

# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Maundy Thursday



Thursday, April 2, 2026

6:00 p.m.

**St. Stephen Lutheran Church**

(850) 385-2728, Office

sslc@ststephenlutherantally.com, Email

<http://www.ststephenlutherantally.com>

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Rev. Tom Holdcraft, Pastor

Katharine Gossman, Music Director

Rita Ford, Office Manager

All Members, Ministers

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**Welcome, Everyone!**

**We are glad to have you with us this morning.** If you need assistance in finding anything, one of our ushers will be glad to help you.

**Restrooms are found** in the fellowship hall and office building to the right as you exit the sanctuary. Proceed up the stairs and through the glass door. Unisex bathrooms are available through the kitchen in the office area.

**“Let the Little Children Come” Matthew 19:14** - In accordance with St. Stephen’s mission “to be a welcoming community . . .” we encourage all ages to worship on Sundays. We also believe that children learn to welcome others by how they have been welcomed. If you are a parent of a young child, know that this community supports your efforts to engage your child in worship and understands that it can be a stressful process. Having children in worship is a joy that we treasure, so please know that we welcome you and your children as they learn to become active members in Christ’s body.

**Please remember** to turn off your cell phone during the liturgy.

**All the hymns** for the worship service are in the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship book and numbered by hymn, not page.

**St. Stephen Lutheran Church (ELCA) is a Reconciling in Christ congregation that explicitly welcomes people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. St. Stephen is equally committed to anti-racism. We welcome people without regard to race, ethnicity, age, family status, economic status, or differing abilities.**

**All are invited to receive the sacrament. Lutherans believe that Jesus Christ is present in, with and under the consecrated bread and wine of Holy Communion. Those not wishing to commune are welcome to the altar to receive a blessing. To indicate this, please cross your arms over your chest. If you are not able to come forward, please inform the ushers and the meal will be brought to you.**

# Maundy Thursday

## INTRODUCTION

*This evening our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection. Tonight we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal. As Jesus washed his disciples' feet, so we are called to give and receive love in humble service to one another. Formed into a new body in Christ through this holy meal, we are transformed by the mercy we have received and carry it into the world. Departing worship in solemn silence, we anticipate the coming days.*

*All hymns are found in the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship book.  
Please place your offering in the plate by the narthex as you exit the sanctuary.*





**+ GATHERING +**

*The ministers enter in silence.*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*The presiding minister invites the assembly into the confession, and then silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

Pastor Friends in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to struggle against sin, death, and the devil – all that keeps us from loving God and each other.. This is the struggle to which we were called at baptism. Within the community of the church, God never wearies of forgiving sin and giving peace of reconciliation. On this night let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor, and enter the celebration of the great Three Days reconciled with God and with one another.

Most merciful God,

**Congregation** 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.

P 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 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.

**C** Amen.

*The assembly stands.*



- 1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray;
- 2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for - giv - ing heart
- 3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:
- 4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls and bid re - sent - ment cease;



but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say.  
 that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?  
 how tri - fling oth - ers' debts to us; how great our debt to you!  
 then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905–1987, alt.

Music: DETROIT, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

Text © Oxford University Press 1969.

## GREETING

**P** 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

**P** Let us pray.

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 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.

**C** Amen.

*The assembly is seated.*



+ WORD +

## FIRST READING: Exodus 12:1-4, [5-10]11-14

*Israel remembered its deliverance from slavery in Egypt by celebrating the festival of Passover. This festival featured the Passover lamb, whose blood was used as a sign to protect God's people from the threat of death. The early church described the Lord's Supper using imagery from the Passover, especially in portraying Jesus as the lamb who delivers God's people from sin and death.*

<sup>1</sup>The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: <sup>2</sup>This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>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. [<sup>5</sup>Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup>You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.

<sup>7</sup>They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. <sup>8</sup>They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. <sup>9</sup>Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. <sup>10</sup>You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ] <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>For 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 gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. <sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19**

*We pray the Psalm responsively.*

Lector <sup>1</sup>I love the LORD, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication,

**C <sup>2</sup>for the LORD has given ear to me whenever I called.**

L <sup>12</sup>How shall I repay the LORD for all the good things God has done for me?

**C <sup>13</sup>I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.**

L <sup>14</sup>I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people.

