

Zion Lutheran Church ~ Maundy Thursday Worship ~ April 2, 2026

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Congregation is in Bold

***NOTE: The bread and wine will be brought to your tables
at the appropriate time and we will all take
the elements together as directed by the pastor.***

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

L: This evening our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the Three Day Vigil of Jesus' death and resurrection.

As we remember Christ's last meal with His disciples, our central focus is His commandment is to live out the promise embodied in this meal – to remember Him.

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 to carry it into the world.

Tonight we watch as the disciples sit around the table with Jesus at His Last Supper before voluntarily going to the cross to save us. As they move from pride and overconfidence to sorrow and humility, they are blessed by Jesus own prayers for them... and for us.

We begin with our call to worship...

MAUNDY THURSDAY: CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: We are Jesus' disciples, following him even as he moves toward the cross.

C: Even as he wraps a towel around his waist.

Even as he kneels to wash the filth from the feet of his friends.

L: We are Jesus' disciples, longing to be faithful even as the night grows dark.

C: Even as betrayers loom. Even as the powers that oppose the way of Christ press in around us.

L: We are Jesus' disciples, struggling to love others even as Jesus loved us.

C: We are Jesus' disciples, gathered here to worship God: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. Amen.

HYMN

"Go to Dark Gethsemane"

LBW 109

1 Go to dark Gethsemane,
all who feel the tempter's pow'r;
your Redeemer's conflict see.
Watch with him one bitter hour;
turn not from his griefs away;
learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

3 Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb;
there, adoring at his feet,
mark that miracle of time,
God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear him cry;
learn from Jesus Christ to die.

2 Follow to the judgment hall,
view the Lord of life arraigned;
oh, the wormwood and the gall!
Oh, the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss;
learn from him to bear the cross.

4 Early hasten to the tomb,
where they laid his breathless clay;
all is solitude and gloom.
Who has taken him away?
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes.
Savior, teach us so to rise.

PRAYER AND CONFESSION:

L: Let us pray... Gracious God, as those who strive to follow Jesus in our living and to trust your power in our dying, we gather to reflect upon the life that ended on a cross.

We recognize in ourselves the strengths and weaknesses of Jesus' disciples: although they loved him, they disappointed and failed him.

And yet, gathering with these imperfect friends at this last meal, Jesus washed their feet in service, and then extended the bread and cup to each. Jesus called them to love one another, and invited them to share in his very life and in his acceptance of the road ahead.

C: We are humbled, honored and inspired by the deep love Christ extended to the world, and we take seriously the calling to be the body of Christ today.

Forgive us when we disappoint and fail you, and guide us back to a place of trust

and faithful living. Grant us the vision to see the world as you see it, with love and compassion for each creature and all of your creation.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS: *(based on John 12:47; 13:1)*

L: Jesus said: *"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world"*

and "having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end"

The good news therefore is this: In Jesus Christ, you are loved and you are forgiven.

C: Thanks be to God!

Dramatization

Dialog Part 1 – Disciples arrive for the Lord’s Supper:

Gospel reading: John 13: 1-11

¹ It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Dialog Part 2 – Peter Protest - Jesus washes the Disciples Feet

HYMN (Sung during foot washing) **“Where Charity and Love Prevail”** LBW 126

PRAYER FOLLOWING FOOTWASHING:

L: Let us pray... Merciful Savior,

C: We have traveled this long, dusty Lenten journey. Our feet are tired, dirty, aching, and calloused. You have shown us Your love by becoming a humble servant.

L: Humble us when we try to travel without You.

As Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another.

L: Humble us when we believe some work is below us.

As Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another.

L: Humble us when we are too proud to accept help, or care, or love.

As Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another.

L: Humble us when we do not fully receive the gift of Your amazing and bountiful grace.

As Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another. Amen.

Dialog Part 3 - The Example Given:

Narrator: After all had been washed... the room is quiet... heavy with a shocked, uncomfortable silence. The disciples avoid eye contact, staring at their own hands and the table before them. As Jesus comes to the table, the silent tension is replaced by a deep stinging humility.

Dialog Part 4 – Disciples Response

NARRATOR:

Jesus set an example for the disciples on this night of by washing their feet, an act of humble service... to understand that strength and growth in God's kingdom come by lowly service to one another.

Dialog Part 5 - Jesus Foretells His Betrayal

Gospel Reading John 13: 18-30

¹⁸ "I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: 'He who shared my bread has turned^[a] against me.'^[b]

¹⁹ "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am. ²⁰ Very truly I tell you, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

²¹ After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me."

²² His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. ²³ One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. ²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means."

²⁵ Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?"

²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

(Serving Students come forward to serve the bread)

Dialog Part 6 – The Lord’s Supper

The disciples fall into a reverent hush as the first break of the bread echoes through the room—the sound of a new covenant beginning.

NARRATOR: In the quiet of the room, as the disciples are still humbled by the foot washing... Jesus takes the loaf of bread... not in a traditional pattern of the past but with a new solemn dignity...

Word of Institution

(Confirmation Students take the bread to the tables and come back)

Distribution

P: And now we give you thanks for when his hour had come, in his great love he gave this supper to his disciples, that we might proclaim his death, and feast with him in his kingdom.

(The bread will be distributed – Pass the bread at your table and please wait.)

P: 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.

(The bread is taken all together with the Words...)

