

# Maundy Thursday

April 2, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

ASCENSION † LUTHERAN † CHURCH  
Littleton, Colorado



## MAUNDY THURSDAY / HOLY THURSDAY

### ALTOGETHER NEW: NEW PASSOVER

#### AS WE GATHER

As the Lord Jesus had His disciples make preparations for the annual Passover meal, little did they know that this would be the very last official observance of the commanded remembrance of the exodus deliverance of the Jewish people from Egyptian bondage in the days of Moses. For in the next three days (the Triduum), the fulfillment of that prophetic event would culminate in the deliverance of all people from the bondage of sin and death by means of the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus, the Christ, the long-awaited Messiah and deliverer. Tonight the “cup of blessing” (1 Corinthians 10:16) of the Passover meal is made to be the means of our participation in the very blood to be shed in atonement on the cross of Good Friday. Tonight this cup becomes the Sacrament of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation given to each individual believer from now on until the Lord returns on the Last Day. Tonight it is of utmost importance for all to hear and to believe in the very real presence of our crucified and risen Lord Jesus not just “spiritually” but “in, with, and under” the bread and wine we share, for the Lord Himself invites us to take and eat His body and to take and drink His blood, shed for us.

## ✠ PREPARATION ✠

### PRELUDE

“Impromptu on ‘Wondrous Love’”

Kevin Keil

### PASTORAL GREETING

### OPENING HYMN

“When You Woke that Thursday Morning”  
(Verses 1-3, 5)

LSB 445

### INVOCATION

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

### CONFESSIONAL ADDRESS

**Pastor:** In this Great and Holy Week, tonight we enter the Holy Triduum, or Three Holy Days, of our Lord’s Passion. We begin where the Lord and His first disciples began, celebrating the fulfillment of the Old Testament Passover with the institution of the Sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It is well that we complete our Lenten discipline this night by examining ourselves, confessing our sins, and receiving forgiveness in Holy Absolution. Therefore, let us implore God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**Pastor:** O almighty God, merciful Father,

**People:** **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

**Pastor:** God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

**People:** **Amen.**

**Pastor:** Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God’s?

**People:** **Yes.**

**Pastor:** Let it be done for you as you believe.

In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

✂ WORD ✂

**First Reading: Exodus 12:1–14**

*(The Passover)*

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.”

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.



## Epistle: 1 Corinthians 11:23–32

*(The Lord's Supper)*

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

## Holy Gospel: Matthew 26:17-30

*(Jesus institutes the Last Supper)*

Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?" He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. And as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." And they were very

sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." Judas, who would betray him, answered, "Is it I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said so."



"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

Luke 22:15, NIV

**Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."**

**Pastor:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:** Praise to You, O Christ.

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

"Not All the Blood of Beasts"

LSB 431

**SERMON**

"The Passover"

Pastor John Larson

Text: Exodus 12-13

**NICENE CREED**

**People:** I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.**

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

**Pastor:** Let us pray for the whole church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord God, on this night we remember how You rescued Your people from slavery in Egypt and brought them to the Promised Land. We are reminded of how You have rescued us from slavery to sin and are bringing us to Your heavenly kingdom. Nourish our faith and lead us to walk in Your ways. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Pastor:** Heavenly Father, You made covenants with Your people throughout the centuries. Yet, in these last days, You have made a new covenant with us through Your Son. Make this covenant known among us and all peoples of the earth. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Pastor:** Lord Jesus, You humbled Yourself and took on the role of a servant when You washed Your disciples' feet. You commanded them to love one another just as You loved them. Lead us to love others as You have first loved us. Stir us up to love and good works. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Pastor:** Holy Lord, as we come to Your Table, forgive our sins through Your body and blood and wrap us in the robe of Your righteousness that covers all our sins. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** hear our prayer.

*(Other Intercessions may be added here)*

**Pastor:** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves, our bodies and souls, and all things; redeem us, O Lord, faithful God; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** Amen.

**Offering** *Offerings will be collected in the back.*



## Sacrament of Communion

### ✠ HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION ✠

*The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.*

## ✠ SACRAMENT ✠

### PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you. *2 Timothy 4:22*  
People: **And also with you.**  
Pastor: Lift up your hearts. *Colossians 3:1*  
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**  
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. *Psalm 136*  
People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

### THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

### LORD’S PRAYER

People: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**



### DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

Hymn “Today Your Mercy Calls Us” *LSB 915*  
Hymn “Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face” *LSB 631*  
*(Verses as time permits)*

### GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

## POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You that we have received Your body and blood in this Sacrament. Through Your life laid down for us, You have given us new life. Strengthen us in faith and in loving service to You and others through Your presence. In Your name we pray.

People: **Amen.**

## STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR and HYMN *John 13:31*

Pastor: Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him" just after Judas had left to betray Him. Jesus washed the disciples' feet, inaugurated a new commandment to love one another, and observing the Passover, instituted a new Meal in the Lord's Supper for the life of the Church. After Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, the time for His death was drawing near.

*During the closing hymn below, "Go to Dark Gethsemane," the altar is stripped as a symbol of the abandonment our Lord endured in the hours that would follow and a reminder of how Jesus was stripped of His clothes and ultimately His life, in payment for our sins. **NO BENEDICTION** concludes this service as an indication that the worshipful reflection continues for three more days.*

## HYMN DURING THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

"Go to Dark Gethsemane"

LSB 436

**PSALM** *Psalms 22:1–10*

Pastor: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from saving Me, from the words of My groaning?

People: **O My God, I cry by day, but You do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.**

Pastor: Yet You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

People: **In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You delivered them.**

Pastor: To You they cried and were rescued; in You they trusted and were not put to shame.

People: **But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.**

Pastor: All who see Me mock Me; they make mouths at Me; they wag their heads;

People: **"He trusts in the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, for He delights in Him!"**

Pastor: Yet You are He who took Me from the womb; You made Me trust You at My mother's breasts.

People: **On You was I cast from My birth, and from My mother's womb You have been My God.**

*The congregation departs from the sanctuary in quiet reflection.*



**The Dismissal: We depart silently**



The name Maundy Thursday comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means commandment. It is taken from Jesus' words to the disciples in John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another." Tonight, we remember the first Passover meal and celebrate the meal that was given to us when Jesus celebrated Passover---on the night when He was betrayed. There is **NO BENEDICTION**, reminding us that Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter are one continuous worship service, focusing on the central events of our salvation. There is an integral unity between Christ offering his Body and Blood in the Sacrament, and the offering of his life on the cross.

### **Serving in Worship**

**OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT  
MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP  
ORGANIST**

The Rev. John R. Larson, Pastor  
Michael Zehnder  
Linda Olsen



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“Before the rooster crows  
twice you yourself will disown  
me three times.” — Mark 14:30