**C <sup>15</sup>Precious in your sight, O LORD, is the death of your servants.**

L <sup>16</sup>O LORD, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

**C <sup>17</sup>I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the LORD.**

L <sup>18</sup>I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people,

**C <sup>19</sup>in the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Amen.**

**SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

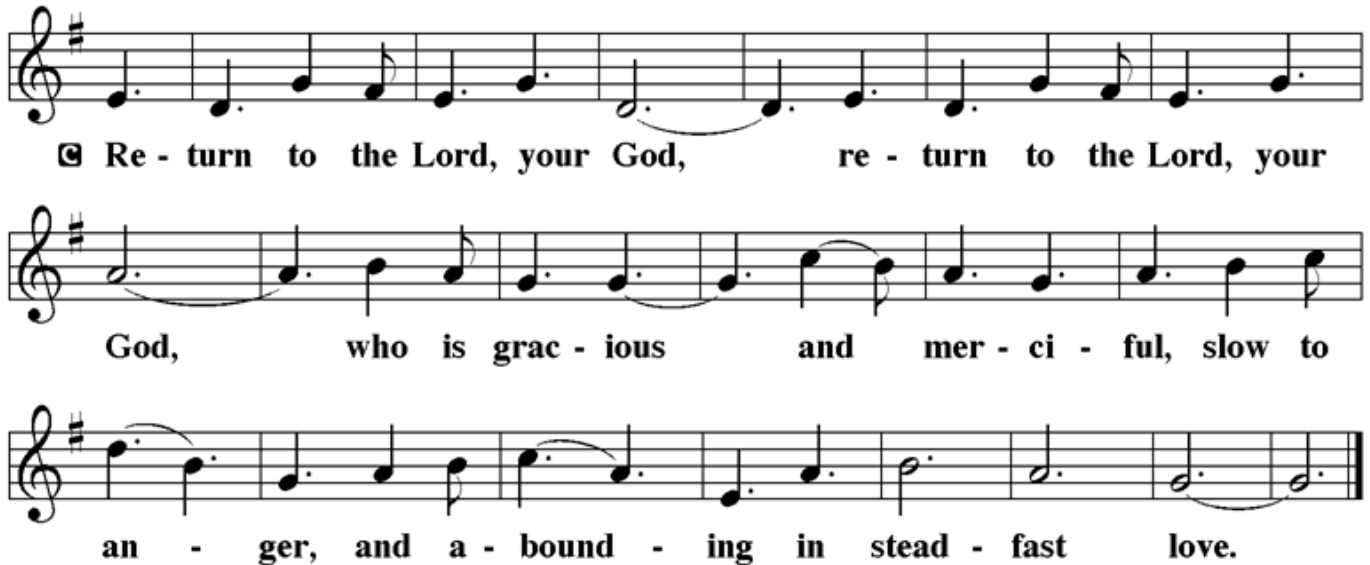
*In the bread and cup of the Lord's Supper, we experience intimate fellowship with Christ and with one another, because it involves his body given for us and the new covenant in his blood. Faithful participation in this meal is a living proclamation of Christ's death until he comes in the future.*

<sup>23</sup>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, <sup>24</sup>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." <sup>25</sup>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." <sup>26</sup>For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**R** The Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *Singing, we welcome the gospel.*



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your  
God, who is grac - ious and mer - ci - ful, slow to  
an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

## **GOSPEL: John 13:1-17, 31b-35**

*The story of the last supper in John's gospel recalls a remarkable event not mentioned elsewhere: Jesus performs the duty of a slave, washing the feet of his disciples and urging them to do the same for one another.*

P The holy gospel according to John, the thirteenth chapter.

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

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper <sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup>got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup>Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." <sup>8</sup>Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." <sup>9</sup>Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" <sup>10</sup>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." <sup>11</sup>For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

<sup>12</sup>After 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? <sup>13</sup>You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup>So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup>For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup>Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup>If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

<sup>31b</sup>"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup>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.' <sup>34</sup>I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

P The gospel of the Lord.

