

St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church
1615 N. Wauwatosa Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

April 1st, 2021

Maundy Thursday

WORSHIP NOTES FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY

This evening our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection. Today we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal. As Jesus washed his disciples' feet, so we are called to give and receive love in humble service to one another. Formed into a new body in Christ through this holy meal, we are transformed by the mercy we have received and carry it into the world. Departing worship in solemn silence, we anticipate the coming days.

Gathering

Prelude

Stripping of the Altar

*The **Stripping of the altar**, removing all ornaments, linens, and paraments, is an ancient custom done on Maundy Thursday. It is symbolic of the humiliation of Jesus at the hands of the soldiers. As Jesus' life was stripped from Him, so we strip our altar of signs of life to symbolize his purposeful, redemptive suffering and death "for us and for all our salvation."*

We do this action today at the beginning of the service to keep us mindful of Christ Jesus emptying himself for us on the cross throughout the service today.

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.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

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.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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 the 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

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 slaughter, preparation, and consumption of the Passover Lamb, whose blood was used 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.

A reading from the book of Exodus, Chapter 12.

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. (Ps. 116:13)

A reading from Psalm 116.

I love the Lord, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication,

for the Lord has given ear to me whenever I called.

How shall I repay the Lord for all the good things God has done for me?

I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God's people.

Precious in your sight, O Lord, is the death of your servants.

O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord.

I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God's people,

in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

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.

A reading is from 1st Corinthians, Chapter 11.

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

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.

The holy gospel according to John, the 13th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Jim Holmberg

Hymn

Love Consecrates the Humblest Act

Please meditate on the text.

When in the shadow of the cross Christ knelt and washed the feet of his disciples, he gave us a sign of love complete.

(Note: The Creed, historically a festive element, is not used, in keeping with the solemnity of the time)

Prayers of Intercession

United by the servant love of God in Christ, we pray this holy night for the needs of the world.

... Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Hear these and all our prayers, O God, in the name of the one who loves us to the end, Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Amen.

Sharing the Peace of Christ

Hear the teaching of Christ: "A new commandment I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Meal

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

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.

Eucharistic Prayer

We give thanks to God the Father that our Savior, Jesus Christ, before he suffered, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice until he comes again. 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, he took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Therefore, we proclaim our faith as signed and sealed in this sacrament:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Lord, our God, send your Holy Spirit so that this bread and cup may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we and all your saints be united with Christ and remain faithful in hope and love. Gather your whole church, O Lord, into the glory of your kingdom.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**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

Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

Anthem

What Wondrous Love is This? Arr. Linda Lamb
Linda Chadwick, Bell Tree