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**HOLY WEEK**  
LOOK UP

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# Holy Thursday

April 2, 2026

# St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church | *Jordan, Minnesota*

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*March 22, 2026*

## **TODAY'S THEME – LOOK UP TO GET A GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN**

We need to be washed clean in the blood of Jesus. Our own need can distract and overwhelm us with the details of our sin and our guilt. Blood always gets our attention, but it can make us feel queasy and uneasy. Jesus wants to lift our eyes above all that to his marvelous promise of forgiveness. Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. We find that forgiveness in the cleansing fountain of the Lord's Supper. The Supper also gives us a glimpse of the heavenly feast where we will eat of the eternal manna and drink from the river of God's delights forever.

## **STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR**

Tonight the altar is stripped of its appointments symbolizing the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples. Jesus would finish his saving work alone, as our only Savior.

## **Holy Week Schedule**

- April 3 | 7:00 pm – Good Friday Service of the Seven Last Words
- April 4 | 7:00 pm – Easter Vigil (Held at St. Croix Academy, West St. Paul)
- April 5 | Easter Sunday
  - 6:30 am – Easter Sunrise Service with Holy Communion
  - 7:45 am – Easter Breakfast
  - 8:00 am – Easter Egg Hunt
  - 9:00 am – Festival of the Resurrection of Our Lord

# Holy Thursday Confessional Rite

## 424 The Garden of Gethsemane

*Stand*



In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

### **Confession**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard again how our Lord walked the path of suffering which led him to the cross for our salvation. We have also heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that keeps us from loving God and one another. This is the struggle to which we were committed at Baptism; God's forgiveness and the power of his Spirit to amend our lives continue with us because of his love for us in Jesus our Savior.

Within the family of the Church, God never wearies of giving peace and new life. In the absolution, we receive forgiveness as from God himself. We should not doubt this absolution but firmly believe that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven, for it comes to us in the name and by the command of our Lord. 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.

In Holy Communion, first instituted on this night, the members of Christ's body participate most intimately in his love. Remembering our Lord's Last Supper with his disciples, we eat the bread and drink the cup of this meal. Together we receive the Lord's gift of his body and blood for forgiveness and participate in that new covenant that makes us one with him and one another. The Lord's Supper is the promise of the great banquet we will share with all the faithful when our Lord returns, the joyous culmination of our reconciliation with God and each other.

As we begin the solemn celebration of our Lord's passion, let us confess our sins to him, receive his absolution, and be reconciled to God and each other in Christian love.

**Holy God, gracious Father,  
I am sinful by nature  
and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.  
I have not loved you with my whole heart;  
I have not loved others as I should.  
I deserve your punishment both now and forever.  
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins  
with his innocent suffering and death.  
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ has forgiven us, has reconciled us to God, and has promised us the power to forgive and love one another. Relying on his promise, therefore, be reconciled with one another.

**Brothers and sisters, may the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, in our words, and in our actions.**

## The Word

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

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.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## First Reading

*Exodus 24:1–11*

<sup>1</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, along with Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship me from a distance. <sup>2</sup>Only Moses is allowed to come near the LORD, but the others are not to come near, and the people are not to go up with him.” <sup>3</sup>Moses came and reported to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances. Then all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do.” <sup>4</sup>Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He got up early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain. He set up twelve memorial stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup>He sent young Israelite men, who offered whole burnt offerings and sacrificed fellowship offerings of cattle to the LORD. <sup>6</sup>Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and he splashed half of the blood on the altar. <sup>7</sup>He took the Book of the Covenant and read it out loud to the people and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do. We will obey.” <sup>8</sup>Moses took the blood and splashed it on the people. He said, “Look, here is the blood of the covenant, which the LORD made with you by means of all these words.” <sup>9</sup>Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up. <sup>10</sup>They saw the God of Israel. Under his feet they saw what looked like a pavement of sapphire as clear as the sky. <sup>11</sup>The LORD did not lay his hand on the dignitaries of the people of Israel. They gazed at God, and they ate and drank.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

# 116D I Will Take the Cup of Salvation

Psalm 116D

## Refrain



I will take the cup of sal-va - tion and call on the  
name of the LORD. I will take the cup of sal-va - tion  
and call on the name of the LORD.

## Tone



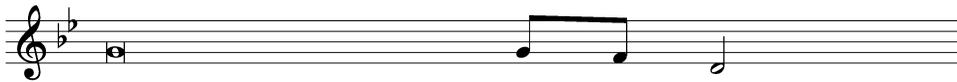
I love the LORD, for he / heard my voice;  
he heard my cry for / mercy.  
Because he turned his / ear to me,  
I will call on him as long / as I live.

For you, LORD, have delivered / me from death,  
my eyes from tears, my feet from / stumbling,  
that I may walk be- / fore the LORD  
in the land of the / living. *Refrain*

What shall I return / to the LORD  
for all his good- / ness to me?  
I will lift up the cup of sal- / vation  
and call on the name / of the LORD.



*Tone*



Having loved his own who were in the world,



he loved them to the end.

