How We Incorporated Foot Washing Into Our Wedding Ceremony (With Video)

JANUARY 18, 2016 *by* BLAIR LAMB | *filed under:* WEDDING RECAP

Allison Davis
PHOTOGRAPHY

When planning our wedding (which you can read all about here), the most important thing to me was making sure that it felt like *us*. I wanted our venue, our clothing, our food, our ceremony, our invitations, our signage, our décor, our music–all of it, everything–to feel like us. I was not interested in a "cookie cutter" wedding and [in the kindest possible way] I didn't care in the least whether people thought us weird or strange for our choices. In the end, not only was this the right way for us to plan our wedding, it also resulted in dozens of our guests remarking that they'd never been to a wedding that fit the marrying couple quite so well. Given my intentional planning, those words were taken to be highly complimentary.

Of all of the details and perhaps off-beat things that we planned so that our wedding would feel like us, my favorite was our foot washing ceremony. In fact, my favorite five minutes of our entire wedding day was our foot washing ceremony.

HEY, I'M BLAIR!

Thanks for stopping by!
I'm a small town Texas transplant, wife, and mom to two. I believe in intentional living in lieu of the world's breakneck pace and write honestly with the hope of encouraging other women. Grab a cup of warm and enjoy!
(More about me here.)

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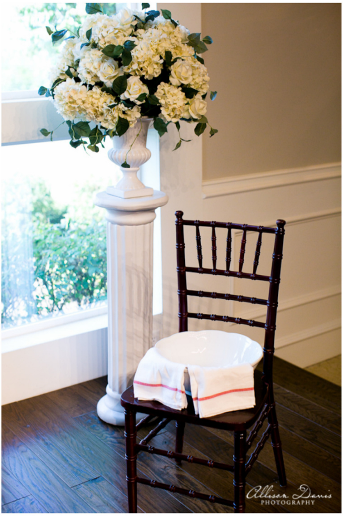
Many couples add a special mini-ceremony to their wedding ceremony–like a sand-pouring ceremony, a unity candle, a rope tying ceremony, planting a tree, or even nailing together a box with love letters and a bottle of wine to open during their first fight. All of those ceremonies are nice, but none were *us*. They were all a little too formal or forced and didn't seem to fit with our vision. We wanted something real, gritty, even a little messy. Enter: the foot washing ceremony.

(I've dreamt of doing a foot washing ceremony at my wedding for years, but have had a lot of girlfriends scoff at the idea because "it's weird." But, of course, Riley loved the idea and thought it suited us perfectly. We prayed throughout our entire engagement for our wedding to exude Jesus–we desperately wanted our guests to experience the way He has wrapped us up in His perfect love and brought us together–and this ceremony was such a lovely reflection of Christ's sacrificial love.)

> John 13:2-5 (NIV)
> The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

When it came down to planning our foot washing, it was surprisingly difficult. I could find almost nothing online about how to gracefully incorporate something that's so gritty (but beautiful!). Since we wrote our entire ceremony, I decided to tack it on to the wedding to-do list and create a plan myself.

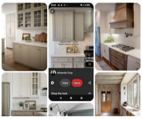
The necessary items for a foot washing ceremony are: something to sit on, something to wash feet in, something to hold water, and something to dry feet off with. In my opinion, it's also necessary to have a song playing or some other "distraction" to hold your guests' attention while you and your husband enter into a tender moment together. (There are also a few logistics involved, like removing shoes and switching places, which take time and require concentration, so a "distraction" buys time, too.)



Here's what we did: First, I bought a big white bowl from Home Goods and a pitcher and towels from IKEA. The chair was provided by our venue. (I have no idea where the pitcher was when our photographer took the above photo! I'm assuming our wedding coordinator was filling it up!)

VERY PIN-TERESTING

Blair Lamb



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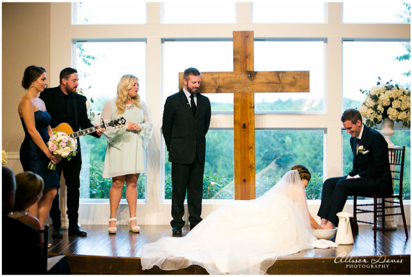


I then asked our friends, Ross and Lauren Tyler, to perform "Love Goes On" by Hillsong during our foot washing. (I *love* that song and the lyrics fit the day perfectly…you can read a snippet of them below or watch the full performance below!) The Tylers have absolutely incredible voices (as you can hear in the video below) and we loved the idea of incorporating live music into our ceremony.

