

“... in remembrance of me.”

Luke 22:19



Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Smiths Falls is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples dating back countless generations. We are grateful for our neighbours and recognize the opportunity to exercise the Ministry of Reconciliation

Introduction - TUC Liturgical Elder

Passover commemorates liberation, the Israelites' deliverance from bondage in Egypt. Passover is also known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread, since in their haste to flee Egypt, "the people carried off their dough, still unleavened."

Passover is a festival of great rejoicing, which reveals how God "led us from captivity to freedom, from sadness to joy, from mourning to feasting, from servitude to redemption, from darkness to brilliant light."

The Seder Meal - WPC Liturgical Elder

The ritual meal which commemorates the Exodus is called the Seder.

The aim of the Seder is to tell the story. A family gathers around a table, sharing in a meal which symbolises their experience as a people and their faith in the future.

The Exodus story is relevant to all persons, since it tells of the right of all persons to be free.

Celebrating Our Beginning - TUC Liturgical Elder

The Passover Seder is also believed to be when Jesus instituted the Eucharist or Lord's Supper. Gathered around the supper table with his disciples, Jesus told them, "I have longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; because, I tell you, I shall not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Then, taking a cup, he gave thanks and said, 'Take this and share it among you, because from now on, I tell you, I shall not drink wine until the kingdom of God comes'.

Then he took some bread, and when he had given thanks, broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which will be given for you; do this as a memorial of me'. He did the same with the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be poured out for you.'"

This Christian observance of this ritual meal celebrates Christ's last supper and the Jewish heritage which provided the context for Jesus.

Elements of the Seder - WPC Liturgical Elder

The Seder meal is accompanied by commentary, prayers and, where possible, songs. The service which follows is symbolic. It should be festive and joyous.

Before the celebration the table is set as for a dinner.

Haroset: represented in honey or granola.

Marror: a bitter herb such as horseradish.

Egg: one slice of hard cooked egg.

Salt: a separate small dish next to the dinner plate.

Glass: This should be empty at the beginning of the meal.

Unleavened Bread: one piece.

Napkin: A separate plate with a napkin on it. This will be used to cover the *afikoman* (hidden portion) during the meal.

Roles to be Performed - TUC Liturgical Elder

- Usually a woman begins the service by lighting the festive candles.
- The "four questions" are posed by the Youngest person present.

The Seder Meal

Sanctification of the Festival - Rev Jill Turnbull

The central theme of the Passover is redemption. For us, Passover means not only the exodus from Egypt, but our spiritual passing over from the bondage of sin. The aim of this observance is to bring the events of the past deliverance from Egypt into the present, so that each of us feels as though we have come out of bondage.

We are asked to bear witness to God's redeeming action in the past, to act in conformity with this Divine will in the present, and to renew our hope in further redemption.

Sanctification of the Day - Rev Christopher Ryan

We gather for this sacred celebration with family and friends surrounded by the signs of festive rejoicing. We link the past with future;

we respond in faith to God's call to service;

we gather here to observe the Passover, as it is written:

"The feast of unleavened bread must be kept, because it was on that same day I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Keep that day from age to age..." (Ex. 12:17)

Lighting of the Festive Candles - WPC Liturgical Elder

In praising God we say all life is sacred. In kindling these festive lights, we are reminded of life's sanctity. With every holy candle we light, the world is brightened to a higher harmony. We praise you, Our God, Creator of the Universe who hallows our lives with commandments and bids us to light these festive holy lights.

(Light main Candles / Table Candles are likewise lit)

The First Cup - TUC Liturgical Elder

The candles we have lighted praise God for the holiness of all life.

Now let us prepare to drink the cup of sanctification. Traditionally, four times during the meal wine is taken, recalling the four terms which describe God's action in rescuing the Israelites:

"I brought out...
I saved...
I delivered...
I redeemed."

We bless the vine and every food which is eaten, and every action which takes place, as a gesture of thanksgiving to the Creator of all things.

WPC Liturgical Elder

In varied ways and in different words God gave promises of freedom to our people. With cups of the vine we recall each one of them, as now the first:

"I am Yahweh. I will free you from the burdens which the Egyptians lay on you." (Ex. 6:6)

TUC Liturgical Elder *(All raise glasses)*

We raise the cup, and proclaim the holiness of the Day of Deliverance.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who have kept us in life, sustained us, and brought us to this session of joy!

(All drink the first cup)

Rebirth And Renewal TUC Liturgical Elder

The meal is customarily begun with hard-boiled eggs flavoured with salt water. The egg is symbolic of new growth, new hope, new life.

(Each person dips a slice of egg in salt water and eats it.)

WPC Liturgical Elder

Springtime is the season of rebirth and renewal. The parsley symbolises the growth of springtime, and is a sign of hope and renewal.

TUC Liturgical Elder

"See, winter is past, the rains are over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth. The season of glad songs has come..." (Song 2:10-12).

(Each person takes some greens and dips them twice in salt water)

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the earth!

(The greens are now eaten)

A Bond Formed By Sharing WPC Liturgical Elder

The leader breaks the bread on their plate, wraps the larger half in a cloth, and conceals. This serves as a visible reminder of the hidden Messiah whose appearance is expectantly awaited.

TUC Liturgical Elder (*While breaking the bread*)

This is the bread of affliction, the poor bread which the Children of Israel ate in Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in want share in hope. As we celebrate, we join with people everywhere.

Blessed are you, our God, Creator of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth. We praise you, who hallow our lives with commandments, and have commanded us regarding the eating of bread.

WPC Liturgical Elder

Unleavened bread recalls the fact that the dough used by the fleeing Israelites had no time to rise before the act of redemption.

