

Instructions for a shortened do-it-yourself Passover

For use at home or in a Church Hall

For use at home, follow these instructions but make the "top table" your only table, and of course use your own cutlery and best crockery etc.

For the hand washing: somewhere accessible from the top table:

Jug of water
Hand towel
Bowl

On the top table:

3-tier matzah holder. You can buy one, or make one. It is often simply a flat cloth bag, decorated with embroidery, into which 3 Matzahs (3 unleavened bread "slices") are placed, one on top of the other.

Cup for Elijah. A small glass left ready for a guest who never arrives!

Communion chalices. (One cup only for home use)

2 Candlesticks and candles and matches

Serviettes in which to wrap the Afikomen

Prize(s) to redeem the Afikomen

A cushion to lean on.

Seder dish (a large ordinary, or decorative plate or platter will do) on which is placed:

Haroseth, (recipe below)

Baked egg (a token of grief for the destruction of the Temple, and a symbol of resurrection)

Parsley or watercress (representing the hyssop)

Shankbone of a lamb (to represent the lamb sacrificed at Passover when there was a Temple) (It is best for someone to buy a leg of lamb some weeks before and keep a part of the bone in the freezer until you need it.)

Horseradish (the bitter herbs - symbolic of the suffering in Egypt)

So that the team who are arranging the event know everything that is required, we usually give them the following instruction sheets. They look a bit daunting, but in fact it is hardly more complicated than a harvest supper, or church fellowship meal. If helpers know the ethos of the event, they are more likely to prepare the room appropriately and have the items required out and ready.

From experience, we have found that congregations tend not to know what to expect, and therefore in the advertising we always quote the first paragraph of the team instructions given below, to encourage families, single people, the elderly and the very young to come.

A microphone and simple amplifier is essential for the leader of the evening, because he or she will need to be heard above the general noise, and speak while others are talking. As at most family occasions, the family does not always listen in awed silence to the head of the household each time they open their mouths! In our experience, when the meaningful

moments come, such as remembering what Jesus did at the Last Supper, a profound silence descends upon even the smallest children. The music group will add to the atmosphere with worship songs, while everyone shares in the Communion. If of course you are celebrating at home in a smaller group of say 12 people, then it is all much simpler. You can do without microphones and music groups and sing unaccompanied. But you will nonetheless need to read the liturgy out loud when other members of the family group may be chattering, youngsters asking questions or causing a distraction.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ORGANISING TEAM

The Aim & Objective of the event you are organising

People are coming to an event which lasts about 3 hours, but passes very quickly.

The Passover is essentially an extended family celebration at home. So we are keen for it to seem a family occasion with young and old present. Singing, worshipping, chatting and enjoying a good meal are all interwoven. A snack is not appropriate. Each person or group is to bring enough food for a reasonable evening meal (first course and dessert) to share with others from a buffet. The meal is very much part of the occasion.

Arrangement of the room

Have one "top table" for the service leader(s) and a group with them. Then have tables of 8-10 people so that groups of 8-10 can "copy" what is being done at the top table. The leader(s) will be using microphones and amplification, so everyone will hear instructions, teaching and liturgy. The head table needs to be big enough for candlesticks and a few other items.

Food and equipment to buy

1. Plastic transparent "glasses" for each person (for wine). Small, low ones are best.
2. Cutlery & Crockery (as in summary list below).
3. Table cloths. Paper catering rolls are quite acceptable.
4. Paper napkins for each person (essential). Colourful too.
5. Red wine 70cl bottles are best, because you can spread these around the room, so groups of people can help themselves. Buy one bottle per 4 or 5 adults plus 3 extra. (You can sell off excess bottles). The top table needs some extra wine for Communion.
6. Orange juice for youngsters. Why not spoil them with real stuff, rather than squash; it is a special occasion?

