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April 17, 2014 – Maundy Thursday

*The New and Better Passover Meal of Meals*

**AS WE GATHER**

As part of our Holy Week worship life, we observe, in part, an ancient custom of the early Christian Church. Beginning with the evening worship on Maundy Thursday and continuing through Holy Saturday's Easter Vigil, these services were considered to be one service and called the Triduum (The Three Days). Even though people go home to rest and carry out their necessary responsibilities, they are encouraged to remember that at least in spirit, they are still "worshiping" and remembering the events of Holy Week. No benediction concludes this service as an indication that the service continues for two more days. 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.

The conclusion of tonight's service is the stripping of the altar. This practice symbolizes the way our Lord was stripped of all his rightful glory and instead wore our sins upon the cross. The stripped altar and chancel area then set the stage for the crucifixion, which we remember tomorrow in our Good Friday service.

**GREETING**

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

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Glory to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, our salvation, life, and resurrection. The Lord is near to those who call on Him.

**People: Oh, come, let us worship Him.**

**OPENING HYMN** "*When You Woke That Thursday Morning*" #445

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (please stand)

Pastor: God's people, the Israelites, celebrated Passover for the first time on this night when the angel of death punished the Egyptians and Pharaoh by killing the firstborn in every household, because Pharaoh was guilty of placing himself above God. After this, the Israelites were set free. On this night when Jesus was betrayed, He celebrated this same Passover meal with His disciples. It was on this night, that our Lord would begin His march to the cross to die for the sins of the world. We are the sinners for whom Jesus died, as Romans 6:23 reminds us:

**People: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Heavenly Father, we confess that our sins make us worthy of death. There are times when we place our desires above You, O Lord. There are times when we mistreat or betray others and times when we fail to step in when others are being betrayed or mistreated. Have mercy on us and forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ.**

Pastor: I now ask you before God, who searches the heart:

1. Do you sincerely confess that you have sinned against God and deserved His wrath and punishment?

Then declare so by saying: **I do confess.**

Verily you should confess; for Holy Scripture declares: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

(1 John 1:8)

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

2. Do you heartily repent of all your sins committed in thought, word, and deed?

Then declare so by saying: **I do repent.**

Verily, you should repent, as did the penitent sinners: King David, who prayed for a contrite heart; Peter, who wept bitterly; the sinful woman; the prodigal son; and others.

3. Do you sincerely believe that God, by grace, for Jesus' sake, will forgive you all your sins?

Then declare so by saying: **I do believe.**

Verily, you should so believe. For Holy Scripture declares: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

4. Do you promise that with the aid of the Holy Ghost you will henceforth amend your sinful life?

Then declare so by saying: **I do promise.**

Verily, you should so promise, for Christ, the Lord says: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

5. Finally, do you believe that through me, a called servant of God, you will receive the forgiveness of all your sins?

Then declare so by saying: **I do believe.**

As you believe, even so may it be unto you.

Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and 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 Ghost. (John 20:19-23)

**People: Amen.**



Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

+ **WORD** +

### FIRST READING

**Exodus 12:1-7**

P: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

### SECOND READING

**Jeremiah 31:31-34 (NIV)**

*(God promises to make a new covenant with His people.)*

P: "The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord.

**C: "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord.**

P: "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

P: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL

**Luke 22:7-20**

*(In the simple meal of the Lord's Supper, you pass under the Passover Lamb to life.)*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

*(The Gospel is read.)*

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

**NICENE CREED** *(as found in the back cover of the hymnal)*

**SERMON HYMN** *Draw Near and take the Body of the Lord* #637

## SERMON

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *"The Old Rugged Cross"* Insert

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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

**People: What shall we render to You for all Your benefits toward us? As we lift up the cup of salvation, we offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call upon Your name,**

Pastor: O Lord, in the midst of the solemnities of this Holy Week, we rejoice and give thanks for the blessed sacrament of salvation. In Your mercy, You give us the very body and blood of Your only-begotten Son, in this bread and wine, to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins, for life and salvation.

**People: You have graciously invited us to be guests at Your table. As did the children of Israel in the days of Moses, we eat and drink and we see God. We come before You, trusting in Your mercy and pleading for Your grace, that the blood of Jesus Christ may cleanse and wash us of all our offenses.**

Pastor: Strengthen Your Church that, as we are nourished by the true manna from heaven, we may be found faithful in doctrine and practice.

**People: Give to our nation and all the nations of the world peace and pious leaders who govern with wisdom and honor.**

Pastor: Grant, O Lord, Your mercy, blessing, and peace to those in the distress of sin and guilt, to those in the pains of illness, to those in the shame of conscience, the ache of sorrow, the loneliness of separation, and the fear and sting of death.

**People: Send Your holy angels to minister to us in our times of need and helplessness. Be present for the sick and the homebound, especially those who depend on the care of others.**

Pastor: Now, at Your holy table, grant us the promised blessing of forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation for both body and soul. We long for the day when we shall drink with You in Your Kingdom.

**People: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## OFFERING

+ SACRAMENT +

## SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

*(p. 194-199 in front of hymnal)*

**DISTRIBUTION HYMNS #’s 435, 609, 440, 617**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.

**People: His mercy endures forever.**

Pastor: Let us pray...

**All: Almighty God, who has given Your only Son to be for us both a sacrifice for sin and an example of godly life: Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive His enormous gift, and follow the blessed steps of His most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.**

## **THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR** *(please be seated)*

After the Last Supper, less than 24 hours remained in the earthly life of our Lord.

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. As Jewish women tended Jesus on the cross, so our Altar Guild removes the paraments and worship items.

[A portion of *Psalm 22* is chanted as *flowers are removed*]

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 dark when He suffered, so we extinguish our candles and remove them.

[A portion of *Psalm 22* is chanted as *candles are extinguished and removed*]

Our offerings represent one way of serving God and others. They reflect God’s greatest offering to the world and to us in sending His Son, Jesus, in human form. As the offered body of Jesus was removed from sight in burial, so we remove our offerings.

[A portion of *Psalm 22* is chanted as *offerings are removed*]

The missal stand holds our worship books that guide 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, we remove the missal stand.

[A portion of *Psalm 22* is chanted as *missal stands and service books are removed*]

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 Mystery. As He was removed from us in the grave, so we removed the elements and vessels of this Sacrament.

[A portion of *Psalm 22* is chanted as *communion vessels removed*]

Our altar is in the form of 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 and brocade; materials appropriate for feasting with our King. As our King’s body was stripped in crucifixion, so our altar is stripped of its coverings.

[A portion of *Psalm 22* is chanted as *altar clothes and paraments are removed*]

***In silence the minister and congregation leave their places***

***There is no Benediction this evening, showing the continuity from Maundy Thursday until Easter sunrise. The uncomfortable and incomplete feeling that you have by leaving without a Benediction symbolizes the feeling of the unknown tomorrow felt by the disciples of Jesus as they left the upper room.***