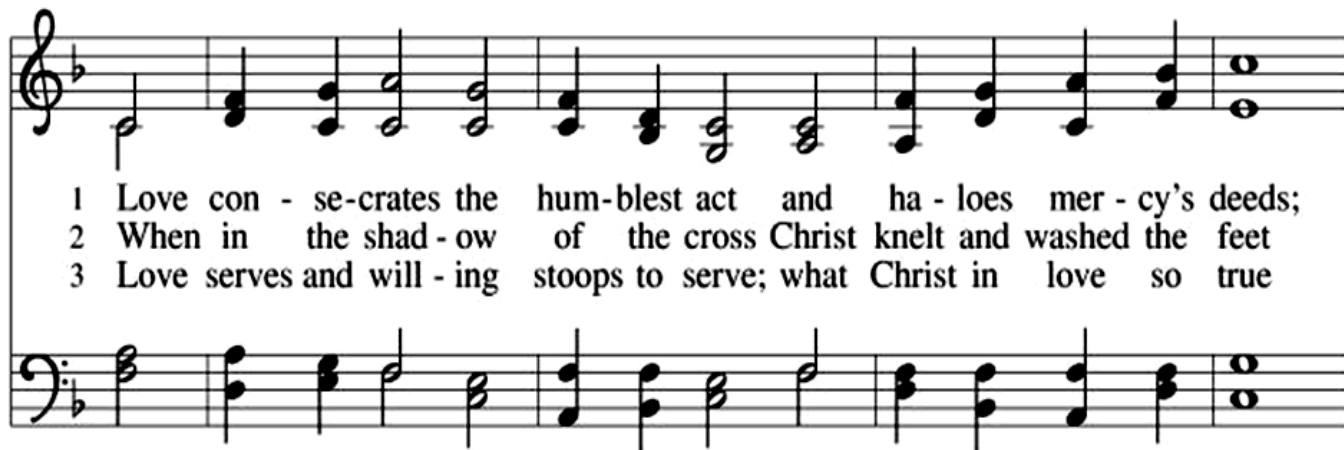
**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

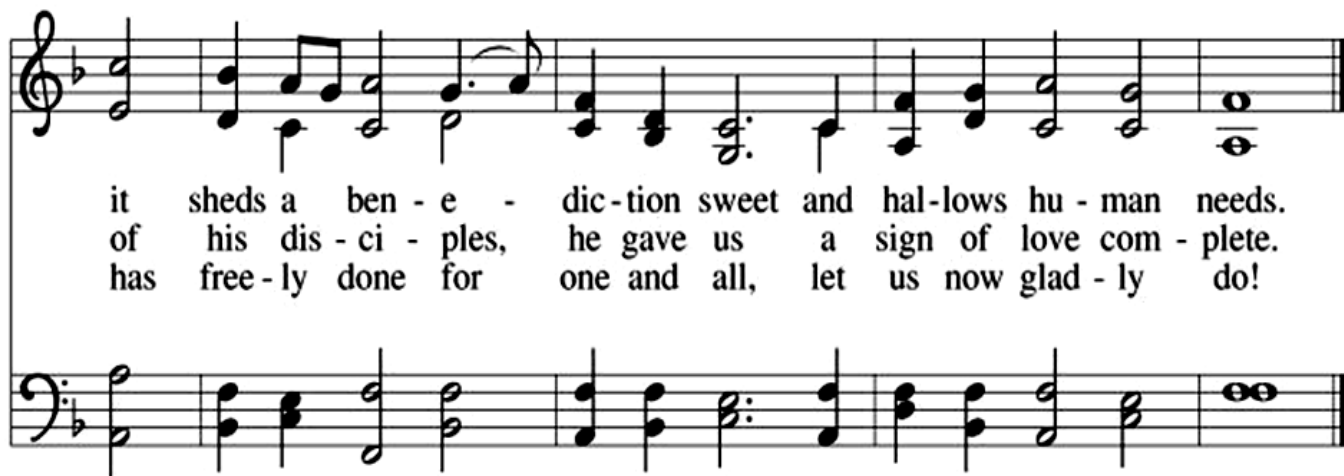
## SERMON

*The assembly stands.*

### HYMN OF THE DAY     360     *Love Consecrates the Humblest Acts*



1 Love con - se-crates the hum-blest act and ha - loes mer - cy's deeds;  
2 When in the shad - ow of the cross Christ knelt and washed the feet  
3 Love serves and will - ing stoops to serve; what Christ in love so true



it sheds a ben - e - dic-tion sweet and hal-lows hu - man needs.  
of his dis - ci - ples, he gave us a sign of love com - plete.  
has free - ly done for one and all, let us now glad - ly do!

Text: Silas B. McManus, 1845–1917  
Music: TWENTY-FOURTH, attr. Lucius Chapin, 1760–1842



## + ORDER FOR HEALING +

### INTRODUCTION

P Our Lord Jesus healed many as a sign of the reign of God come near and sent the disciples to continue this work of healing - with prayer, the laying on of hands, and anointing. In the name of Christ, the great healer and reconciler of the world, we now entrust to God all who are in need of healing.