Body of Christ – given for you.

(Student will distribute the wine – Pass the trays to each table.)

(Congregation will please wait for the words.)

P: 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.

(The cup is taken all together with the Words...)

Blood of Christ – shed for you.

P: For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes again. **Amen.**

While the song is sung – students will pick up the baskets, trays and cups.

HYMN *“What Wonderous Love is This ”* LBW 385 vs. 1 & 2

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

L: Let us Pray... Lord Jesus, in a wonderful sacrament you strengthen us with the saving power of your suffering, death, and resurrection. May this sacrament of your body and blood so work in us that the fruits of your redemption will show forth in the way we live, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C:**

Amen

NARRATOR: The cup returns to the table with a soft thud. The ritual is complete, but the air is charged. Jesus looks at them—truly looks at them—with a love that is both devastating and beautiful.

Dialog

NARRATOR: *The silence that follows is deafening. The disciples’ hearts, which had been swelling with the mystery of the bread and wine, suddenly seize with a cold, sharp terror.*

Gospel Reading: John READER:

²⁷ As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.” ²⁸ But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹ Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor. ³⁰ As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

Bag of silver is loudly emptied on the table.

Dialog Part 6 - Prediction of Denial

John 13: 31b-35:

³¹ When he was gone, Jesus said... “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ 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.’

³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

³⁶ Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." ³⁷ Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." ³⁸ Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!

The gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you oh God.

Dialog Part 7 – Promise of an Advocate

The remnants of the Passover meal sit on the table

Dialog Part 8 – Jesus prays for the Disciples and you

L: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. I have finished the work you gave me to do here on earth. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. I am not praying for the world, but for them, for they are yours.

Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe. Now I am coming to you, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

Silence

OFFERING: L: All that we have is a gift from God; Let us return to God the offerings of our life and the gifts of the earth... As we sing...

OFFERTORY HYMN: "Will You Let Me Be Your Servant" ELW 659 vs 1-4

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

L: God of glory, receive these gifts and the offering of our lives. As Jesus was lifted up from the earth, draw us to your heart in the midst of this world, that all creation may be

brought from bondage to freedom, from darkness to light, and from death to life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C: Amen.**

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

L: Let us remember Christ's promise of forgiveness of sins and new life as we pray

Time of Silence

L: God of our lives, Six weeks ago we gathered to begin our Lenten journey. We reflected on our need for healing and restoration. We reflected on the testimony of those who knew you, our mortality, our life after death, our need for each other, on our need for you.

C: Lord, Help us remember your teachings

L: Since that day of ashes, we have journeyed day by day to discover how out of our control life really is, to realize how entertainment and self-serving attitudes have become our idols, how our focus should be on you and to understand our need for you as death can happen at any moment.

C: Lord, Help us remember your promises

L: It has not always been an easy journey. You have created us to be in community with each other, and we have come to understand this is where we see the face of Jesus in others good deeds and caring compassion. You have learned, no matter what our status is or who we are, we too are the face of Jesus to others.

C: Lord, Help us remember your gifts are to be shared

L: Thank you for this sacred community of First English and Zion Lutheran you have partnered together, cast in your image, shaped by your love. Help us, as we follow Jesus together, to broaden our concept of community, to include not only those we know and love, but also strangers both here and in far places.

C: Lord, Help us remember you're your command to love one another

L: Lord, may we live our lives with courage of profound obedience, radical humility, and unconditional love, to be a part of your kingdom, and lead others to it. So hear us now as we pray for the coming of that kingdom, in the words Jesus taught us long ago.

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.

THE SENDING:

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

P: Go now and remember the last supper Jesus shared with his disciples and friends and look forward to the time we gather once more in this meal.

Go into the world and face the darkness knowing Christ died for you... letting all people know the love of Christ... by your love for one another.

May the blessing of the God who calls the people out of Egypt call us out from our comfort and our safety to embrace a journey of challenge and risk...

May the blessing of the Son who kneels and washes our feet call us out from our comfort and our safety to embrace and serve those we meet on the journey...

May the blessing of the Spirit who weaves dreams of a new community call us out from our comfort and our safety to provide welcome and hospitality to strangers as well as friends. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL:

L: The hour has come for the Son of man to be handed over to the power of sinful men. Christ was obedient unto death.

At this time, let us follow the cross... to remember how the people followed him through the streets of Jerusalem... then stood around... mocking... laughing... jeering Him... as he suffered on the cross... and died.

Pastor goes to the pulpit... then...

The cross is carried next to the altar... and placed...

Jesus – the disciples and confirmation students will follow first and gather by the steps - then congregation... will follow in silence...

Stripping of the Altar

The reading of Psalm 22 during the stripping of the Altar...

¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.
³Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.
⁴In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.
⁵To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.
⁶But I am a worm, and not human;
scorned by others, and despised by the people.
⁷All who see me mock at me;
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;
⁸"Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver —
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.
²⁸For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.
²⁹To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.
³⁰Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the LORD,
³¹and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

(ALL Leave in silence.)

Continue to hear the story of Christ amazing love for you!

Good Friday Service will be at First English Lutheran Church at 7 pm

April 5 Easter

Sunrise Serve at FELC – 7 am

Easter Breakfast at FELC – 8 am

Easter Service at FELC – 9 am

Easter Breakfast at Zion – 9 am

Easter Service at Zion – 10:30 am