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## Gospel

*John 13:1–15,34*

<sup>1</sup>Before the Passover Festival, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved those who were his own in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup>By the time the supper took place, the Devil had already put the idea into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup>Jesus knew that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God. <sup>4</sup>He got up from the supper and laid aside his outer garment. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. <sup>5</sup>Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. <sup>6</sup>He came to Simon Peter, who asked him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup>Jesus answered him, "You do not understand what I am doing now, but later you will understand." <sup>8</sup>Peter told him, "You will never, ever, wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with me." <sup>9</sup>"Lord, not just my feet," Simon Peter replied, "but also my hands and my head!" <sup>10</sup>Jesus told him, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet, but his body is completely clean. And you are clean, but not all of you." <sup>11</sup>Indeed, he knew who was going to betray him. That is why he said, "Not all of you are clean." <sup>12</sup>After Jesus had washed their feet and put on his outer garment, he reclined at the table again. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup>"You call me Teacher and Lord. You are right, because I am." <sup>14</sup>Now if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup>Yes, I have given you an example so that you also would do just as I have done for you. <sup>34</sup>"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also you are to love one another.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

## **659 Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior**

CW 659

### **Sermon**

### **A Cleansing Fountain**

#### **Zechariah 13:1-3**

On that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. In that day, declares the LORD of Armies, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered. I will also remove the prophets and the impure spirit from the land. If anyone still prophesies, his father and his mother who gave birth to him will tell him, “You shall not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the LORD!” Then his father and his mother who gave birth to him will stab him when he prophesies.

### **Choir**

*The Blood of the Lamb*

*This piece is a choral version of a new hymn in the hymnal of the same name. If you would like to follow along with the words, it is hymn 418.*

*Stand*

## **The Blessings of Holy Communion – The Small Catechism**

What blessing do we receive through this eating and drinking?

**That is shown us by these words: “Given” and “poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Through these words we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in this sacrament. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.**

*Be seated*

## Prayer of the Church

Lord God, heavenly Father, author of the everlasting covenant and giver of the cup of salvation,

**We gather in your presence to offer you our thanks.**

You kept your promise to establish a new covenant through the blood of Jesus.

**We are humbled that you made this covenant with us.**

Jesus gave thanks to you when he broke the bread and lifted up the cup to you.

**We give you thanks for the bread and wine, his body and blood broken and lifted up for us.**

Lord Jesus, you are both Priest and sacrifice, we are filled with awe and amazement as we eat this meal of your body, broken for us, and your blood, shed for us.

**We remember your death in our place ever time we partake of this meal.**

We come to your table with nothing to offer you, no excuse for our sin.

**Through your sacrament of the New Testament, we are given assurance that our sins are forgiven and no longer remembered.**

Holy Spirit, dwell within us as we remember our Lord's death in this sacrament. Strengthen our faith and fill us with gratitude for your great mercy.

**Move us by this gift to love one another and do those things which please you.**

*Special prayers and intercessions may follow.*

Hear us Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

Help us to learn the lesson Jesus teaches as he washes the disciples feet.

**Empower us to love and serve each other with great humility. Amen.**

## Offering

*During the offering, please fill out the Friendship Register in the pew and pass it down to those sitting next to you.*

## Handbells

*Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted*

## The Sacrament

*Stand*

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

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 brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

## Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 1025

*Tune: AURELIA*



- 1 Sing, "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts on high,
- 2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How blest is Christ our King,





your ev - er - last - ing glo - ry fills earth and sea and sky.”  
who died as our Re - deem - er, e - ter - nal life to bring!



Our voic - es cry, “Ho - san - na!” Lord, hear our hum - ble plea:  
How blest are you, Lord Je - sus, now com - ing in God’s name!



in mer - cy, come and save us; in love, come set us free.  
“Ho - san - na in the high - est!” our grate - ful hearts pro - claim.

Text: Michael D. Schultz  
Tune: Samuel S. Wesley  
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## Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus’ death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son’s body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**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.

## Words of Institution

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

## Lamb of God

CW 1032

*Tune: SUANTRAI*



1 O Lamb of God, once lift - ed high up - on a  
2 O Lamb of God, your sac - ri - fice has can - celled



cross to bleed and die, in per - fect love you took our  
sin, has paid its price; your per - fect love will nev - er



place— be - stow on us your sav - ing grace.  
cease— have mer - cy, Lord, and grant us peace.

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*Be seated*

## Distribution

**662 Draw Near**

CW 662

# Holy Thursday: Stripping of the Altar

## Reading

*Matthew 26:4-57*

While Jesus was still speaking, suddenly Judas (one of the Twelve) arrived. With him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign: “The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him.” Immediately he went to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him. Jesus said to him, “Friend, why are you here?” Then they advanced, took hold of Jesus, and arrested him. Suddenly, one of the men with Jesus reached out his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place, because all who take the sword will die by the sword. Do you not realize that I could call on my Father, and at once he would provide me with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?” At that same time Jesus said to the crowd, “Have you come out to arrest me with swords and clubs as if I were a robber? Day after day I was sitting in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has happened so that the writings of the prophets would be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

# Day and Night I Cry To You

Psalm 88A



1 Day and night I cry to you: free me from my  
2 How the bur - den of your wrath leaves my soul in  
3 E - ven those I called my friends now con - sid - er



gnaw - ing fear; I am anx - ious, drained of strength,  
deep dis - may! Why, so of - ten through the years,  
me un - known; driv - en from my fam - i - ly,



marked as one whose death is near— would I praise you  
have you turned your face a - way? As a pris - 'ner  
I must bear my grief a - lone. In the dark - ness,



from the grave? Show me, LORD, your pow'r to save.  
of de - spair, am I ban - ished from your care?  
ask - ing, "Why?" night and day to you I cry.

Text: Martin E. Leckebusch

Tune: Martin Setchell

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*The minister exits in silence. Worshipers may remain for prayer and meditation before dispersing quietly.*