

Simplified Passover/Agape

We used to eat a simplified form of the Christian Passover meal with our children when they were too young to go to church on Maundy Thursday.

We ate in the evening, a roast lamb dinner, but any meal will do.

Preparation-

Some people might want to set their own simplified version of a Seder plate- we used to use a lamb bone, a bowl of salty water, some washed lettuce leaves or parley, one boiled egg, charoset (a small bowl of a mixture of grated apple mixed with cinnamon and red fruit juice or wine). Place all these items on a plate together. Place your Seder plate in the centre of the table.

You will additionally need

- Two candles
- A glass of wine (or red fruit juice)
- Two Mazos (these are traditional Passover crackers). If you can't get any, tear a piece of pitta bread in two or use cream crackers (which are the popular version of Mazos)
- A napkin.
- An extra place setting, one more than the number of people sitting down to eat. If you don't eat at the table, just add an extra plate and cutlery. It's traditional at Passover to leave a place for an unexpected guest.
- A Bible with two readings identified. Exodus ch.12 v 1 -27 Mark ch14 v 22 – 26. If you don't have a Bible you can look up BibleGateway on the internet. Use the menu on the Bible Gateway site to find a version you prefer- there is one called 'Easy to Read' which is best for children. Or you can use a child's version from a Children's Bible.

If you don't have a Seder plate prepared, you will also need-

- A small bowl of salty water
- Some pieces of lettuce or parsley

(you will have these items on your Seder plate, if you've prepared one.)

Before you eat, hide one of the Mazos, crackers or pieces of bread inside the napkin and the other on top of it. Put a candle either side of it (don't forget the matches!) and place the glass of wine near it. Have your Bible ready. Have your table set or find somewhere to arrange all these items together.

The Christian Passover

We used to do the next bit just before the main meal was ready to serve, to save it getting cold. You will need about fifteen minutes for this.

- Bring everyone together wearing their outdoor coats. Everyone remains standing up. If possible, open your back door or the door of the room in which you are eating, in case there is an unexpected guest. Children love this bit.
- Light both candles to show that Jesus is present.
- Give thanks that you are together and pray briefly for the world, particularly refugees and those without homes.
- Ask the question 'Why is this night more special than any other night?' It's traditional for the youngest child to answer this. If they know the Passover story, get them to tell it. Otherwise read the Exodus 12 passage. If your youngest can read the passage, so much the better.
- Hand round the bowl of salty water. Everyone takes a small piece of lettuce, dips it in and eats it. Remind them that this water is salty like the tears that were cried in Egypt when the people of Israel were slaves.
- Share the first piece of bread, leaving the other piece hidden. Remind them that when the Israelites left Egypt, they were told God would provide for them all their needs. You can share your charoset -to remind people of the mortar used to make bricks in slavery, and your egg - for new beginnings).
- Give thanks for the meal, take off your coats, sit down and eat. You can shut the door now!
- Serve your meal. Enjoy!
- After the meal, take the second piece of bread from out of the napkin. Remind them that Jesus was about to die and be buried like the Mazos hidden in the napkin. Read the passage from Mark. Share the bread. You would usually share the wine or fruit juice by passing the cup round but COVID19 ADVICE- provide additional cups and share the wine or juice out equally. Drink together.
- Finally, share prayers about things you are grateful for, worried about, the sick and the dead.
- Finish with the Grace. Blow out the candles.
- And now- the washing up!