



Holy Thursday April 2, 2026
St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)
8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254
815-989-2025

April 2, 2026 Holy (Maundy) Thursday

***** *Divine*

Service Setting Four (Lutheran Service Book, p. 203) **Hymn of Invocation 446**

Jesus, Greatest at the Table

Invocation and Versicles (p. 203)

Introit *Psalm 116:1-4; antiphon: v. 5* Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful.

I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy.

Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish.

Then I called on the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!"

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful.

The Kyrie (p. 204)

Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 205)

P O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a re membrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifest in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

(The Gloria is omitted during Holy Week)

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Gradual *Hebrews 9:12a, c, 15a; Psalm 111:9a* [Christ] entered once for all into the holy places, by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.

(The Alleluia is omitted during Holy Week)

Apostles' Creed (p. 207)

Hymn of the Day 445 When You Woke That Thursday Morning

Sermon

Text: Zechariah 13:1-3

Title: "A Cleansing Fountain"

Prayer of the Church

After each petition:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

P ...one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Gathering and Presentation of the Offering

Service of the Sacrament (p. 208)

(Please read the statement below before receive Holy Communion.)

Distribution Hymns

631 Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face

639 Wide Open Stand the Gates

Post-Communion Hymn 617 O Lord, We Praise Thee

Post-Communion Collect (p. 212)

(The service continues on the next page.)

Stripping of the Altar

P After He had instituted the Lord's Supper, less than 24 hours remained in the earthly life of our Lord. Events moved rapidly: prayer in Gethsemane,

betrayal by Judas,

arrest, mock trial, beatings and scourging,

the trudge to Golgotha,

and execution by crucifixion.

As His life was stripped from Him, so we strip our altar of the signs of life to symbolize His purposeful, redemptive suffering and death for us.

Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows Me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness." The events of Golgotha snuffed out the human life of Jesus, the Light of the world. As even creation was darkened when He suffered, so we extinguish our candles and remove them.

The missal stand holds our altar book which guides our worship life together as we sing praises to God. As Jesus suffers, joyous songs are not heard. As these sounds of joy are removed from our lips, so we remove the missal stand.

Jesus' offered body and His shed blood have been given to us in, with, and under the form of bread and wine in this Holy Sacrament. As He was removed from us in the grave, so we remove the elements and vessels of this Sacrament.

Our lectern and pulpit is where our Lord speaks to us through His Word, proclaiming to us the forgiveness of sins that He has won for us. Since our Savior's voice was removed from us in death, so we strip the paraments from our lectern and pulpit.

Our altar, which reminds us of Christ's sacrifice, also serves as a table. It is here where our Lord Jesus serves us as both host and meal at His banquet feast. The coverings and paraments are made of fine linen; materials appropriate for feasting with our King. As our King's body was stripped in crucifixion, so our altar is stripped of its coverings.

At the conclusion of the Stripping of the Altar, all leave the sanctuary in reverent silence.

About tonight's service:

The word "Maundy" comes from the Latin word, *mandatum*, which means "commandment." This refers to Jesus giving His disciples the new command to "Love one another." (John 13:34) We see such an example of love expressed by our Lord humbly washing His disciples' feet and, even more, as He institutes the Holy Communion, giving His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins to His disciples; the forgiveness He would earn by His suffering and death less than twenty-four hours later.

The worship services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday are part of the Triduum ("Three days") and so have a unified

character. Therefore the first service (Holy Thursday) will end with the post-communion collect and the stripping of the altar. We eagerly await the Lord's Benediction (blessing) on Easter Sunday, when we celebrate His rising in glorious triumph over sin, death, and hell proving that the heavenly Father has accepted His sacrifice for our sins.

Receiving Holy Communion at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church The Lord's Supper is celebrated at St. John's in the confession and confidence that, as He says, our Lord Jesus gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins, to strengthen our fight against sin and grow in His likeness, to assure us of our own bodily resurrection on the Last Day, and to increase our unity of love with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, so that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and judgment, and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, are asked to first speak with the pastor before receiving the Sacrament.

For further study: Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Cor 10:16; 11:17-34; 27-30; Acts 2:42; 20:27.

Acknowledgements

Cover painting by Jan van 't Hoff.

<https://www.gospelimages.com/paintings/90/institution-of-the-lords-supper?>

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 12:1-14

12 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ²“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell 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. ⁴And 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. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, ⁶and 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.

⁷“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two door posts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. ¹⁰And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹In 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. ¹²For 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. ¹³The 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.

¹⁴“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.

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵In 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.” ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

²⁷Whoever, 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. ²⁸Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰That is why many of

you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. ³²But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

Holy Gospel: John 13:1-17, 31b-35

13 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them....^{31b} "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' 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. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”