

HOLY THURSDAY



APRIL 2, 2026

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS)

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AS WE GATHER—“FOR MANY MEANS FOR YOU”

We have been reflecting a great deal on the phrase “for us.” Tonight, though, we will hear about the phrase “for many” as Jesus gives His own body and blood for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:26–28). Jesus and the disciples are celebrating the Passover, but Jesus does something new. We hear echoes of how Moses and the elders saw God (Exodus 24:3–11), recognizing that the sacrifices of old will not satisfy (Hebrews 9:11–22). When Jesus says the phrase “for many,” He is clearly pointing the disciples to the fact that His death was not only for them alone but for the sins of the world. Because you are a part of the many, “for us” still holds true.

HYMN

“WHEN YOU WOKE THAT THURSDAY MORNING”

445

✠ CONFESSON AND ABSOLUTION ✠

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P I will go to the altar of God,

C to God my exceeding joy.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

CONFESSONAL ADDRESS

P During this Lenten season, we have heard our Lord’s call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving one another. Since it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, it is proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God’s wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit, He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you.” It is as

if He said, “I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat.”

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and 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.” Again, it is as if He said, “I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink.”

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples’ feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and one Body, even as we are all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with the wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one Body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word but also in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.

C Amen.

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

Silence for reflection on God’s Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **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.**

P God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

C Amen.

P Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C Yes.

P Let it be done for you as you believe.

P 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.

C Amen.

P Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in † peace.

C Amen.

HYMN

“IF YOUR BELOVED SON, O GOD”

568

† SERVICE OF THE WORD †

SALUTATION & COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance 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 CATECHISM LESSON

P What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

C It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

P Where is this written?

C The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul write: 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.”

P What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?

C These words, **“Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,”** show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

P How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

C Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: **“Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.”** These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: **“forgiveness of sins.”**

P Who receives this Sacrament worthily?

C Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training. But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: **“Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.”** But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, for the words **“for you”** require all hearts to believe.

OLD TESTAMENT

EXODUS 24:3-11

³Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the just decrees. And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.” ⁴And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. ⁶And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” ⁸And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.” ⁹Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰and they saw the God of Israel. There was under His feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹And He did not lay His hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

HEBREWS 9:11-22

¹¹When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹²He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. ¹³For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, ¹⁴how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. ¹⁵Therefore He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. ¹⁶For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. ¹⁷For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. ¹⁸Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." ²¹And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. ²²Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

MATTHEW 26:17-30

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

G Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁷Now 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?" ¹⁸He 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.'" ¹⁹And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover. ²⁰When it was evening, He reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹And as they were eating, He said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." ²²And they were

very sorrowful and began to say to Him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?” ²³He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with Me will betray Me. ²⁴The 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.” ²⁵Judas, who would betray Him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.” ²⁶Now 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.” ²⁷And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I 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.” ³⁰And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise to You, O Christ.

NICENE CREED

[back inside cover of hymnal]

HYMN OF THE DAY

“WHAT IS THIS BREAD”

629

SERMON

RITE OF ADMISSION TO THE LORD’S SUPPER

This rite is intended to be used to admit to the Lord’s Supper baptized children who have not yet been confirmed. Candidates for admission to the Lord’s Supper have learned the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer. They have received careful instruction in the Gospel and Sacraments. Confessing their sin and trusting in their Savior, they desire to receive the Lord’s Supper for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of their faith in Christ and their love toward others.

Concerning the worthy reception of the Lord’s Supper, the Small Catechism teaches: “That person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words—‘Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.’ But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, for the words ‘for you’ require all hearts to believe.”

Baptized Christians are admitted to the Sacrament when they have been examined and absolved by their pastor in accordance with the practice outlined in Article Twenty-Five of the Augsburg Confession.

Elders and Pastor examined each candidate for Admission to the Lord’s Supper. We encourage all who partake in the Lord’s Supper to prepare and receive Christ’s Body and Blood for their benefit by reading “Christian Questions with Their Answers” on pages 329-330 in The Lutheran Service Book located in the pew.