### LAYING ON OF HANDS AND ANOINTING WITH OIL

P Siblings in Christ, I invite you to come and receive a sign of healing and wholeness in the name of the triune God.

*Those who wish to receive a laying on of hands (and anointing) may kneel or stand at the altar rail.*

P Receive this oil as a sign of forgiveness and healing in Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

**HYMNS**    **614**    *There Is a Balm in Gilead*  
              **612**    *Healer of Our Every Ill*

*After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands, and the presiding minister continues.*

P Let us pray.

Merciful Lord God, constant source of all healing, we give you thanks for all your gifts of strength and life, and above all we thank you for the gift of your Son, through whom we have health and salvation. As we wait for that day when there will be no more pain, help us by your Holy Spirit to be assured of your power in our lives and to trust in your eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends: God of grace,*

***Congregational response: hear our prayer.***

## PEACE

A The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

*The people greet one another with the sign of Christ's peace.*

*The assembly stands.*



**+ MEAL +**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior, Jesus Christ; whose suffering and death gave salvation to all. You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and  
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy". It consists of five staves of music in a single system, written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are printed below the notes. The first staff begins with a square symbol, likely indicating a specific tempo or performance instruction. The music features a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est."

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus 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.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**C 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

P All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

## LAMB OF GOD

**☩** Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

*The assembly is seated.*

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*As the ushers direct you, come to the altar using the side aisles and return to your seat via the central aisle. The assisting ministers offer both wine and grape juice from pouring cups; take a communion glass from the tray as you approach the rail. Leave the empty glass on the lower level of the rail. Wheat-free wafers are available— simply tell the pastor you prefer them.*

## COMMUNION HYMN

**666** *What Wondrous Love Is This (please see next page)*

*The assembly stands.*

1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What  
 2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when  
 3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing; to  
 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on; and

won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is this  
 I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when I was sink - ing down  
 God and to the Lamb I will sing; to God and to the Lamb,  
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm free,

that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my  
 be - neath God's righ-teous frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my  
 who is the great I AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will  
 I'll sing God's love for me, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing

soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul?  
 soul, for my soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul.  
 sing, I will sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.  
 on, I'll sing on; and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt.

Music: WONDROUS LOVE, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; arr. Paul J. Christiansen, 1914-1997, alt.

Arr. © 1955 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

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.

C Amen.

*The assembly is seated.*

## STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

PSALM 88 (Chanted by cantor)



<sup>1</sup>O LORD, my | God, my Savior,  
by day and night I | cry to you.

<sup>2</sup>Let my prayer enter in- | to your presence;  
incline your ear to my | lamentation.

<sup>3</sup>For I am | full of trouble;  
my life is at the brink | of the grave.

<sup>4</sup>I am counted among those who go down | to the pit;  
I have become like one who | has no strength;

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

<sup>6</sup>You have laid me in the depths | of the pit,  
in dark places, and in | the abyss.

<sup>7</sup>Your anger weighs up- | on me heavily,  
and all your great waves | overwhelm me.

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

<sup>9</sup>My sight has failed me be- | cause of trouble;  
LORD, I have called upon you daily; I have stretched out my | hands to you.

<sup>10</sup>Do you work wonders | for the dead?  
Will those who have died stand up and | give you thanks?

<sup>11</sup>Will your loving kindness be declared | in the grave,  
your faithfulness in the land | of destruction?

<sup>12</sup>Will your wonders be known | in the dark  
or your righteousness in the country where all | is forgotten?

<sup>13</sup>But as for me, O LORD, I cry to | you for help;  
in the morning my prayer | comes before you.

<sup>14</sup>LORD, why have you re- | jected me?  
Why have you hidden your | face from me?

<sup>15</sup>Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the | point of death;  
I have borne your terrors | and am helpless.

<sup>16</sup>Your blazing anger has swept | over me;  
your terrors | have destroyed me;

<sup>17</sup>they surround me all day long | like a flood;  
they encompass me on | every side.

<sup>18</sup>My friend and my neighbor you have put a- | way from me,  
and darkness is my on- | ly companion.

*All depart in silence.*

***The service continues tomorrow, Good Friday at 6:00 pm.***

**Serving tonight:**

Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Preaching, Presiding

Katharine Gossman, Music Director

Audey Post, Assisting Minister

Rudy Hehn, Cantor

Rita Ford, Cup Minister

Judi Duffy, Lector

Bob Eshleman, Usher