## April 6th, 2023 Maundy Thursday – Email/At Home Missal

**Maundy Thursday Worship Service 7:00 PM**

**The ZOOM link for the Maundy Thursday Service, which opens at 6.30 pm on April 6th, 2023, can be found here:**

**Maundy Thursday Worship April 6th, 2023 6:30 pm ZOOM room opens; service begins at 7:00 PM**

**Join Zoom Meeting**[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83920470890?pwd=U3d6NHpUUytCUlhLcitnRWVBWEI0dz09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83920470890?pwd=U3d6NHpUUytCUlhLcitnRWVBWEI0dz09)

**Meeting ID: 839 2047 0890
Passcode: 317744
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Meeting ID: 839 2047 0890
Passcode: 317744
Find your local number:** [**https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcgM8SpIeK**](https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcgM8SpIeK)

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:**

**Here is the YouTube link for the sermon from this past Sunday’s (March 26th) service:** [**https://youtu.be/mTJbkwRhBWw**](https://youtu.be/mTJbkwRhBWw)

**……………………….**

**PASTORAL VISITS:** Pastor Laura Sauder is available for safe visits with social distancing requirements in place, and also for telephone visits. Please reach out to her by calling the church office at 519-653-4721 to arrange a visit.

**…………………………….**

**Bible Study will be in the Art Room on Mondays at 3:00PM.**

**Please join us – all are welcome!**

**…………………………..**

You can order your own Maple Syrup from St. Peter’s, Preston. Our partner is a 5th generation Woolwich Township farm that has been producing maple syrup for over 100 years. They adhere to the production guidelines issued by the Ontario Maple Syrup Association, which state the number of taps per tree (max. of 2) for best forest management practices. Handling of the sap and syrup is minimized to reduce the chance of contamination. Their syrup is pure with nothing added, only the water has been removed. As of 2018 their maple syrup is certified organic.

**1 litre Mason Jars of maple syrup are $23.00**.

**Send an email to or** **alexblack@sympatico.ca** **to order your own locally produced fresh Maple Syrup.**

**……………………………….**

**Greenhorizons BigYellowBag - Give & Grow Program**

This fundraiser is open to all and enables each one of us to raise funds for St. Peters. If you don’t have a lawn or garden, you can still help by spreading the word to your neighbours, friends and relatives.

Each time that an order is placed at Greenhorizons Sod at 519.653.7494 for a **BigYellowBag** of soil using the **code SPLCC23** you will save $5.00, and the church will receive $10.00.

Spread the word, and the soil!​

**………………………………..**

**Bridges VBS 2023 Knights of North Castle** - Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God’s power! Application Forms are located in the narthex or by calling the church office at 519-653-4721. Dates: July 10-14, 2023, 9:00am – 4:00 pm Children who are between the ages of 5 and 11 (as of December 31, 2023). Registration fee of $125/participant (including lunch & snacks) is due upon registration. Please make cheques payable to Bridges VBS (please note child’s name on cheque, post-dated cheques will not be accepted). As this camp is running at cost, tax receipts will not be issued and registration fees are non-refundable. Registration closes June 1st, or when spaces are filled. Location: St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church (317 Franklin St. N, Kitchener). We are extremely grateful to St. Luke's for hosting us and can't wait to be in this great space. This week long VBS is run solely by volunteers, both youth and adult. There are many volunteer opportunities that cover a wide range of skill, as well as a variety of time commitments. [bridgesvbs.weebly.com](http://bridgesvbs.weebly.com/)

1. **………………………………….**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Laura Sauder**

**Organist & Director of Music: Bradley Moggach**

**Land Acknowledgement:**

**A: With thankful hearts we acknowledge that the land upon which we live and worship here at St Peter’s is the treaty land of the Six Nations, comprising in part the territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral Peoples. This land is covered by treaties such as the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Two Row Wampum Treaty and the Haldimand Treaty of 1784. As we continue to learn more about the truth of our shared history, we desire to grow in Peace, Friendship and Respect, leading ultimately to true reconciliation.**

**Confession and Forgiveness:**

Friends in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard the promise that in our imperfections, our struggles, our doubts, and our fears, God is with us. And because of this, we are blessed. Even so, we struggle to embrace this gift as fully as we ought; and often we fail to show this same love and grace to those around us. In this, we are yet, bound by sin.

Within the community of the church, God never wearies of forgiving sin and giving the peace of reconciliation. On this night let us confess our sin and our need for God’s goodness and grace, and enter the celebration of the great Three Days reconciled with God and with one another.

All kneel or sit and keep silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

***C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.***

***Amen.***

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

**Laying on of Hands**

You are invited to receive a personal promise of Christ’s forgiveness and his deep and abiding love for you, through the laying on of hands. In a moment I will invite those in the building who wish, to come forward.

But first I invite those worshiping with us at home on zoom, to place a hand on your heart or to cross your arms across your chest. Close your eyes. Take a moment to feel your chest rise and fall as you breathe; perhaps you can feel the beat of your heart. As you rest in God’s love, receive these words spoken for you: In obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins. Amen.

And now I invite all those in the building who wish to receive the laying on of hands to come forward …

The minister, laying both hands on each person’s head, addresses each in turn.

In obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins.

*The person may respond* **Amen.**

**Hymn sung by Choir during the laying on of hands: ‘Lay Your Hands’**

 *(Title: Lay Your Hands; Text & Music: Text based on Isaiah 61:1; Carey Landry. Text and music © 1977, OCP. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Greeting**:

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

**C: And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day***:*

Let us pray,

Holy God, source of all love, on this night, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen.\****

**Lesson Introduction: *(Pastor Laura)***

**Exodus 12:1-14**

In three of the four gospels, the final meal Jesus shares with his disciples is a Passover meal – the traditional meal Jewish people continue to eat to this day to remember how God freed their ancestors from slavery in Egypt. This connection explains why we hear the origins of the Passover meal in our worship this night.

The meal shared at Passover, which is also called a seder meal, includes several symbolic foods to help tell and remember the story. A roasted shank bone to represent the Passover sacrifice, an egg to represent spring and the circle of life, bitter herbs to represent the bitterness of slavery, haroset (an applesauce-like mixture with wine, nuts, and apples) to represent the mortar used by the Jews in Egypt, and greens, often parsley, to represent spring.

As we hear this passage from Exodus, we remember the connection we share with our Jewish siblings. We remember how Jesus reinterpreted this tradition in a new way for his disciples. And we remember that for us as Christians, Jesus’ own self-sacrifice is mirrored in the sacrifice of the paschal lamb. Let us listen to the word…

**The First Reading: Exodus 12:1-14**

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month will be the first month; it will be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole Israelite community: On the tenth day of this month they must take a lamb for each household, a lamb per house.If a household is too small for a lamb, it should share one with a neighbor nearby. You should divide the lamb in proportion to the number of people who will be eating it. Your lamb should be a flawless year-old male. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You should keep close watch over it until the fourteenth day of this month. At twilight on that day, the whole assembled Israelite community should slaughter their lambs. They should take some of the blood and smear it on the two doorposts and on the beam over the door of the houses in which they are eating. That same night they should eat the meat roasted over the fire. They should eat it along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Don’t eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over fire with its head, legs, and internal organs. Don’t let any of it remain until morning, and burn any of it left over in the morning. This is how you should eat it. You should be dressed, with your sandals on your feet and your walking stick in your hand. You should eat the meal in a hurry. It is the Passover of the Lord. I’ll pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I’ll strike down every oldest child in the land of Egypt, both humans and animals. I’ll impose judgments on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be your sign on the houses where you live. Whenever I see the blood, I’ll pass over you. No plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

“This day will be a day of remembering for you. You will observe it as a festival to the Lord. You will observe it in every generation as a regulation for all time.  *(CEB)*

Word of God, Word of Life*.* ***C: Thanks be to God.****\**

**Lesson Introduction: *(Pastor Laura)***

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

From Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, we hear Paul speak about a tradition that was started by Jesus, that was passed on to him, and that he is now passing on to others – the Lord’s Supper.

For Lutherans, and for many Christians, Holy Communion is one of two sacraments (along with baptism). And one of the reasons it is a sacrament – a holy act through which Jesus comes to us – is because Jesus commanded us to do so. And so we give thanks for faithful folks like Paul and the gospel writers, who made sure it was passed on. Let us listen to the word…

**The Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

I received a tradition from the Lord, which I also handed on to you: on the night on which he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread. After giving thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this to remember me.” He did the same thing with the cup, after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Every time you drink it, do this to remember me.” Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you broadcast the death of the Lord until he comes.  *(CEB)*

Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**\*

1. **Gospel Acclamation: Lenten Acclamation from Setting 4 *(ELW page # 151)***
2. 

**The Holy Gospel according to John 13:1-17, 31b-35**

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

Before the Festival of Passover, Jesus knew that his time had come to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them fully.

Jesus and his disciples were sharing the evening meal. The devil had already provoked Judas, Simon Iscariot’s son, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew the Father had given everything into his hands and that he had come from God and was returning to God. So he got up from the table and took off his robes. Picking up a linen towel, he tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he was wearing. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”

Jesus replied, “You don’t understand what I’m doing now, but you will understand later.”

“No!” Peter said. “You will never wash my feet!”

Jesus replied, “Unless I wash you, you won’t have a place with me.”

Simon Peter said, “Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and my head!”

Jesus responded, “Those who have bathed need only to have their feet washed, because they are completely clean. You disciples are clean, but not every one of you.” He knew who would betray him. That’s why he said, “Not every one of you is clean.”

After he washed the disciples’ feet, he put on his robes and returned to his place at the table. He said to them, “Do you know what I’ve done for you? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you speak correctly, because I am. If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example: Just as I have done, you also must do. I assure you, servants aren’t greater than their master, nor are those who are sent greater than the one who sent them. Since you know these things, you will be happy if you do them.

“Now the Human One has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify the Human One in himself and will glorify him immediately. Little children, I’m with you for a little while longer. You will look for me—but, just as I told the Jewish leaders, I also tell you now—‘Where I’m going, you can’t come.’

“I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other.”  *(CEB)*

The Gospel of the Lord. ***C: Praise to you, O Christ.\****

1. **Sermon**

**John 13:1-17; 31b-35 – Blessed Are Those Who Remember**

Memory is a strange thing. How or why our minds imprint certain moments and not others. Why some details stand out clearly and vividly, while others fade away. How a particular smell or sound will instantly transport us to a time or place or person from our past. Or how two individuals who both shared an experience can remember it so differently.

This week, perhaps more than any other in the church year, is a week of remembering. Of remembering Jesus’ final days. And on this night, Maundy Thursday, we remember the final meal Jesus shared with his closest disciples.

I wonder, what would Jesus remember most about this night? Would it be the sound the water made as he poured it over their feet? Or the pang in his heart as he washed Judas’ feet, sensing the fear that would soon lead Judas to betray him?

Does he remember the room being crowded with his enemies or with his best friends? Does he remember how much they praised him and made him laugh, or only that in the end they betrayed him and denied knowing him?

On this night, of shared food, shared laughter, shared lessons; that would eventually end in sorrow, what would stand out most in Jesus’ memory – the bitter or the sweet?

Remember is a word that means “call to mind.” Sometimes calling something to mind can be comforting. When we remember a happy moment or a time when we felt loved and cared for.

Calling something to mind is often a wistful act. The act of remembering brings with it a longing for what once was and is no more. A nostalgia that leads to melancholy.

Calling something to mind can also be a courageous act. For when we’ve suffered harm in our past, this remembering can be painful and even traumatic.

The truth about remembering is that it is both bitter and sweet. Sometimes one or the other, and often a mix of the two.

And that’s what’s so challenging about memory. We don’t always remember the moments we wish as clearly as we would like. And those moments that we would rather forget, continue to haunt us.

Sometimes, with intention, we can sear a particular moment that we wish to remember into our brain. But often we don’t have that control; of what imprints on our mind and in our heart and what doesn’t. And this is why so many of the memories we carry, especially the most powerful and poignant ones, are often a combination of bitter and sweet.

For the disciples, many of the events of this week are ones they’d likely rather forget if they could. Certainly many bitter memories that threaten to overshadow the sweet ones.

As much as they might want to forget, they also can’t ignore the fact that Jesus himself has told them to remember the events of this bittersweet night.

To repeat this act of footwashing; and remember his example humble service.

To repeat the meal they shared – the bread and the wine; and remember his act of self-giving love.

These are traditions that have been passed on down through the generations of disciples all the way to us, who gather here this night. Which means it’s worth asking, what purpose does our remembering these events serve?

The thing is, tonight’s remembering, is about more than calling past events to mind.

As we gather; as we share in the Lord’s Supper; Jesus meets us here.

In this holy gathering, in these holy acts, Jesus is with us – here and now.

Touching us with forgiveness.

Washing us with grace.

Feeding us with love.

Yes, we are remembering the gifts that Jesus gave his disciples to sustain them after his death. But these same gifts are given again this night to us, to sustain us in our pilgrimage of faith.

Tonight we remember, and in our remembering, we create new memories. We are not stuck in some past moment but carry into the present and the future Christ’s self-giving love.

By offering compassion, mercy, and even forgiveness to those who have done harm.

By caring for one another and for our neighbours – as Christ has cared for us.

By sharing the abundance of God’s gifts with all those in need.

By honouring both the bitter and the sweet that make life what it is.

Tonight, as we remember the bittersweet final night Jesus spent with his disciples, we are promised that in the bittersweetness of our own memories, of our own stories, that we are blessed.

For Christ is among us this bittersweet night, enfolding us with grace, with mercy, and with love.

AMEN.

**Hymn of the Day: ELW # 358 ‘Great God, Your Love Has Called Us’**

1 Great God, your love has called us here

 as we, by love, for love were made.

 Your living likeness still we bear,

 though marred, dishonored, disobeyed.

 We come, with all our heart and mind

 your call to hear, your love to find.

2 We come with self-inflicted pains

 of broken trust and chosen wrong,

 half-free, half-bound by inner chains,

 by social forces swept along,

 by powers and systems close confined

 yet seeking hope for humankind.

3 Great God, in Christ you call our name

 and then receive us as your own

 not through some merit, right, or claim,

 but by your gracious love alone.

 We strain to glimpse your mercy seat

 and find you kneeling at our feet.

4 Then take the towel, and break the bread,

 and humble us, and call us friends.

 Suffer and serve till all are fed,

 and show how grandly love intends

 to work till all creation sings,

 to fill all worlds, to crown all things.

5 Great God, in Christ you set us free

 your life to live, your joy to share.

 Give us your Spirit's liberty

 to turn from guilt and dull despair,

 and offer all that faith can do

 while love is making all things new.

*(Title:**Great God, Your Love Has Called Us; Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936; Text © 1977, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission; Music:* Norman Cocker, 1889-1953*; Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under CCLI, License # 11098609. All rights reserved.)*

**Handwashing**

On this night we have heard our Lord’s commandment to love one another as he has loved us. We who receive God’s love in Jesus Christ are called to love one another, to be servants to each other as Jesus became our servant.

For Jesus and his disciples, washing feet was a normal part of life; sandals and dusty roads were the norm. We don’t have the same need to wash our feet these days, but we do wash our hands before eating a meal. As such, our commitment to Jesus’ loving service will be signified tonight in the washing of hands, in the spirit of the example our Lord gave us on the night before his death.

This is another one of those liturgical pieces that is hard to do virtually. And so what I will invite all of us to do – those on zoom and those here in the building – is to take a moment together to meditate on our hands.

*Guided meditation*

At this time, I invite those in the building who wish to have their hands washed, to come forward. And for those who choose not to, I invite you to continue using this time to reflect on all that your hands have done and continue to do for you…

**Hymn Sung During Hand Washing:**

**ELW # 642 ‘Ubi caritas et amor’ *(Latin words)* *(Where True Charity and Love Abide)***

Ubi caritas et amor,

ubi caritas, Deus ibi est.

*(Title:* *Ubi caritas et amor* (*Where True Charity and Love Abide) Text: Latin antiphon, 9th cent.; Taizé Community; tr. With One Voice; Text © 1979 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. (English text © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.) Music: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994; © 1979 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Prayers of Intercession:**

A: Sustained by God’s abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You make a new covenant with your people. Gather your church around word and table in love and promise as these three holy days enfold us. Open us to behold the mystery of our salvation. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

You give us our daily bread, fruit of the earth and work of human hands. Bless those who labor and tend to their crops and those who prepare our meals. Strengthen us to advocate for food justice and a fair distribution of resources. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

You, our Savior and Teacher, stoop down to us in servant love. Inspire all leaders with a renewed sense of public service. Increase in them a humility to serve with equity and fairness. Teach us to pray for our enemies. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

You incline your ear to us in every need. Befriend all who are lonely. Comfort those who grieve. Soothe any who are anxious. Console all who are distressed. Graciously tend to the hurts of your children who suffer in body, mind, and spirit (Especially we pray for Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Bryan, Nansea, Helen, Sharon, Donald, Creena, Shirley, Maya, Karen, Clara, Carol, Jeff, Aaron, Mackenzie, Rhett, Linda, Jan, Ken, Lena, Brian, John, Anne, Pastor Neil, Robin, and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts….. ). Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Precious in your sight is the death of your faithful ones. We remember and give thanks for those who have died. With them, we trust your promise to love your own until the end. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.\***

**Share the peace of Christ:**

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**\*

Our worship continues with the offering of our gifts.

**Offering**

**Offertory Music: ACS # 968 ‘Feed Us with Hunger for Justice’**

 Feed us with hunger for justice.

 Feed us with thirst for peace.

(Title: Feed Us with Hunger for Justice; Text & Music: Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960; Text & Music © 2020 Augsburg Fortress.All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)

**Offering Prayer:**

A:God of good gifts,

receive these and all our offerings

as we present them in faithful service

for the sake of your gospel.

Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal

as you pour out your very presence

through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

**Amen.\***

**You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.**

**Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:**

[**https://youtu.be/kmZJQiBM8QY**](https://youtu.be/kmZJQiBM8QY)

**The Great Thanksgiving:**

P: We do not come to this table trusting in our own goodness.

***C: We come knowing we need forgiveness and trusting God to grant it.***

P: We come because we are hungry for meaning and need to be fed.

***C: God, forgive and feed us.***

P: We come because Jesus Christ invited us.

***C: We come as Christ’s guests to the heavenly banquet.***

**Thanksgiving at the Table:**

P: Jesus is among us, his gathered followers, just as he was with his followers on the night in which he was betrayed, when he took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this to remember 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 to remember me.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever.

Amen.

**Invitation to Communion:**

This is Christ’s table. All are welcome here to receive God’s good gifts of love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

I invite those at home, and those in the building communing by fellowship cup, to take your bread or cracker as we say together, “The body of Christ, given for us.”

And, as we take our cup we say, “The blood of Christ, shed for us.”

**Communion Music: ELW # 653 ‘Where True Charity and Love Abide’ *(Instrumental)***

*(Title: Where True Charity and Love Abide; Text: Latin, 9th cent.; tr. Composite; Text © 1995, 2001 Augsburg Fortress; Music: Plainsong mode VI; arr. © GIA Publications Inc. All rights reserved; Used by permission. Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

L: May the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen you, and keep you, in his grace.

***C: Amen.***

**Prayer after Communion:**

A: 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.

Amen.\*

**A Blessing for Maundy Thursday**

This is the night that it begins,

the festival of grief and somehow triumph.

The end is near.

Jesus, we are beginning to understand that

your grace that makes no sense—

grace sits next to betrayers,

grace washes the feet of back-stabbers,

grace breaks bread with the disloyal,

grace shares a cup with double-dealers.

Jesus, you are undoing every guarantee

that, in loving you, we will not lose.

You are losing everything.

Bless us now, as we see your sacrifice.

How you are pleading with us to love,

as your friends break your heart.

How you are showing us how to remember,

when we long to forget

that in your undoing, you remade the world.

Amen.\*\*

**The Stripping of the Altar**

*As the linens, paraments, banners, and books are removed from the worship space, Psalm 22 is intoned by a single voice. The congregation may sit or kneel.*

*Lights are dimmed as the worship space is stripped.*

**Psalm** **22**

***My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?***

***Why so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?***

***My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer;***

***by night, but I find no rest.***

***Yet you are the Holy One,***

***enthroned on the praises of Israel.***

***Our ancestors put their trust in you,***

***they trusted, and you rescued them.***

***They cried out to you and were delivered;***

***they trusted in you and were not put to shame.***

***But as for me, I am a worm and not human,***

***scorned by all and despised by the people.***

***All who see me laugh me to scorn;***

***they curl their lips; they shake their heads.***

***“Trust in the Lord; let the Lord deliver;***

***let God rescue him if God so delights in him.”***

***Yet you are the one who drew me forth from the womb,***

***and kept me safe on my mother’s breast.***

***I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born;***

***you were my God when I was still in my mother’s womb.***

***Be not far from me, for trouble is near,***

***and there is no one to help.***

***Many young bulls encircle me;***

***strong bulls of Bashan surround me.***

***They open wide their jaws at me,***

***like a slashing and roaring lion.***

***I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint;***

***my heart within my breast is melting wax.***

***My strength is dried up like a potsherd; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;***

***and you have laid me in the dust of death.***

***Packs of dogs close me in, a band of evildoers circles round me;***

***they pierce my hands and my feet.***

***I can count all my bones***

***while they stare at me and gloat.***

***They divide my garments among them;***

***for my clothing, they cast lots.***

***But you, O Lord, be not far away;***

***O my help, hasten to my aid.***

***Deliver me from the sword,***

***my life from the power of the dog.***

***Save me from the lion’s mouth!***

***From the horns of wild bulls you have rescued me.***

***I will declare your name to my people;***

***in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.***

***You who fear the Lord, give praise! All you of Jacob’s line, give glory.***

***Stand in awe of the Lord, all you offspring of Israel.***

***For the Lord does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the Lord’s face hidden from them;***

***but when they cry out, the Lord hears them.***

***From you comes my praise in the great assembly;***

***I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the Lord.***

***The poor shall eat and be satisfied.***

***Let those who seek the Lord give praise! May your hearts live forever!***

***All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord;***

***all the families of nations shall bow before God.***

***For dominion belongs to the Lord,***

***who rules over the nations.***

***Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;***

***all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the Lord.***

***Their descendants shall serve the Lord,***

***whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.***

***They shall proclaim God’s deliverance to a people yet unborn,***

***saying to them, “The Lord has acted!”\****

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*All depart in silence. Feel free to stay for a time of prayer & meditation.*

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