

MAUNDY THURSDAY
March 28th, 2024 ✚ 7:15 p.m.

Every Sunday in worship the church celebrates the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit gathers us to receive again the gifts of God that come to us through Christ, the saving Word. On several key days at the center of the church year, however, worship takes a particular shape. These central days have come to be known as the Three Days (from the Latin, Triduum), recalling Jesus' own words to his disciples that he would be handed over to death, and that "after three days he will rise again" (Mark 10:34). The Three Days encompass the time from Maundy Thursday evening through the evening of Easter Day. In particular, the services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Vigil of Easter unfold in a single movement as the church each year makes the passage with Christ through death into life.

The Maundy Thursday Liturgy is one of endings and beginnings. What was begun on Ash Wednesday is brought to a close here tonight. What begins tonight does not end until the resurrection of Easter. The theme is love, our Savior's love for us, expressed in the washing of the disciples' feet, in giving himself in bread and wine, in dying upon the cross.

An invitation to confession is given. The focus is on absolution. On Ash Wednesday we began Lent with a major act of confession and ashes but did not receive absolution. That forgiveness comes now "in the name and by the command of our Lord" at the service celebrating Christ's love. The peace is shared after absolution and seals that forgiveness in a loving embrace as if embraced by Christ himself. The lessons of love are read. Then an example of love is given, along with a new command. The new command derives from it: "Love one another."

The prayers are said. The table is made ready. The time of the Lord's Supper arrives, and our Lord is revealed in bread and wine as once he "revealed himself to his disciples." It is a solemn moment, but we cannot linger here. Nor could the Lord. His betrayal was imminent. Before we know it, the markings of betrayal are seen before us. The symbol of Christ in our midst, the altar, is stripped bare. Christ is stripped of his power and glory. Good Friday is inescapable. The powers of darkness work upon him.

In silence we depart without the Benediction. The Triduum continues with the Good Friday Liturgy tomorrow at 7:15 p.m.



LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

** = Those who are able are welcome to stand.*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In remembrance, we gather:

to be with the One who teaches us the meaning of faithfulness.

In remembrance, we worship:

lifting our voices to the One who calls us to love one another.

In remembrance, we feast:

breaking the Bread which makes us whole, drinking the Cup which fills us with grace.

*PRAYER

It was the beginning of hope
on that night long ago,
Liberating God,

as you prepared to lead
your people to freedom.

As they readied themselves,
you fed them

with your unblemished grace,
so all sin, pain, and bitterness
could be set down and left behind
when it was time
to follow you.

It was the beginning of salvation
on that night long ago,
Servant Lord,

as you prepared your disciples
for all the things which were to happen.



You humbled yourself
by washing their feet,
so they could follow you
in service and love
to a world which would reject you
and hang you on a cross.

We tell these stories once again
on this night of remembrance,
Servant's Spirit.

Here is the Bread
which gives us life;
here is the Cup
which quenches our thirst for justice;
here is the towel
with which we wipe the tears
of the broken-hearted;
here is the basin
which cleanses the stains
of the world.

*HYMN

Now We Join in Celebration

ELW 462

*ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Friends in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that keeps us from loving God and each other. This is the struggle to which we were called at baptism.

Within the community of the church, God never wearies of forgiving sin and giving the peace of reconciliation. On this night let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor, and enter the celebration of the great Three Days reconciled with God and with one another.

All may stand, keeping silence for self-examination.



Most merciful God,
we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Almighty God in his mercy has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. Through his Holy Spirit he cleanses us and gives us power to proclaim the mighty deeds of God who called us out of darkness into the splendor of his light. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

On Ash Wednesday, we began this season of repentance with confession, and we came forward to receive the ashes of repentance. You are welcome to come forward now and receive your absolution, the forgiveness which comes from Christ our Lord.

Those in the congregation may come forward to kneel at the baptismal font. The minister, laying both hands on each person's head, addresses each in turn.

***PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

WORD

God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14

Israel remembered its deliverance from slavery in Egypt by celebrating the festival of Passover. This festival featured the Passover lamb, whose blood was used as a sign to protect God's people from the threat of death. The early church described the Lord's Supper using imagery from the Passover, especially in portraying Jesus as the Lamb who delivers God's people from sin and death.

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it... This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the LORD. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; 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 live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A brief silence follows for meditation.



In the bread and cup of the Lord's Supper, we experience intimate fellowship with Christ and with one another, because it involves his body given for us and the new covenant in his blood. Faithful participation in this meal is a living proclamation of Christ's death until he comes in the future.

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, 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.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

A brief silence follows for meditation.

The congregation may remain seated for the Gospel Reading.

The Holy Gospel according to St. John...
Glory to you, O Lord.

