



Full to the Brim

An expansive lent

A CREATIVE WORSHIP LITURGY

for Maundy Thursday

Liturgy by Adrian White

*We invite you to implement this service as-is, or adapt it for your context. Either way, please attribute credit as follows:
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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE SERVICE

Maundy Thursday witnesses God's invitations to encounter, to connect, and to be transformed. Through three movements, worshipers will visit the baptismal font, trusting in their goodness and God's loving claim on their lives; they will experience the nourishment of the Table, encountering Jesus's body through communion; and they will explore how to live out Jesus's new commandment to love others as he has loved us.

The author roots this liturgy in a transgender theology of the sacraments which seeks to evoke curiosity and delight as we open-heartedly negotiate the blurry boundaries of the symbolic and literal, of fact and faith, of being and doing. The sacraments and gender transition—and the people who engage with them—have much to teach one another. Through acts such as these, we offer an expansive response to our createdness as beloved children of God. The service places an emphasis on the body of the individual, the body of Christ, and the ecclesial body, seeking to situate worshipers in physical space where they might recognize God's presence in new ways. In this recognition, we open ourselves to the radical possibilities of God's grace for our lives, for our neighbors, and for Creation.

If your community hosts a single service to commemorate Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, you may insert your Good Friday liturgy after the creative practice in Movement 3, using a prayer or hymn to mark the transition.

ABOUT THIS LITURGY OUTLINE

- *Italicized lines are notes for worship leaders.*
- Unbolded lines are to be spoken by worship leaders and, when appropriate, printed in bulletins or projected on screens.
- **Bolded lines are to be spoken by the congregation and printed in bulletins or projected on screens.**



ORDER OF WORSHIP

MOVEMENT 1 | The Font

Call to Worship / Call to the Body

We invite you to bring your body into the worship of God. You may do so standing or seated, by listening to your heartbeat or noticing the rise and fall of your abdomen with each breath.

A call to worship is a call to presence.

We long to be fully present here, and to feel God's presence here.

Notice the space around us, the way it looks, smells, and sounds.

With all our senses, we recognize a sacred space and our belonging in it.

We gather as good creation, wonderfully made.

We join our bodies into one body as we remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Opening Hymn

"What Wondrous Love Is This"¹

Opening Ritual

In a few minutes, we'll hear the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet on the night of his betrayal and arrest. It is a story of deep intimacy and sacred connection. It is also a story about human resistance to God's grace and our discomfort with the ways that Jesus demands the disruption of hierarchies. In this story, Simon Peter first objects to Jesus's plan to wash his feet. Jesus does not rebuke him, but he does insist, for he knows what is to come.

As we prepare to lay down our burdens before God in confession, we place our trust in God's desire to know us and be with us. As we enter into the sacred story of John's gospel, let us take a few moments to notice our feet. Take off your shoes if you wish. Wiggle your toes. Plant your feet firmly on the ground. As you experience these sensations, consider the wonder of God, who meets us not only from on high but also kneeling at our feet.

Musicians might play a brief instrumental as people participate in the ritual in the manner of their choosing.

¹ Author: Anonymous. Tune: WONDROUS LOVE (Southern Harmony). Public domain.

Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Forgiveness

Confession returns us to our bodies by reminding us that God claims us, exactly as we are. Through repentance, we name that which we have left undone and ask for the help of God and our community to seek repair, restoration, and renewal. Let us pray together our prayer of confession:

**Loving God, you pour out grace upon us exactly as we are,
but we confess we are suspicious and react from fear of scarcity.**

**You invite us to take our shoes off
and receive the care our bodies need,
but we sit on our heels.**

**We sort bodies into worthy and unworthy ones
to mask our insecurities.**

**We reject and punish fat bodies,
disabled bodies,
transgender bodies,
and racialized bodies—**

even when these bodies are our very own.

God, remind us that we are made in your image.

**Help us learn to receive from your abundance
so we can share all that we have with others.**

**Let us see that the cups we longingly hold out
are already full.**

May they overflow so that all will have enough!

As he does with Peter in the footwashing, Jesus transforms our confusion and rejection into joy and connection. With God's help and mercy, we can reciprocate abundance with one another and with Creation.

In Jesus Christ we are loved and befriended by God.

Thanks be to God.

Responsive Hymn

"God Calls You Good"²

Reading | John 13:1-17

² Author: Paul Vasile. Find this hymn here: paulvasile.com/products/god-calls-you-good