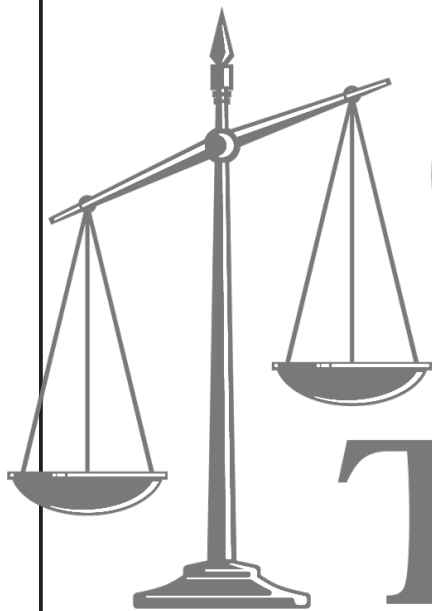



# Holy Thursday



# GOD ON TRIAL



Respite

 Star of  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

## Worship Service

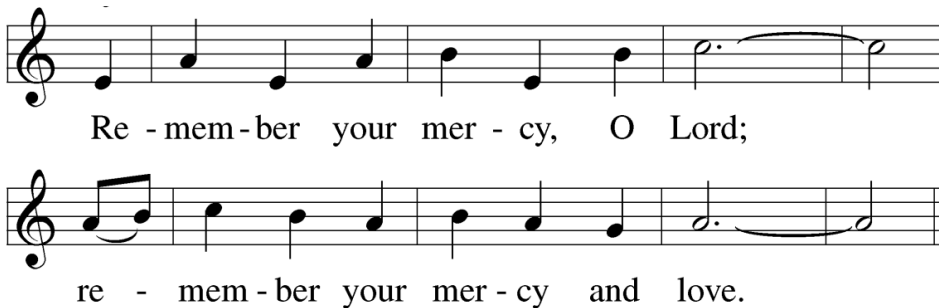
Thursday, March 28, 2024 7:00 p.m.

### MAUNDY THURSDAY



**Theme of the day:** Christ shows us the full extent of God's love for us. The Church calls this day *Maundy* because of Jesus' "new" command in the Gospel lesson that his followers love one another (it is the *dies mandate*). Christ shows the full extent of his love in service and in sacrifice. He loves us more than life and feeds us his body and blood to prove it. Reconciled to God, we then follow his command to love one another.

Minister: In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
Congregation: Amen.



M: I lift up my eyes to the mountains.

C: **Where does my help come from?**

M: My help comes from the LORD,

C: **the Maker of heaven and earth.**

♪ **Remember your mercy, O Lord;  
Remember your mercy and love.**

M: He will not let your foot stumble.

C: **He who watches over you will not slumber.**

M: Yes, he who watches over Israel will not slumber.

C: **He will not sleep.**

♪ **Remember your mercy, O Lord;  
Remember your mercy and love.**

M: The LORD watches over you.

C: **The LORD is your shade at your right hand.**

M: The sun will not strike you by day,

C: **nor the moon by night.**

**♪ Remember your mercy, O Lord;  
Remember your mercy and love.**

M: The LORD will watch to keep you from all harm.

**C: He will watch over your life.**

M: The LORD will watch over your going and your coming

**C: from now to eternity. (Psalm 121)**

**♪ Remember your mercy, O Lord;  
Remember your mercy and love.**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

M: God has invited us into his presence to worship him with humble and repentant hearts. Therefore, let us confess our sins and ask him for forgiveness.

Turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate;  
He is patient and abounding in love and faithfulness.

**C: LORD, do not rebuke me in anger.**

**Do not discipline me in wrath.**

**There is no health in my flesh because of your rage.**

**There is no wellness in my bones because of my sin,  
because my guilt has gone over my head.**

**Like a heavy burden, it is too heavy for me.**

M: Turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate;  
He is patient and abounding in love and faithfulness.

**C: I am drooping. I am completely bent over.**

**All day long I go around mourning.**

**I have become numb. I am totally crushed.**

**I groan loudly because of my anxious thoughts.**

**Lord, all my needs lie before you.**

**My sighs are not hidden from you.**

M: Turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate;  
He is patient and abounding in love and faithfulness.