The story of the Last Supper in John's Gospel recalls a remarkable event not mentioned elsewhere: Jesus performs the duty of a slave, washing the feet of his disciples and urging them to do the same for one another.

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and

to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Gospel of our Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.



WASHING OF FEET

O Prince of Peace, O Friend of Sinners, we praise you and give you thanks, because you laid aside your power as a garment and took upon yourself the form of a slave.

You became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. You allowed yourself to be born to die in our place. You allowed your own feet to be anointed for death. You allowed a sinner to wash your feet with her tears. For God chose what is low and despised in the world to bring to nothing things that are. Therefore, with the woman who gave you birth, with the woman who anointed you for death, with the woman who worshiped you with her tears, and with all our fellow sinners who have loved and served you from that time until now, we praise you, Lord Jesus.

O Eternal Father, blessed is our brother Jesus, who on that night before Passover, rose from the Supper, laid aside his garments, took a towel, and poured water, and washed his disciples' feet, saying to them: "If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

Come now, mighty Spirit of God, wash us and make us one body in Christ, that, as we are bound together in this act of love, we may no longer be in bondage to the principalities and powers that enslave creation but may know your liberating peace such as the world cannot give. Amen

All who wish to participate in the ritual washing of feet are invited to come forward in turn with shoes removed to be seated in the chair placed in the chancel. The ministers will kneel before each person to wash and dry their feet.



When the foot-washing has ended, the congregation prays the following prayer.

Blessed are you, Lord God. The basin and the towel are signs to us of your Son's servanthood. You have made us partakers of Christ and of one another. As we go forth, give us grace to count others more important than ourselves, to love our enemies, and to make peace. Amen

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Love Consecrates the Humblest Act

ELW 360

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

On this holy night, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy.

By the cross of Christ, mend the brokenness of your church. Where there is division, grant healing. Where there is fracture, grant unity. Where there is indifference, grant passion. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

By the cross of Christ, mend the brokenness of the creation. Put an end to destruction and renew our commitment to the fullness of life you intend for every living thing. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

By the cross of Christ, mend the brokenness of the human family. Bring understanding and a spirit of cooperation to nations and communities in conflict. Dissolve distrust into understanding and transform disregard into profound care for one another. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

By the cross of Christ, mend the brokenness of those who suffer in mind, body, and spirit, especially... . Feed those who hunger, give shelter to those without a home, heal the sick, and grant rest to the dying. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

By the cross of Christ, mend the brokenness of this community. Help us seek not so much to be served, but to serve; not to be loved, but to love; not to be forgiven, but to forgive, for the sake of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered in speech or silence.

By the cross of Christ, mend the brokenness within us. Cast out all fear of separation from you, and join us to the communion of saints, especially those whom we name in our hearts... who celebrate at your eternal banquet table. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into the arms of your tender embrace, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in the one who, on the cross, opened his arms to all: Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Merciful God, it would have been enough for you to give us the fruit of the earth by which we live. But in this meal, by your promise, you also give us yourself. Use what we have gathered here in feeding the hungry world with your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**



*DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; whose suffering and death gave salvation to all. You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.

We do not presume to come to your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. You are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.

***BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you, nourish your faith and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, to eat this bread and to drink this cup is to know that you, O Lord, have died on the cross for the life of your friends. By your power through this Sacrament, help us also to die to self that we may be taken with you into glory. You are the Lord forevermore. **Amen**

The congregation remains standing.

