

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Maundy Thursday
April 2, 2026

GATHERING

Call to Worship

P: Followers of Jesus, our lives are filled with stress and distress, disquiet and fear.
In the unrest and the fear, we gather to worship God who delivers us.

Like the disciples gathered with Jesus, we feel the turmoil of rumors and conspiracies, the grasping for power and security that threatens the lives and livelihoods of our neighbors.
In the suffering and the tumult, we gather to call on God who delivers us.

Facing an unknown future, the disciples gathered as we do today, to be surprised by Love, to share a meal, to remember their story, to receive a new story and a new meal.
In the uncertainty of these days, we gather to share the story of God who delivers us.

Followers of Jesus, come. Come to the meal and be fed. Come to the table and be strengthened for the journey.

We gather together to remember the story of God's deliverance, that we may go from this place to heal the hurting, to tend the suffering, to love one another as Jesus loves us.

Prayer of Confession

A: Holy Deliverer,
Tonight, we have reached the all-too-familiar story of the eve before Jesus' execution. While there are times when we relate very well to Jesus in this story, we forget that we have been Judas, Peter, and the disciples. We have allowed ourselves to become part of someone's story of pain. Our words have pierced another's hearts. We have betrayed our neighbor instead of filling this world and another's soul with love. Instead of living with the heaviness of guilt, holy God, allow us to create peace around us and within us. Invite us to share our repentance and to reconcile whenever possible. May we live into the mandate to love one another as you love us.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

P: Through the redeeming love of Christ, God has poured grace upon us. Your sins are forgiven. May the mercy of God transform us into bearers of love in a wounded world.

Amen.

Entrance Song: Healer of Our Every Ill, ELW # 612

Greeting

P: 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

P: Let us pray. Gracious God,

**All: 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.**

**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.**

WORD

First Reading: Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14

L: A reading from Exodus.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² “This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ¹¹ 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. ¹² I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human to animal, and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. ¹³ 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.

¹⁴ “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 116:1-2, 12-19

¹ I love the Lord, who has ^l heard my voice,
and listened to my ^l supplication,

² **for the Lord has given ^l ear to me
whenever ^l er I called.**

¹² How shall I re- ^l pay the Lord
for all the good things God has ^l done for me?

¹³ **I will lift the cup ^l of salvation
and call on the name ^l of the Lord.**

¹⁴ I will fulfill my vows ^l to the Lord
in the presence of ^l all God’s people.

¹⁵ **Precious in your ^l sight, O Lord,
is the death ^l of your servants.**

¹⁶ O Lord, truly I ^l am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me ^l from my bonds.

¹⁷ **I will offer you the sacrifice ^l of thanksgiving
and call upon the name ^l of the Lord.**

¹⁸ I will fulfill my vows ^l to the Lord
in the presence of ^l all God’s people,

¹⁹ **in the courts of ^l the Lord’s house,
in the midst of you, ^l O Jerusalem.**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

L: A reading from 1st Corinthians.

²³ 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, ²⁴ 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.” ²⁵ 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.” ²⁶ 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 Acclamation

All: Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

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

P: The holy Gospel, according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ 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. ² The devil had already decided that Judas son of Simon Iscariot would betray Jesus. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ 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. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” ⁷ Jesus answered, “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” ⁸ Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I 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, “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.” ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, slaves are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one

who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

^{31b} “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.”

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Song of the Day: Lamb of God, ELW # 336

Prayers of Intercession

L: On this night when Jesus gave us a new commandment to love one another, let us bring our prayers before the One whose love knows no bounds.

A brief silence.

Gracious host, you knelt to wash your disciples’ feet. Cleanse us from pride and self-centeredness, and teach us to love one another as you have loved us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creator God, the earth is yours and everything in it. Awaken us to care for all you have made and conserve the rich diversity of your good creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the nations, guide the world’s leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Where they wield power unjustly, confront them. Where they are indifferent to suffering, awaken their conscience. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Compassionate One, embrace all who are lonely or in captivity, comfort the grieving, and relieve those in pain. Draw near to all who suffer. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Blessed redeemer, we give you thanks for this community of faith, and for all who gather around your table of grace. Unite us in love for you and for one another. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, we praise you for the great cloud of witnesses who now rest from their labors. At the last, gather us with them at your heavenly banquet. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, confident that you will strengthen us by your Spirit to love one another as Christ has loved us. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Peace

P: May the peace of Christ enfold you. Let us share His peace with one another.

MEAL

Offering

Offering Prayer

A: Generous God, you fill your hungry creatures with the blessings of creation. Fill us now as we hunger for your presence. Take and use what we offer here, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

This concise eucharistic prayer echoes a Jewish table blessing.

Blessed are you, O living God, sovereign of time and space.

You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine.

Your word leads us across the waters to freedom,

passing over with us from death to life.

Blessed be God forever!

Blessed be God forever!

Blessed are you, O living God, for your glory revealed in Jesus Christ.

He is the Lamb, whose blood saves us from sin.

He is your Servant, who washes our feet with mercy.

He is himself our Food, the bread and cup of salvation.

Blessed be God forever!

Blessed be God forever!

On the night in which he was betrayed, he 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.

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.

Blessed be God forever!

Blessed be God forever!

Blessed are you, O living God, for your Spirit of love.
Feed us at this table with the body and blood of your Son.
Make us servants of one another and of everyone in need.
Bring us with all your people to the joy of the resurrection.

Blessed be God forever!

Blessed be God forever!

Amen, Amen.

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.**

P: Come and receive what you also are: the body and blood of our Lord Jesus, given for the life of the world. You are invited to receive bread from the loaf from the person on your left and, in turn, offer a piece of the loaf to the person on your right, saying, "The body of Christ, given for you." Then

receive the wine from the person on your left, dip your bread into it and eat it, then pass the cup to the person on your right, saying, “The blood of Christ shed for you.”

Holy Communion

Closing Song: Go To Dark Gethsemane ELW # 347

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

C: Amen.

A: Let us pray. Lord Jesus, in this meal you have strengthened us with your saving power. Remind us that we are loved beyond measure, so that we may have the courage to carry your life with us to all we meet. In Jesus’ name,

Amen.

Stripping of the Altar – *Psalm 22 is sung by a soloist.*

The assembly sits or kneels. The sacramental elements and vessels, linens, paraments, banners, and books are removed from the worship space.

All depart in silence.

Liturgy elements included from Discipleship Ministries, September 2025. Other elements included from Sundays and Seasons.