Horseradish symbolises the bitterness of suffering.

Honey and nuts symbolise the mortar the Jews used in carrying out the Pharaoh's labour.

In these elements we see the symbols of freedom and of toil. For in the time of bondage there is hope of redemption, and in the time of freedom, there is knowledge of servitude.

(the honey and horseradish are eaten between two pieces of unleavened bread)

The Four Questions Youngest Person Present

Why does this night differ from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat leavened bread; why on this night only unleavened?

On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs; why on this night only bitter?

On all other nights we do not dip our herbs at all; why on this night must we dip them?

On all other nights we eat in an ordinary manner; why on this night do we dine with a special ceremony?

Response -

We were slaves and the Lord freed us. Had the Lord not delivered us, we, our children, and children's children would still be enslaved.

TUC Liturgical Elder

Therefore, even if all of us were wise, if all of us were a people of understanding, and learned in the law and the prophets, it would still be our obligation to retell the story of the Exodus. Anyone who searches deeply into its meaning is considered praiseworthy.

Our redemption is not yet complete.

WPC Liturgical Elder

What is the meaning of the unleavened bread?

TUC Liturgical Elder

It is the bread of affliction, for, as it is written: "They baked cakes with the dough which they had brought from Egypt, unleavened because they had been driven out of Egypt with no time for dallying, and had not provided themselves with food for the journey." (Ex. 12:39)

(The leader replaces the bread, and holds up the bitter herbs)

WPC Liturgical Elder

What is the meaning of the bitter herb?

TUC Liturgical Elder

The bitter herb, and symbolises the bitterness of past suffering. As it is written, "The Egyptians forced the children of Israel into slavery, and made their lives unbearable with hard labor, work with clay and with brick, all kinds of work in the fields; they forced on them every kind of labor." (Ex. 1:13-14)

WPC Liturgical Elder

This part of the service ends with the prayers of thanksgiving to God through Psalms and drinking the second cup of wine, the cup of deliverance.

(All together recite Psalm 114)

**When Israel went out from Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,
Judah became God's sanctuary,
Israel his dominion.**

**The sea looked and fled;
Jordan turned back.
The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills like lambs.**

**Why is it, O sea, that you flee?
O Jordan, that you turn back?
O mountains, that you skip like rams?
O hills, like lambs?**

**Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,
at the presence of the God of Jacob,
who turns the rock into a pool of water,
the flint into a spring of water.**

TUC Liturgical Elder

With the second cup of the vine, we recall the second promise of liberation.

"I will deliver you." (Ex. 6:6)

WPC Liturgical Elder

It is written: "And on that day you shall explain to your children, 'This is because of what Yahweh did for me when I came out of Egypt.'" It is not only our ancestors that the Lord redeemed, but he redeemed us as well along with them, and all generations to come.

(The participants raise their cups and say:)

Therefore, we are bound to thank, praise, honor, bless and adore him who brought us forth from slavery to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to feasting, from bondage to redemption, from darkness to great light. We praise you, O God, Creator of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine!

(All drink the second cup. The symbolic meal is now served.)

Communion

Rev Christopher Ryan - Fraction

We believe that at this point, the Lord's Supper was instituted. We read in Luke's Gospel: "He took bread, and when he had given thanks, broke it and gave it to them saying, 'This is my body, which will be given for you; do this as a memorial of me.'" (Lk. 22:19)

Rev Jill Turnbull

As we now share the bread, let us know that the fellowship which binds us together is the grace and peace we share as members of the Body of Christ.

Consuming

“Let us eat of this bread in remembrance of Christ’s body given for us”

(All eat)

Rev Jill Turnbull - Pouring

Luke's account continues: "He did the same with the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the New Covenant in my blood which will be poured out for you'" (Lk. 22:20).

Here we clearly see the connection between the cup of Jesus' New Covenant and our final cup of the Seder, the cup of redemption.

Rev Christopher Ryan - Consuming

As we now see the cup before us, let us know that the fullness of life that we share is poured because Christ poured out his life for us and in us.

Let us together take up our cups, and recall the final promise:

As it is written: "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm." Praised are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine!

(All drink)

Gesture of Peace TUC Liturgical Elder

We have now celebrated our unity in this symbolic meal, in sharing this bread and this wine. We recall the words of the Lord Jesus at this

point in the Last Supper: "Peace I leave you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give...."

Let us now offer one another an appropriate sign of the peace we have experienced here as the company of believers gathered to celebrate these mysteries of our faith.

(All exchange a sign of peace.)

Rev Jill Turnbull

Let us conclude our ritual by joining our hearts in praying the words which Jesus offered on the night we recall here.

Keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one as we are one.... I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one.... Consecrate them in truth--your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.... May they all be one. May they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

(Pause for silent prayer.)

Final Blessing - Rev Christopher Ryan

Let us bless each other.

May the Lord bless us and keep us! May the Lord let his face shine upon us and be gracious to us! May the Lord look upon us kindly, and grant us peace! Amen!

Closing Song VU 148 Jesus Remember Me (X2)

*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*

Dismissal

Let us remember that Jesus became the fulfilment of all the promises of redemption and deliverance we mark tonight. Jesus has called us out of darkness and made us the people of the New Covenant.

**That is why we gather here tonight.
That is why we celebrate this meal.
Jesus has offered himself for the forgiveness of our sins.**

Happy are we who share in this supper.

Blessing - TUC and WPC Pastoral Elders

As you go forth, God give you grace
to count others more important than ourselves,
to love our enemies,
to make peace.

May the Holy Spirit keep alive in you
what Jesus taught and did,
that your words may carry the Gospel, and
that your life may be a blessing to others.

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord.

Amen.