LAYNE DRESSLER

AIDEN KOSEK

ADDISYN LIND

BETTY MIKE

BROOKLYN PETERSON

LUCAS SCHAUER

MIKEY SCHAUER

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN

“ON MY HEART IMPRINT YOUR IMAGE”

422



On my heart im - print Your im - age, Bless - ed Je - sus, King of grace,



That life's rich-es, cares, and plea-sures Nev - er may Your work e-raise;



Let the clear in - scrip-tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,



Is my life, my hope's foun - da - tion, And my glo - ry and sal - va - tion!

Text and tune: Public domain

✠ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT ✠

PAGES 160-163

The Sacrament is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that our Lord, as He says, gives not only bread and wine, but His true body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, to repentant, reconciled believers in Christ. Our Lord Jesus 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 (Matt. 26:26-28; 1Cor. 11:23-29; Matt.6:15).

We practice closed communion. Why? (1 Cor. 10:16-17). Because our Lord says those who eat and drink His body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm. If not yet instructed, in doubt, or holding a confession differing from that of the LCMS, you are lovingly asked not to commune at this time. Pastor is happy to make an appointment to discuss adult catechesis or questions you have regarding the Sacrament of the Altar.

Examination Questions: Please prepare by asking yourself — Am I sorry for my sins? Do I believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior from sin? Do I believe that I am receiving the body and blood of Christ along with the bread and wine? Will I try, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to live a more God-pleasing life?

Prayers for “Before communing” and “Thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament” are printed on the front cover of the hymnal.

AGNUS DEI

“LAMB OF GOD”

550



1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, But You have
 2 Your Gift of love they cru - ci - fied, They laughed and
 3 I was so lost, I should have died, But You have



sent Him from Your side To walk up - on this guilt - y
 scorned Him as He died: The hum - ble King they named a
 brought me to Your side To be led by Your staff and



sod, And to be - come the Lamb of God.
 fraud, And sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God.
 rod, And to be called a lamb of God.



Refrain
 O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the ho - ly Lamb of God!



O wash me in His pre-cious blood, My Je-sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD”	634
“GLORY BE TO JESUS”	433
“JESUS COMES TODAY WITH HEALING”	620
“THY BODY, GIVEN FOR ME, O SAVIOR”	619

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

HYMN “O LOVE, HOW DEEP” 544:1-5

✠ STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR ✠

It is the night in which our Savior was betrayed. The communion vessels are reverently removed from the altar, the altar is stripped, and the chancel is cleared. We remove these appointments to symbolize the abuse He received. The candles shine no more as the Light of the World is taken to His death, the books are closed as the Word is silenced for a time, the paraments on the altar are removed as our Lord’s body is laid bare, and the altar is left alone for the sacrifice to be remembered tomorrow.

PSALM 22 (CHANTED BY PASTOR)

*As we prepare for Good Friday, Psalm 22 will be chanted. **Psalm 22 can be found in the front part of the hymnal** if you wish to follow along, though it will be dark. There is no Benediction; the service is brought not so much to a close as to a pause. All leave the church in silence, returning tomorrow as we continue the Triduum (Three Days) worship.*

Acknowledgments

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**TRIDUUM “THREE DAYS” WORSHIP
CONTINUES TOMORROW!**

4/3 GOOD FRIDAY, 7:00 P.M. “HIS DYING BREATH”

4/4 EASTER VIGIL, 7:45 P.M. “FOR US HE ROSE” (AT ST. JOHN, PLATO)

4/5 EASTER SUNDAY

6:30 A.M. EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE “FOR US HE LIVES”

7:30-8:45 A.M. EASTER BREAKFAST

8:15 A.M. EASTER EGG HUNT

**9:00 A.M. FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION SERVICE (PLEASE NOTE
TIME!)**