**C: So I declare my guilt,  
and I am troubled by my sin.**

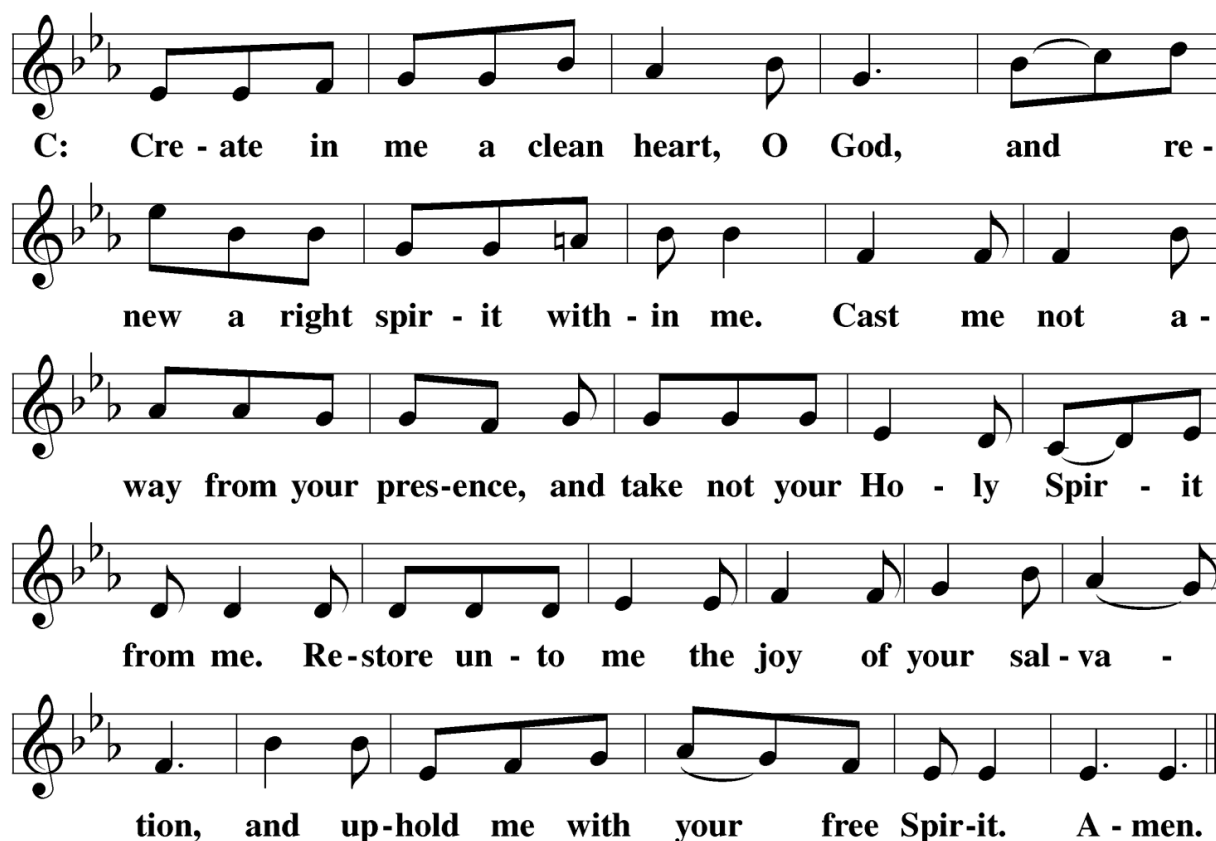
**Do not forsake me, O LORD.**

**My God, do not be far from me.**

**Hurry to help me, O LORD, my salvation. (Psalm 38)**

M: Turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate;  
He is patient and abounding in love and faithfulness.

*Silence to reflect on the Word and to examine yourself.*



C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from your pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of your sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it. A - men.

M: Our holy and gracious Father in his infinite love has made us his own. Even when we were still enslaved by wickedness and death, he, in his mercy, sent his only and eternal Son, Jesus Christ, to share in our humanity, to live and to die as one of us, and in this way reconciled us with God, the Father of all. Through him, God has freed us from all unrighteousness, and has made us worthy of his presence. Through him, God has turned us from wrongs to truth, from sin to righteousness, and from death to life. In him we have forgiveness of all of our sins.

