

## Youth Lesson Plan 2/4/18 Communion

We will continue our lesson on Mary Mother of Jesus. First though I suggest we read the story of communion in New England churches which is the other lesson plan posted today. The first Lord's Supper which we celebrate with communion happened in what is called the "Upper Room." The last mention of Mary in the Bible had her also located in the Upper Room. I think it is important that we realize how important Mary was to the early church.

Last week we discussed Mary and her beautiful song of praise "The Magnificat." We all listened closely to Rev Karen as she referred to the Bible as her source for "directions" when during life "some assembly was required." Up to now we have looked at Mary's story in the Bible before Jesus was born; today we look at Mary's life after Jesus was born.

The very first thing parents of a new baby would do would be to bring a sacrifice to the Temple. Mary and Joseph were very poor so they brought the least expensive gift to the Temple for the Priests to sacrifice which was a pair of doves. The doves were sacrificed on an altar. The religion of the time of Mary and Jesus used altar's for sacrifices to God.

We are going to move way ahead to the Last Supper held in the upper room of a building during Passover in Jerusalem. Jesus is with the 12 disciples and the meal is probably made up of sacrificed Lamb. During Passover priests would sprinkle blood on the altar from sacrificed sheep and then the meat was given back for a meal later that day. Soon Jesus would die.

Mary, after Jesus' crucifixion we find her (Acts 1:14) gathered with the disciples in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. Here is Mary with the men who abandoned her son and when she needed

them for support they abandoned her. However, in the upper room she is supporting and not blaming. She is showing an amazing depth of understanding and compassion. I feel she represents the “mothering side of God.” She is a symbol of strength, comfort and power for the powerless in the world.

I think the understanding of how communion evolved from the Last Supper in the Upper Room to a communion table once a month at Second Congregational Church of Cohasset begins and ends with Mary. We don't use the term “altar” and sacrifices any longer for communication with God. Jesus was the last sacrifice for all our sins. He knew he was going to be betrayed but he still shared a meal with the disciples. Mary, after Jesus died, continued that understanding of compassion for all. We meet each month for a sacred meal at the most basic piece of furniture- a table. Early Congregationalists put the table right in the middle of the sanctuary for all to join in.

We need to understand Mary as a sister and a friend who would be welcome at our table. The old sacrifices at an altar were hidden away from the congregation. We have our communion in plain sight for all to share.