> Ever our heart will seek
> Jesus in everything
> From sky to ocean deep
> Your love goes on
>
> Through every rise and fall
> We are forever Yours
> One thing we know is sure
> Your love goes on and on and on…
>
> "Love Goes On" by Hillsong

Finally, we spoke with our officiant (who is also our good friend), Chris, and asked him to offer an explanation before the foot washing so that our friends and family would be clued in to what we were doing. You can hear his brief-but-clear explanation in the video below! (As he says, this was the very last element of our ceremony before we were pronounced husband and wife, on purpose. That way, the first thing we did as a married couple was humbly serve one another. What a beautiful foundation to build a marriage on!)

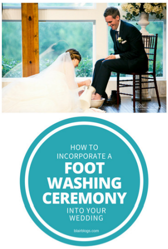
You can watch our foot washing ceremony below or directly on YouTube here.

This video is private

If you're getting married, and a foot washing ceremony fits into your vision for your wedding day and marriage, I truly hope this post has been helpful. I've been there–I know how hard it is to find information on something so unique! Here's to acts of service and gritty, real, authentic, gorgeous marriages that reflect our sweet Jesus.

To view all of our wedding posts, click here. To watch our wedding film, click here.

use the images below for Pinterest



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FOOT WASHING CEREMONY
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Comments

LEAH GATES *says*
January 18, 2016 at 4:36 pm

I absolutely love this! It's so personal and sounds like it was a special moment.

WHITNEY CRAMER *says*
January 25, 2016 at 11:43 am

HOW am I just now finding your blog my friend? (new friend, that is! lol) SO glad I did!! Excited to be following along!

BLAIR LAMB *says*
January 26, 2016 at 11:51 am

You're so sweet, Whitney! I'm so happy we can be blog friends. Love your blog, by the way. Too cute!

xo,
b

SUMMER *says*
June 16, 2016 at 9:46 am

You have no idea how helpful this blog post has been for me. Like you, I can find almost nothing on foot washing ceremonies except pictures. For you to share the logistics and details of how you put the event into your whole ceremony was perfect. It was beautiful as well.

BLAIR LAMB *says*
June 16, 2016 at 2:42 pm

Hi Summer! Congratulations on your engagement. I'm so thankful that this post was helpful to you–I really struggled to plan my own foot washing ceremony and thus wrote this post to help others. (It's always super cool when that works!) Thank you for reading and for your kind words!

RAQUELLE BOWMAN *says*
September 7, 2016 at 9:27 am

I love this idea! Did you still do a unity candle or unity braid along with the feet washing?

BLAIR LAMB *says*
September 7, 2016 at 9:05 pm

We didn't. We just did the foot washing!

SOCALGIRL152 *says*
November 4, 2016 at 8:57 am

I love this idea and I've been thinking about doing this for my own wedding. Did you just keep the chair off to the side during the ceremony?

BLAIR LAMB *says*
November 4, 2016 at 11:21 am

Yes!

CHRISTYWREYNOLDS *says*
March 16, 2017 at 3:09 pm

This is absolutely beautiful. Thank you so very much for sharing this. We are renewing our wedding vows and will be incorporating this into the ceremony.

LINDSAY DEVRIES *says*
April 17, 2017 at 8:23 am

Thanks so so much Blair for sharing this!! I'm getting married to my best friend in just 6 days (!!!!) And not long after we got engaged, Ivan and I decided that we really wanted to do a foot washing in our ceremony. We both serve as volunteers in our church and serving has always been important to us. Early on in wedding planning I found your blog and loved your idea of doing the footwashing last… It's been really helpful to refer to for logistics even and the video was super helpful, and also beautiful!! Thanks again and God bless!!

JENNY *says*
June 25, 2017 at 12:30 pm

Thank you so much for this! We're getting married July 29, 2017. I've been thinking about the logistics of our foot washing ceremony for a while. Very helpful! My biggest concern is that my dress has an inner corset, so my movement is somewhat restricted. But as with everything else we've come across in our relationship, we'll figure it out as we go along. Hope your first year and a half of marriage have continued to be blissful! Blessings to you both

ELIZABETH *says*
December 3, 2017 at 2:15 am

What was your order of ceremony with having the foot washing?

BLAIR LAMB *says*
December 3, 2017 at 3:06 pm

That's all here: https://blairblogs.com/2015/09/the-best-hour-of-my-life-our-wedding-ceremony/ 😀

VICTORIA *says*
December 13, 2017 at 1:29 pm

How long was the foot washing? A total of 5 minutes like your video? Or longer?

ALEXANDRIA BASS *says*
August 11, 2018 at 2:07 pm

Thank you for posting this! It is so helpful and I cannot wait for our own foot washing ceremony. As being two Christians who sometimes have a hard time saying exactly how we feel, we both agreed this is the perfect portrayal of our love for one another.

LAURA HURST *says*
January 25, 2019 at 11:32 am

Thank you so very much for sharing this with us. It is beautiful and very helpful.

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