**C: Amen.**

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord!

**HYMN: # 654 (vv. 5,6), “Jesus Sinners Does Receive”**

♪ Oh, how blest it is to know, were as scarlet my transgression,  
it shall be as white as snow by your blood and bitter passion,  
for these words I do believe: Jesus sinners does receive.

Now my conscience is at peace, from the law I stand acquitted.  
Christ has purchased my release and my ev'ry sin remitted.  
Naught remains my soul to grieve: Jesus sinners does receive.

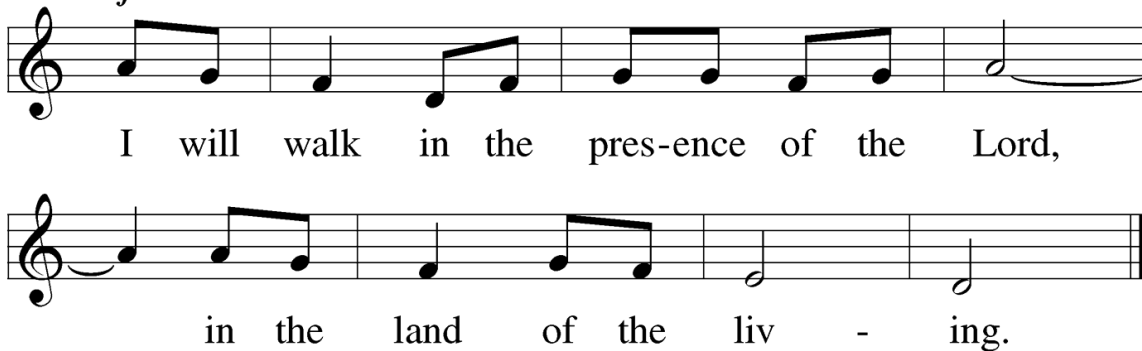
## PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, you give us your true body and blood as a remembrance of your suffering and death on a cross. Grant us so firmly to believe your words and promise that we may always partake of this sacrament to our eternal good; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

## PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 116

### *Refrain*



### *Psalm tone*



I love the LORD, for he heard my voice;\*  
he heard my cry for mercy.

Because he turned his ear to me,\*  
I will call on him as long as I live.

The LORD is gracious and righteous;\*  
when I was in great need, he saved me.

### *Refrain*

For you, O LORD, have delivered my soul from death,\*  
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

How can I repay the LORD\*  
for all his goodness to me?

I will lift up the cup of salvation\*  
and call on the name of the LORD.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son\*  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

*Refrain*

#### FIRST LESSON: Exodus 12:21-30

<sup>21</sup>Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and take lambs for yourselves according to your family size, and slaughter the Passover lamb. <sup>22</sup>You shall take a bundle of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and paint the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you are to go out of the door of your house until morning. <sup>23</sup>When the LORD passes through to strike Egypt and sees the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over that door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you.

<sup>24</sup>“You shall observe these instructions as a perpetual regulation for you and your descendants. <sup>25</sup>When you enter the land that the LORD will give you just as he said he would, you shall observe this ceremony. <sup>26</sup>So when your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to you?’ <sup>27</sup>you will say, ‘It is the sacrifice of the Passover to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. When he struck the Egyptians, he spared our houses.’ ”

The people bowed down and worshipped. <sup>28</sup>The Israelites went and did all this. They did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.

<sup>29</sup>At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on his throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner who was in the dungeon, even all the firstborn of the livestock. <sup>30</sup>During the night Pharaoh got up—he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians—and there was a loud outcry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not someone dead.

