

Why should “waterless foot washing” be considered?

1. While foot washing is very meaningful for some/many, and it is a tradition, I have found that invariably some do not participate for various reasons (didn't grow up with it, embarrassment due to physical conditions, etc.) I have observed that in most congregations, up to half of those attending Maundy Thursday, don't wash feet. And we never know how many don't come to communion to avoid being seen as not washing feet.
2. I have introduced waterless foot washing in a number of congregations. It has always been a very positive experience. Many go back to washing feet the next year. But for the one time, especially during transition, it can serve a valuable purpose.
3. What it accomplishes:
 - a. a very high percent of the congregation participates (all ages are invited!), i.e. more “feet” are washed
 - b. due to the randomness, it connects people (inter-generationally) who would otherwise never connect with each other, and can be especially powerful for children and youth. Parents can work with older children to think what they might want to offer another child or an adult! By what is offered, anyone can target a specific age group: elderly, young, those with young children, etc.
 - c. in some cases, very meaningful holy moments take place, with testimonies of God's grace being shared throughout the next year (since some “services” are seasonal) in nature.
 - d. while it is not literally washing feet, it is a more practical application of modeling what Jesus modeled. IT personalizes and connects gifts with needs!
4. If it is attempted, we would STRESS that it is just this time, i.e. we are not “doing away with foot-washing”

Below is an example from another congregation (so ignore dates/times) of an invitation that went to the congregation, with a coupon, explaining the concept.

“Washing feet” without water: Everyone is invited (all ages!) to participate in a “Will you let me be your servant?” experience on Worldwide Communion Sunday, Oct. 3. If you want to participate, pick up a blank “coupon” this Sunday, and fill it in with an hour of service you would be willing to provide for anyone in the congregation. Your service can be general, or targeted to specific ages. Examples to get you thinking, but please don't be limited by these: baked goods; home cooked meal; clean gutters; rake leaves; wash a car; be a scribe for someone with a story who can't write it down; change oil; college student care package; computer tech support; put up storm windows; wash windows; shovel snow; pull weeds; till garden; take a child out to a restaurant or movie; transportation; etc.! Include any specifics: redeem before the first snow or valid next Summer or valid weekends only or requires one week's notice, etc.

Please post your coupon on the bulletin board (service described on front/name & phone on reverse) anytime up until Oct. 3, 9:30 a.m. After 10:30 a.m. that day, you can take down a coupon with the service you would like to receive—if you posted one. With our names on the back, no one will know who is offering the service until you select it. We're all on the honor system to not peek at the reverse side!

[front]

“Will you let me be your servant?” COUPON

The bearer of this coupon is entitled to:

Some restrictions may apply: _____

[reverse]

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail _____