

The Three Days: Maundy Thursday April 1, 2021

The 115th Anniversary of the faith community of Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church



This is the first of The Three Days: Maundy Thursday. While Easter is every Sunday, these Three Days are like one great annual Sunday. But because of the pandemic, we cannot do these important services together in church. While Easter is a joyful festival, we keep it now in a time of difficulty and world-wide sorrow. Still, we believe that Christ is with us in his word, by his Spirit drawing us together as one before God. And we believe that the gospel of Christ gives us strength amid distress and comfort in the face of our sufferings.

In setting up a space for worship, consider the physical symbols you could set out. On Maundy Thursday, this would be materials needed for a hand washing: basin, towels, and pitcher. If desired, you may choose to remove items from a home worship space at the conclusion of worship on this day as a kind of “stripping of the altar” in your home.

Set out a bowl of water and a clean towel. Sit with them before you as we begin.

Music will be played as you organize your home worship space and center yourselves for worship.

First, we remember God's forgiveness:

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

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, 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 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.

First Reading: Exodus 12:1–14

¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell 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. ⁴If 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. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹This 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. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the deities of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The 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.

¹⁴This 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.

The Psalm is read in response to the First Reading.

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

¹I love the LORD, who has ¹ heard my voice,
and listened to my ¹ supplication,
²for the LORD has given ¹ ear to me
whenever ¹ I called.

¹²How shall I re- ¹ pay the LORD
for all the good things God has ¹ done for me?

¹³I will lift the cup ¹ of salvation
and call on the name ¹ of the LORD.
¹⁴I will fulfill my vows ¹ to the LORD
in the presence of ¹ all God's people.
¹⁵Precious in your ¹ sight, O LORD,
is the death ¹ of your servants.
¹⁶O LORD, truly I ¹ am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me ¹ from my bonds.
¹⁷I will offer you the sacrifice ¹ of thanksgiving
and call upon the name ¹ of the LORD.
¹⁸I will fulfill my vows ¹ to the LORD
in the presence of ¹ all God's people,
¹⁹in the courts of ¹ the LORD's house,
in the midst of you, ¹ O Jerusalem.

Please rise as you are able.

Gospel: John 13:1–17, 31b–35

The holy gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

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. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then 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. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus 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." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord — and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If 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. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him

in God's own self and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Judeans so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Reflection

Washing the hands God gave us to serve one another

Here you may wash your own hands, using the water in the bowl, recalling Jesus washing his disciples' feet. Or, if there are several of you worshipping together, you may wash each other's hands, thinking of the love of Jesus pours out on each of us in this difficult time.

Hymn

Prayers of Intercession

On this Maundy Thursday, let us pray for the needs of the world, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "we call upon your name."

A brief silence.

Blessed are you, O God, for the church. Strengthen your people, gathered around the globe on this holy day in homes, in churches, and outside under your sky. Bless the church's deacons and all congregational ministries. Give us hunger for your word and joy in receiving it. Feed us at all our tables with your blessing.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God.

We call upon your name.

Blessed are you for this good earth. Cleanse and protect the water you have given for our drinking and our washing. Sustain crops and herds that provide our food; teach us how to live so that there is enough for all.

A brief silence.

Hear us, bountiful God.

We call upon your name.

Blessed are you for our nation. Lead us out of ancient patterns of prejudice. Protect all people throughout the world who flee violence and oppression. Establish wise and just leadership in every place and peace where there is violence and war.

A brief silence.

Hear us, sovereign God.
We call upon your name.

Blessed are you for caring for the needy. Feed the hungry. Give jobs to the unemployed. Embrace all who are isolated and lonely. Comfort those living with guilt and those who mourn.

A brief silence.

Hear us, merciful God.
We call upon your name.

Blessed are you for accompanying the sick. Bring an end to this pandemic, and restore healthy and hearty connections between persons. Empower medical personnel. Receive our prayers for all we name here before you:

A brief silence.

Hear us, faithful God.
We call upon your name.

Blessed are you for serving us, we who are your servants. Receive now, we pray, our silent petitions.

A longer period of silence.

Hear us, loving God.
We call upon your name.

Blessed are you for generations of the faithful who have proclaimed our Lord's death and lived in service to others. Unite us with them in hope until we join with them at your everlasting banquet.

A brief silence.

Hear us, eternal God.
We call upon your name.

Hear these and all our prayers, O God, in the name of the one who loves us to the end, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer.

Amen.

The Three Days continue tomorrow with the service for Good Friday, April 2, 2021. The church will be open from 11 am – 2 pm for Good Friday veneration of the cross. All are welcome to come around the cross for a time of prayer and meditation during the middle of the day.

There will also be a pre-recorded online service available for evening prayer, with a call to worship at 7 pm. Please watch the Eden Lutheran Church Facebook Page and website (edenonthebay.org) for updates and links.

On Saturday, April 3, 2021, @ 8 pm, we will have an in-person Easter Vigil Service that will begin outside with a new fire and conclude inside with a proclamation of Easter and Holy Communion.

On Sunday, April 4, 2021, @ 10:30 am, we will host Easter Sunday Worship in-person and online. (Online worshipers may provide their own bread and wine for communion or request a communion kit for use at home. Simply call 387-2520.)

Stripping of the Altar

Finally, remembering Jesus going to his arrest and his death, the events from which all the mercy that fills this night, we pray Psalm 88 as the altar is stripped at Eden and in your home worship space, if that is what you would like.

¹O Lord, my ¹ God, my Savior,
by day and night I ¹ cry to you.

²Let my prayer enter in- ¹ to your presence;
incline your ear to my ¹ lamentation.

³For I am ¹ full of trouble;
my life is at the brink ¹ of the grave.

⁴I am counted among those who go down ¹ to the pit;
I have become like one who ¹ has no strength;

⁵lost among the dead, like the slain who lie ¹ in the grave,
whom you remember no more, for they are cut off ¹ from your hand.

⁶You have laid me in the depths ¹ of the pit,
in dark places, and in ¹ the abyss.

⁷Your anger weighs up- ¹ on me heavily,
and all your great waves ¹ overwhelm me.

⁸You have put my friends far from me; you have made me to be ab- ¹ horred by them;
I am in prison and can- ¹ not get free.

⁹My sight has failed me be- ¹ cause of trouble;
Lord, I have called upon you daily; I have stretched out my ¹ hands to you.

¹⁰Do you work wonders ¹ for the dead?
Will those who have died stand up and ¹ give you thanks?

¹¹Will your lovingkindness be declared ¹ in the grave,
your faithfulness in the land ¹ of destruction?

¹²Will your wonders be known ¹ in the dark
or your righteousness in the country where all ¹ is forgotten?

¹³But as for me, O Lord, I cry to ¹ you for help;
in the morning my prayer ¹ comes before you.

¹⁴Lord, why have you re- ¹ jected me?
Why have you hidden your ¹ face from me?

¹⁵Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the ¹ point of death;
I have borne your terrors ¹ and am helpless.

¹⁶Your blazing anger has swept ¹ over me;
your terrors ¹ have destroyed me;

¹⁷they surround me all day long ¹ like a flood;
they encompass me on ¹ every side.
¹⁸My friend and my neighbor you have put a- ¹ way from me,
and darkness is my on- ¹ ly companion.

Worship Leaders:

Presiding Minister: Pastor Ann Gonyea

Assisting Minister: Maxwell Gonyea-Alexander

Altar Guild Members: Bruce Dausey, Norma Dick, Elaine Robbins