**M:** Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the author of our faith and the one who brings it to its goal. In view of the joy set before him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. (*Hebrews 12:2*)  
**C:** As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (*1 Corinthians 11:26*)

## **SECOND LESSON: 1 Corinthians 10:16,17**

<sup>16</sup>The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup>Because there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

## **HYMN: # 550 "Lamb of God"**

♪ Your only Son, no sin to hide,  
but you have sent him from your side  
to walk upon this guilty sod,  
and to become the Lamb of God.  
O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,  
I love the holy Lamb of God!  
O wash me in his precious blood,  
my Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Your gift of love they crucified,  
they laughed and scorned him as he died:  
the humble King they named a fraud  
and sacrificed the Lamb of God.  
O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,  
I love the holy Lamb of God!  
O wash me in his precious blood,  
my Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

I was so lost, I should have died,  
but you have brought me to your side  
to be led by your staff and rod,  
and to be called a lamb of God.  
O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,  
I love the holy Lamb of God!  
O wash me in his precious blood,  
my Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

## MESSAGE OF THE DAY      Luke 22:7-20

<sup>7</sup>The day of Unleavened Bread arrived, when it was necessary to sacrifice the Passover lamb. <sup>8</sup>Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it.”

<sup>9</sup>They said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?”

<sup>10</sup>He told them, “Just as you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters.

<sup>11</sup>Tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”’

<sup>12</sup>He will show you a large, furnished upper room. Make preparations there.” <sup>13</sup>They went and found things just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

<sup>14</sup>When the hour had come, Jesus reclined at the table with the twelve apostles. <sup>15</sup>He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, <sup>16</sup>for I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

<sup>17</sup>He took a cup, gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves, <sup>18</sup>for I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

<sup>19</sup>He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” <sup>20</sup>In the same way, he took the cup after the supper, saying, “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is being poured out for you.

## THE SECOND ARTICLE

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.



**All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.**

## **OFFERING**

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**M:** We pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs:

For courage to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, that we may be obedient to the command of our Lord, let us pray to the Lord:

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

**M:** For strength to love others after the pattern of Jesus Christ, that our love may not be self-serving, let us pray to the Lord:

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

**M:** For the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the world, that it may be faithful to the proclamation of the Gospel for the glory of God, let us pray to the Lord:

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

**M:** For our remembrance of Jesus Christ as we celebrate the foretaste of the feast to come, that as we receive His very body and blood our faith may be strengthened by the forgiveness of sins and we may be empowered to love as we have been loved, let us pray to the Lord:

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

**M:** For our observance of our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection, that we may more fully appreciate the great sacrifice of love on our behalf, let us pray to the Lord:

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

**M:** For all who are in need of special gifts from God; the lonely, the ill, the troubled, that they may know the love of God, let us pray to the Lord:

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

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

**C: Amen.**

**C: 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 LORD'S SUPPER**

**M: The Lord be with you.**

**C: ♪ And also with you.**

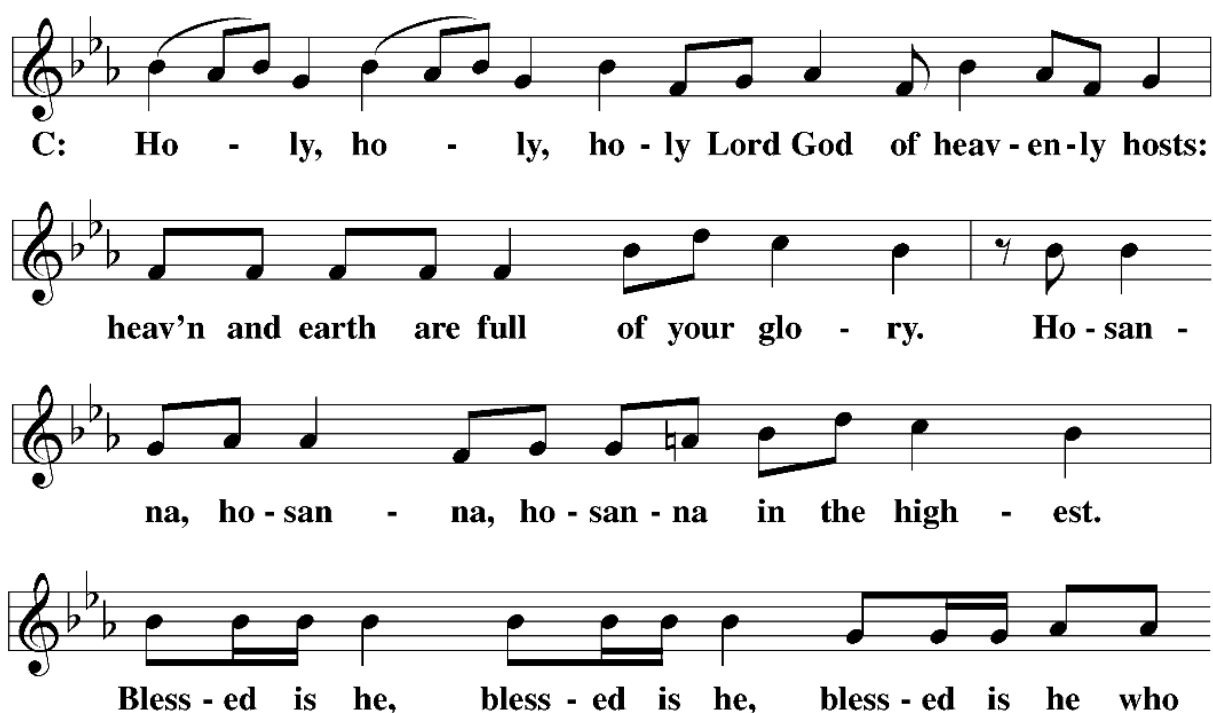
**M: We lift up our hearts.**

**C: ♪ We lift them up to the Lord.**

**M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.**

**C: ♪ It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who willingly died under the curse of this world's sin so that we may live forever in the light of God's blessing. Therefore with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:**



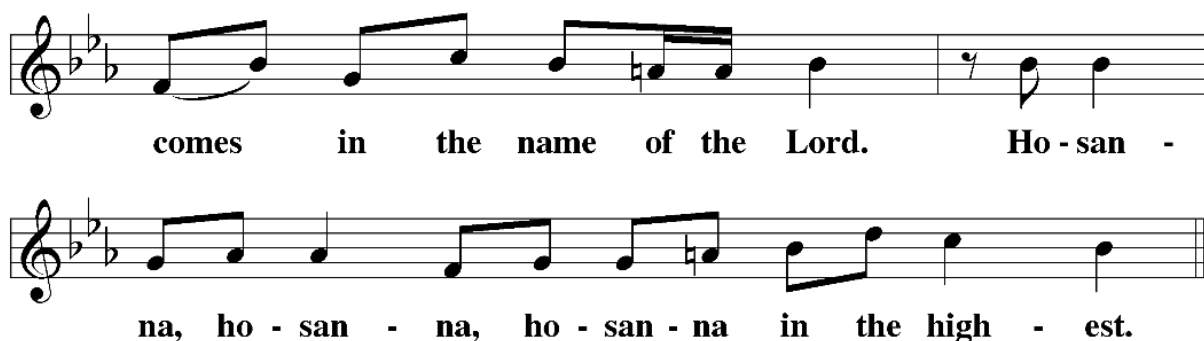
The musical notation is written on four staves in a single system. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The lyrics are: "C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts: heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who".