***STRIPPING OF THE CHANCEL**

John 14:15-31



SERVING IN THE LITURGY

PRESIDING MINISTER

Dennis Lauritsen, pastor

ASSISTING MINISTER

John Broussard

SERVICE LEADER

John Broussard

MUSIC MINISTER

David Richards

LECTOR

Tom Myers

READER

Philip Painter

GREETER

Karyn Bute

USHER

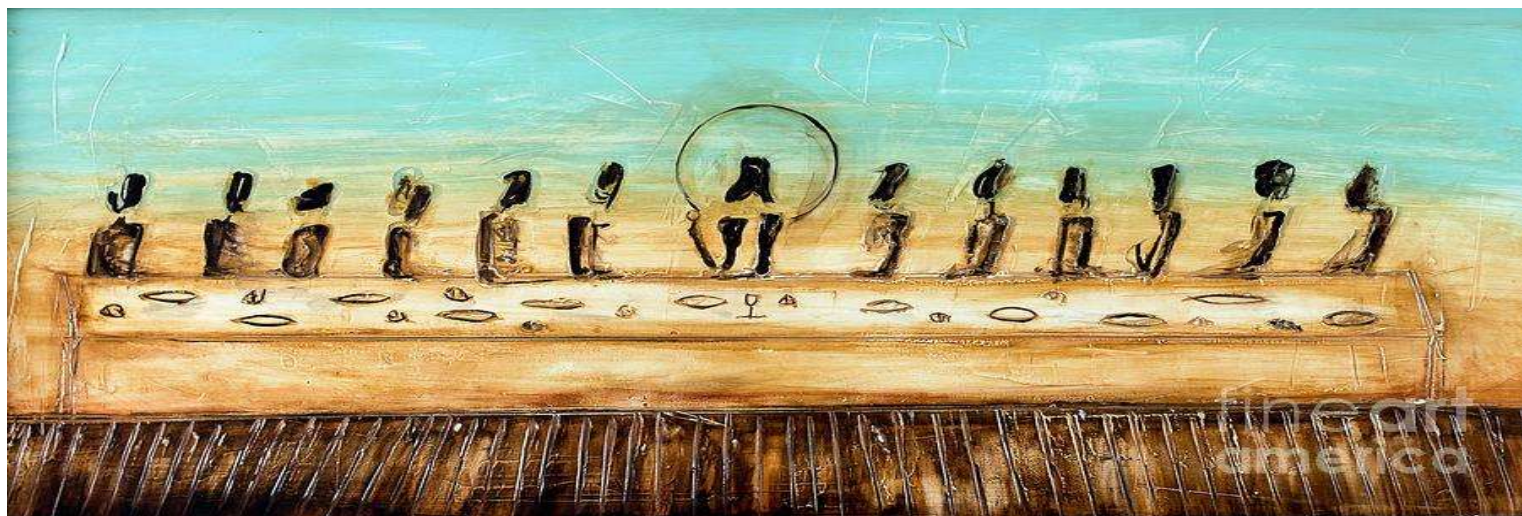
Janet Broussard

DIRTY, BUT NOT DEFINED BY DIRT

When Jesus approaches Peter to wash his feet, Peter's reply is, "You will never wash my feet." Many will feel the same tonight. We struggle to confess that we have dirty feet, that we live in dusty homes and have messy lives. We would like people to see us with our shoes and socks on, neatly wrapped and presented to the world. In private though, we are painfully aware of our shortcomings. We can feel like miserable failures, hopeless cases, lost causes. We are none of the above. We are creatures of earth, living in earthy bodies and inspired with the breath of God. We are dirt, but we are not our dirtiness.

When Jesus knelt at Peter's feet to wash them, it was Peter who was affronted by the seeming impropriety of the situation. But to Jesus, who sees with God's eyes, it was a chance to wash the feet of a loved one—not unlike the feeling you might get touching the feet of an infant. We are children of God and, like any loving parent, God simply wants to give us a bath. Through the eyes of love God looks at us the way we might choose to look at our church, at our lives, at our feet—as things redeemable.

Our feet—stinky with decay, wrinkled with age, ugly from infection, bruised by labor, signs of our march toward death—our feet are not scary to the One who has bound us up into a new body, a body of life, a body we entered into through baptismal waters. God, who is not afraid to draw close to the decaying portions of our world, sees our feet and loves them, and we are given the new commandment to love one another as we are loved.

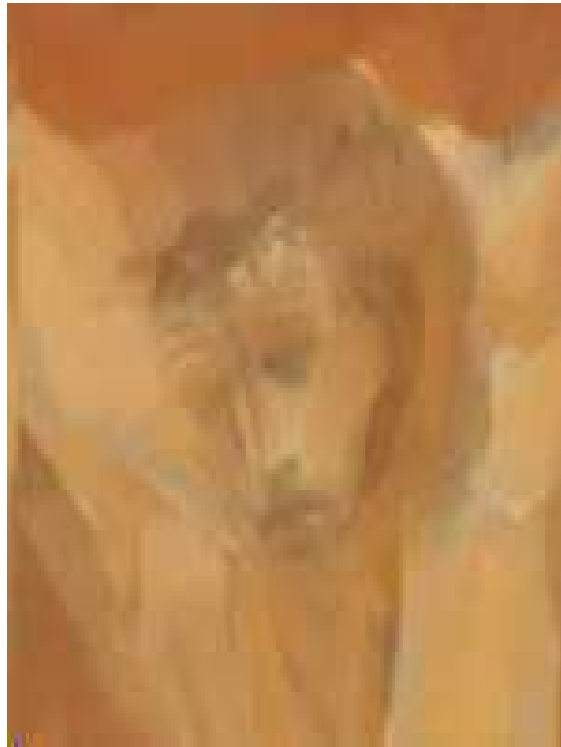


Last Supper by Guaderrama

The Three Days

Good Friday

7:15 p.m. Service of Darkness
The Passion Reading according to St. John
and the Veneration of the Cross



Easter Day

The Resurrection of Our Lord

10:15 a.m. Festival Liturgy of Holy Communion
with Handbells and Choir