

POTLUCK and FOOTWASHING Set for Thursday, April 17

The Schedule:

Our potluck dinner will be in the Fellowship Hall. The church provides silverware, plates, coffee, tea and water. Please arrive around 4:45 so our hosts can display all the food properly. The prayer occurs promptly at 5:00. Our time in the fellowship hall ends at 6:00. Prelude for worship service begins at 6:10. Thanks to all who will work in the kitchen before and after the service.

The Mechanics of Trilby's Footwashing Service

After our potluck in the fellowship hall, persons should go to the sanctuary from 6:00 – 6:10 pm. At 6:10, music for meditation begins. Persons are welcome to attend this service and not participate in footwashing. Women participating should wear slacks and socks; not pantyhose or dresses. After the pastor's brief meditation from John 13, participants should go to the front pews and remove their shoes and socks. DO NOT be ashamed of the appearance of your feet or toenails. DO NOT be self-conscious if you need a friend to help you take your socks off and on. It's all part of the sacred process of becoming humble before Christ. If you want to predetermine who your partner is, that's ok but not needful. We do recommend that women pair with women and men with men, except when couples are married. Participants will be asked to come to the front pews. As Rev. Swaisgood and his partner wash each other feet, six pairs of people move from the front pews to the 12 chairs in the chancel area. One person is in charge of putting warm water in the basins for each pair. No soap is used. After rubbing water on the feet separately, the servant dries the foot. A towel will be supplied when you arrive in the chancel area. Some couples will take more time. As each couple comes back to put on their socks and shoes, another couple comes up.

The Theology of a Footwashing Service

It can be a hard thing to let someone wash your feet. It is a process where you can do nothing to help. You watch humbly as another bows down to wash what is one of the least glamorous parts of the body. It can also be hard for some to do the washing. It requires that we take a physical subservient position.

Footwashing is not done for physical cleanliness, but as a spiritual cleansing. In John 13:10 Jesus says to the resisting Peter "If you've had a bath in the morning, you only need your feet washed now at this late hour. My concern is holiness, not hygiene." David writes in Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a pure heart, O God and renew an obedient spirit within me." No other worship service draws us into humble service of our neighbor as powerfully as footwashing.