**C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:**

**heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -**

**na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.**

**Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who**



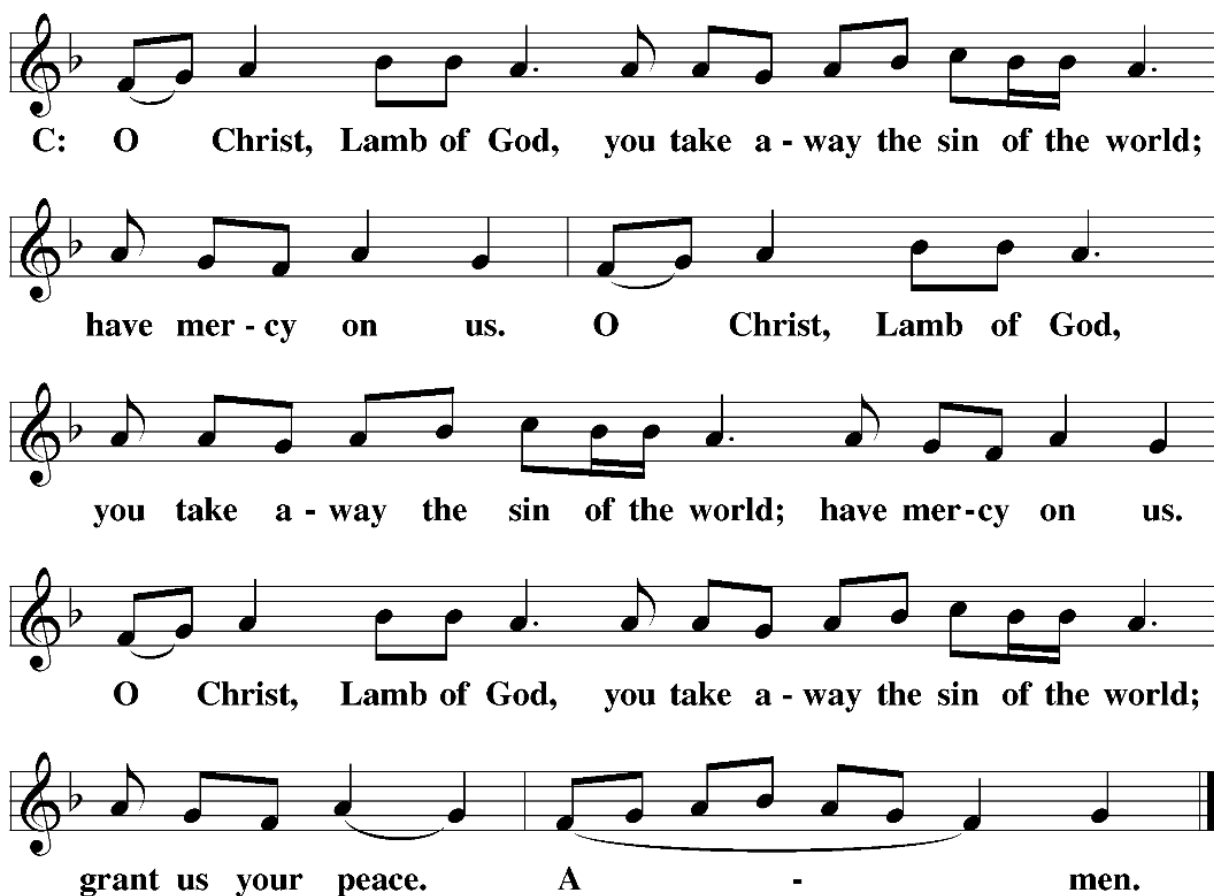
### ***THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION***

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C:  Amen.



## ***DISTRIBUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER***

**COMMUNION HYMN: # 660**

**“Here, O My Lord, I See You Face to Face”**

♪ **Here, O my Lord, I see you face to face;  
here would I touch and handle things unseen,  
here grasp with firmer hand eternal grace,  
and all my weariness upon you lean.**

**This is the hour of banquet and of song;  
this is the heav'nly table spread anew.  
Here let me feast and, feasting, still prolong  
the brief bright hour of fellowship with you.**

**I have no help but yours nor do I need  
another arm but yours to lean upon.  
It is enough, O Lord, enough indeed;  
my strength is in your might, your might alone.**

**Mine is the sin but yours the righteousness;  
mine is the guilt but yours the cleansing blood.  
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace:  
your blood, your righteousness, O Lord, my God.**

**Too soon we rise; the vessels disappear;  
the feast, though not the love, is past and gone.  
The bread and wine remove, but you are here,  
nearer than ever, still my shield and sun.**

**Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,  
yet, passing, points to that glad feast above,  
giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,  
the Lamb's great marriage feast of bliss and love.**

**M: Dearest Jesus our Lord and our God, you took our sins with you  
on the cross, so, dead to sin, we might live in your righteousness.  
Have mercy on us now and in the hour of our death. Grant to us,  
your servants and to all who humbly remember your suffering  
and death a holy and productive life, and by your grace, guide us  
to eternal life with you in heaven; you who reign with the Father  
and the Holy Spirit,**

**C: Amen.**

*Following the distribution prayer, the service continues with the Stripping of the Altar.*

## **THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR**

*The stripping of the altar symbolizes the abandonment of Jesus by His disciples and prepares the sanctuary for the austerity of Good Friday. During the Stripping of the Altar, the congregation sings “The Lamb” (CW 525:1-4), and the Minister reads Psalm 88 – a psalm of Jesus’ abandonment.*

