

2015 UF Seder & Campus Ministries--Vol. 9, No. 14--April 3, 2015



As some may know Linda and I assist Dave and Linda Draper with a Tuesday night Bible study at the University of Findlay. They started this student group about twenty years ago, and we've been helping for the last eight. Giving up this ministry is one of our regrets in moving back to PA. Five years ago we held the first campus Seder Service, and it's now a regular part of outreach on campus. Many young adults in our study group have never experienced a Seder Service and so the experience and symbolism is especially meaningful for them. However, for those of us who've done it before it's no less special.



Matt Ginter welcomes students to the Seder Service



UF students gather to participate in the Seder Service

The Seder Service commemorates the flight of the Jews from Egypt 3500 years ago, and tells the story of Passover and God's redemptive grace. For Christians, it also provides the setting for the Lord's Supper and brings a deeper understanding to Jesus' sacrifice as the Lamb of God. If your church has never held a Seder Service, I highly recommend it. When we served a local congregation, it became our annual Maundy Thursday service. I guarantee both your understanding of the Lord's Supper and the gospel story will be transformed. The internet offers many helpful resources.





The head table



A place setting at the head table

This year we again held the service on the stage at Winebrenner Seminary on Tuesday night at 9 p.m. The time seems very appropriate given the biblical account. In fact John Winebrenner felt that the Lord's Supper should always be observed at night and in a sitting posture. This year because my Linda was back in PA and the Drapers were recovering from surgery, preparations fell mostly to Matt Ginter and me. I took care of the food stuffs and Matt handled (literally) the set up. Thankfully some of the Bible study members helped as there's a lot to do getting everything ready. At the head table we used good linens, cutlery, china, etc., the best we could find, but the other tables were set a bit more simply.



We began with singing which was woven throughout the service, followed by the traditional introductions and blessings.





In the service four cups of wine are poured. The third is the cup of redemption or the after supper cup that Jesus instituted for his remembrance (Luke 22:20). Of course the four childhood questions and the symbolic foods factored in the event too. The latter included grapes and other fruit to represent the plenty of the Promised Land, *haroset* to recall the mud used to make Pharaoh's bricks, and an egg to affirm the promise of new life. The service also incorporates numerous speaking parts which allow a lot of individual participation.

One of the highlights of the service is the search for the *afikomen*. This happens right after the meal and traditionally it's the job of the children to find the lost bread that the father of the feast is obliged to purchase. This part of the ceremony represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The *afikomen* then becomes the dessert when it is spread with honey or jam. We concluded with the usual anticipation of Elijah's coming. According Malachi 4:5 the prophet Elijah must come before the Lord. So, a door was opened in anticipation of the prophet, and the fourth cup of wine was poured. After drinking the final cup the service concluded with a shout: "This year in Findlay; next year in the New Jerusalem!"



Will and Beth Miller

Before closing I want to offer a word of thanks to Matt Ginter and Will Miller for their leadership in Campus Ministries at the University of Findlay. I would say the Christian influence and impact at UF is greater now than at anytime in recent memory. For example I had the privilege on January 22 to speak at Revive to 125+ students. Campus Ministries holds this worship service every Thursday night at 9 p.m. In addition there are no less than thirteen Bible study and Christian small groups meeting throughout the week, an active Newman Club, four C. S. Lewis & J. R. R. Tolkein reading and conversation circles, a Gospel choir, The Philosophers' Roundtable, and much more, including alternative spring & fall break opportunities. So be in prayer for Matt and Will. You can also support their ministry by giving to CGGC designated ministry account CM1500.

Here's wishing you all a blessed Eastertide!

ONE Mission together
Ed
Soli Deo Gloria!