7. Some non-alcoholic wine for teetotallers.
8. Water in jugs, for drinking.
9. Coffee and tea, for after the meal.
10. Eggs; to be hard-boiled, then peeled and sliced. These will be eaten by everyone just before the meal begins. Prepare one egg per three persons. (One egg per person is more correct, but many find this a bit daunting as an appetizer!).
11. Unleavened bread --MATZAH. Buy as soon as you can get it from supermarkets; it keeps. You will need one box per 10 people (at least one box per table). Buy a few extra boxes. The boxes, made by *Rakussens* are blue or red (they do not need to be "kosher for Passover"). They keep for ages (if dry). On the day, open the box, tear off the lid and slit both inner packets along the top with a sharp knife. Leave the Matzah in the boxes on each table. People will help themselves. The boxes usually have some Hebrew on them, it adds to the occasion.
12. Buy fresh parsley from the grocers. Order it beforehand because they won't be expecting such a quantity. One small sprig is needed per person. (Failing that buy watercress instead).
13. Buy salt. Provide a bowl of salt water for roughly every 10 persons. They will need it to dip parsley and for the hard boiled egg.
14. Try to obtain horseradish root. In some areas of the country it is hard to find a supplier of horseradish root. You need one root about 3/4" diameter and 6" long for 100 people. This must be cut up into small pieces to look like half length matchsticks. This item creates a lot of interest, and some tears if it is strong! If you really cannot get the root, then you will have to use horseradish sauce, but it is not the same visually. You could ask a friend living in an area of the country where there are Jewish Delicatessens, to post you a root or two the week before. (Roots are the size of a reasonably large carrot).
16. Make HAROSETH.
RECIPE Serves approx 8, but for a large group of up to 150, four times this quantity is ample, because you can put a desert spoonful per group, which will suffice.
 - 100g (4 oz) chopped walnuts
 - ½ a large cooking apple
 - 1 tsp sugar
 - 2 tsps cinnamon
 - Red wine to moisten
 Blend all the dry ingredients in an electric mixer, then moisten with the wine to the consistency of mortar.
17. Chalices for Communion will be required immediately after the meal, distributed from the top table.

18. Words sheet for the parts of the liturgy in which everyone shares and words for the songs.
19. Do anything to help make the meal special. The only thing NOT to bring is leavened bread (ie ordinary bread). Some floral table decorations are nice. You would make Christmas dinner special. Passover is in the same league.

Summary list of requirements

Each person needs in front of them before the start:

- 1 transparent plastic "glass" for wine / drink
- 1 side plate (could be paper one) for egg & other things during the event.
- 1 spoon for dessert
- Knife and fork.
- 1 napkin.

Each Group of between 5 or 10 needs, before the start:-

- 1 plate/bowl with hard boiled egg ready sliced from which to serve, and a spoon to serve it.
- 1 medium sized plate with parsley on it, and a desert spoonful of HAROSETH, and **two** slivers of HORSERADISH per person.
- 1 bottle of wine per 5 persons; opened!
- 1 jug of water for drinking.
- 1 small bowl with salt water in it, and a teaspoon.
- 1 box of MATZAH (unleavened bread) ready opened and inner wrapper slit open. Matzah stays in the box. (One box will do 10 persons).
- A table decoration eg a small posy of flowers.

During the meal each person will get up and serve themselves from the buffet. After coffee or tea to end the meal, the service continues. Some clearing can be done during the coffee time, but full clearing will need to wait until the very end.

TIMINGS from experience.

6.30pm start. Delays usually mean 6.45pm.

1st part of service.

7.30pm Eat

8.30pm Tea/Coffee

2nd part of service

9.30pm finish

LAYOUT of ROOM

Make space for dancing conga-style around the room. Buffet lay out should have access all around for speed.

MUSIC

A strong lead from a music group makes a big difference. The choice of songs and hymns needs to be familiar, though there is opportunity to learn some folk melodies very easily. Some of the songs we have used from time to time are inspired by the Psalms used in the actual Passover service liturgy. See the notes in the service itself. Most modern hymn and chorus music books have the words and music and copyright can be paid for through *Christian Copyright Licensing Ltd* 26 Gildredge Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4SA, 0323-417711. Obviously you can choose hymns like, "Glory be to Jesus, who in bitter pain" and "When I survey the wondrous cross", for the time when the chalice is being passed round. But livelier ones at other times. Jewish folk songs are sung at the Passover. Choose your own to give the event that special Hebraic flavour. Examples are, "Hinei Ma Tov Umanaim, Chevet Achim Gam Yahad" and "Hevenu Shalom Aleichem". There are a number of new songs by Messianic Jews, notably, "Great and wonderful, are thy wondrous deeds" and "You shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace" by Stuart Dauermann. Some songs used in churches now make it almost impossible not to dance. Encourage a few people to start a slow grapevine dance around the tables and others will eventually join in, like a long conga, but holding hands.