### **HYMN: #525:1-4 “The Lamb”**

♪ **The Lamb, the Lamb, O Father, where's the sacrifice?  
Faith sees, believes God will provide the Lamb of price!  
Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me his own!  
The Lamb is reigning on his throne!**

**The Lamb, the Lamb, one perfect final offering.  
The Lamb, the Lamb,  
let earth join heav'n his praise to sing.  
Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me his own!  
The Lamb is reigning on his throne!**

**The Lamb, the Lamb, as wayward sheep their shepherd kill  
so still, his will, on our behalf the law to fill.  
Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me his own!  
The Lamb is reigning on his throne!**

**He sighs, he dies, he takes my sin and wretchedness.  
He lives, forgives, he gives me His own righteousness.  
Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me his own!  
The Lamb is reigning on his throne!**

### **Psalm 88**

**<sup>1</sup>O LORD, the God who saves me, by day I cry out.  
At night I cry before you.**

**<sup>2</sup>May my prayer come before you.  
Turn your ear to my cry.**

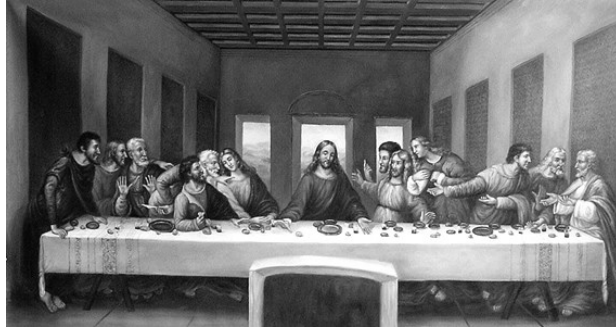
<sup>3</sup>Indeed, my soul has had its fill of troubles,  
and my life has arrived at the grave.  
<sup>4</sup>I am treated like those who go down to the pit.  
I am like someone without strength.  
<sup>5</sup>I am turned loose with the dead.  
I am like the slain who lie in the grave,  
like the ones you do not remember anymore,  
like those who are cut off from your hand.  
<sup>6</sup>You have put me in the lowest pit,  
in dark places, in the depths.  
<sup>7</sup>Your wrath presses against me.  
You have battered me with all your breakers.  
<sup>8</sup>You have distanced my acquaintances from me.  
You have made me repulsive to them.  
I am shut in and I cannot get out.  
<sup>9</sup>My eyesight grows dim from affliction.  
I call to you, O LORD, every day.  
I spread out my hands to you.  
<sup>10</sup>Is it for the dead that you do a miracle?  
Do the spirits of the dead rise up and praise you?  
<sup>11</sup>Is your mercy declared in the tomb,  
your faithfulness in decay?  
<sup>12</sup>Is your wonderful work known in the darkness?  
Is your righteousness known in the land of forgetfulness?  
<sup>13</sup>But I cry to you, O LORD,  
and in the morning my prayer comes before you.  
<sup>14</sup>Why, O LORD, do you reject my soul?  
Why do you hide your face from me?  
<sup>15</sup>I have been afflicted  
and I have been close to death since my youth.  
I have endured your terrors.  
I am in despair.  
<sup>16</sup>Your rage has swept over me.  
Your terrors have destroyed me.  
<sup>17</sup>All day long they surround me like water.  
They have battered me completely.  
<sup>18</sup>You have distanced my loved one and friend from me.  
My only friend is darkness.

No benediction is spoken to end the service.

No music is played.

The minister exits the chancel.

Each worshipper may remain for prayer and meditation before dispersing quietly.



*The service continues at 7:00 p.m. tomorrow,  
where we will focus on Christ's death on the cross.*

***Tonight's account is not the end of the story.  
Come and hear what happened next!***

† **GOOD FRIDAY** worship service at 7:00 p.m.

† **EASTER CELEBRATION** March 31st, 10:00 a.m.

# PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

(cf. page 156 in the front of Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal)

**Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?**

*A: He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.*

**Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?**

*A: I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?*

**Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?**

*A: I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.*

**Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?**

*A: His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.*

**Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?**

*A: In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.*

**Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?**

*A: I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."*

**Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?**

*A: I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.*

*Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.*