the blood of Christ, shed for you.”

After communing, you may now pray a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for what He has done for us.

PARENT: We have reached the fourth and final cup, the cup of praise.

Pour final cups.

PARENT: Baruch atah adonai, elohay numelech haolam, boray pree hagafen.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

Drink.

HUNT FOR THE HIDDEN AFIKOMEN. When they find this bread, broken and wrapped in a white cloth, ask them what that reminds them of, in the Easter story. (Christ’s body wrapped in a cloth and hidden in a tomb).

PARENT: The Passover Seder traditionally comes to an end with a closing hymn. We will do the same tonight, by singing the Doxology.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise Him all creatures here below

Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Amen.