

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD

an International Association
CINCINNATI, OHIO

Passover in Your Home

If you are eligible to take the Passover, but unable to meet together with other brethren at the prescribed time, you may observe it in your own home in the first month of the sacred year or, if necessary, at the second Passover 30 days later (Numbers 9:11). The following directions are to aid you in partaking of such a service:

In advance, purchase or prepare a small amount of unleavened bread. Be sure the bread you use has no leavening in it whatsoever. Some Ry Krisp (check ingredients), or Jewish matzos (preferably plain varieties) should do just fine. You should also obtain a small amount of natural red wine. Be sure you have a natural, unfortified wine. The alcoholic content will be between 10 percent and 13 percent. Wines containing 19 percent to 20 percent are fortified with brandy and should not be used.

The Passover ordinance should be observed in the early evening, soon after sunset. Prepare the room in advance. There should be enough unleavened bread and glasses of wine on the table to correspond to the number who will be participating. A tablespoon of wine in each glass should be sufficient for the service. The bread and the wine should be covered with clean white napkins.

Since Passover is the most solemn evening of the year, all those participating should gather quietly in the room where the service will be held. Only baptized members should be participating in the actual service.

The one conducting the service should read aloud from the following scriptures: 1 Corinthians 11:23-30; Luke 22:7-15. Next, John 13:1-17 should be read. Then if two or more people are participating, they should wash one another's feet. If one person is observing it alone, this part of the ordinance is obviously omitted.

After completing the footwashing, the next portion of the service should serve as an introduction to the bread and wine. The one conducting the service should read aloud Isaiah 53:3-6, 10, 12; Matthew 8:16-17; 1 Peter 2:20-24; and Hebrews 4:14-16. It should be pointed out that Christ's sacrifice was for the healing of our mind and body. Next, the one conducting the service should read John 6:32-40, 48-51, 53-58; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; and 1 Corinthians 11:24. The napkin should be removed from the bread and a short prayer of thanks should be offered. The bread is then to be broken and eaten. This symbolizes the broken and beaten body of Jesus Christ and our acceptance of that sacrifice.

In preparation for the wine ceremony, the following verses should be read aloud: Matthew 26:27-28; 1 John 1:7-9; Hebrews 9:11-15; Ephesians 1:7. Then the napkin should be removed from the wine and a short prayer of thanks offered. The wine is symbolic of Jesus' blood, shed for the remission of our sins. The wine should be passed to those participating, each one taking a glass and quietly, reverently drinking it as a renewal of his acceptance of the blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

Next, a general reading of John 13:18 through John 17 is to take place. Since it is rather long, the person conducting the service may choose to only read portions of this section. This is the story of what Christ did the night before He died.

After the scripture reading, sing a hymn if possible, and dismiss, quietly leaving the room. It is appropriate to remind those participating about the solemn and sacred occasion throughout the evening, and especially as everyone is departing.

After the service has ended and the people have left the room, the one in charge should collect any leftover bread and wine that was blessed during the service. They should be disposed of privately and respectfully. The bread should be burned and the wine poured down the drain or on the ground outside (out of the view of others). If it is not possible to burn the bread, it should be disposed of in a way that will not allow it to be used for any other purpose or consumed as food.

These instructions are to help you in observing God's sacred ordinance of the Passover.