



First Lutheran Church

Gospel of Matthew

Summer 2026 Reading Challenge



Introduction

Week 13: Matthew chapters 25 and 26

	Chapter Outline
Matthew 25:1-46	Parables of warnings and judgment
Matthew 26:1-16	events leading up to the Passover
Matthew 26:17-35	The Passover Supper
Matthew 26:26-46	Gethsemane
Matthew 26:57-75	Jesus before the high priest, Peter's Denials

What to Expect

Chapter 25 concludes Jesus' teaching during holy week. Jesus shares three parables that teach about warnings about the end times and judgment. The third of these identifying how God will judge based on how believers treat others. These parables feel personal, because we have been trained to read the Bible as a personal text within a personal relationship with God. We do need to remember Jesus was speaking in the context of a community relationship with God, these parables are speaking to the whole community. Yes, we are individually part of the community, but these warnings apply to the whole community. Read these texts and see how the whole community fits here, how the whole church is warned about readiness for the return of Jesus, how the whole church will be judged for actions toward the least of these.

Chapter 26 begins the stories of Jesus' passion. We begin with events that we can assume take place on Wednesday. The plotting to kill Jesus and Judas agreeing to be the one wrap around a story of Jesus being anointed. Jesus makes clear this anointing is preparing him for burial. Something that in the story, no one around him understands yet. We get it, because we have read the ending. But Judas doesn't, so he goes and agrees to betray Jesus.

The story that follows as it becomes Thursday is one we are all familiar with. But much like we do with the Christmas story in Matthew and Luke and combine the stories to make one, we often do this with the four Gospels telling these events. Read through Matthew 26 and next week's 26:7 and 28 very slowly. Pay attention to what Matthew writes. What is missing here from your knowing the story. Why do the details Matthew includes matter? Where do the details Matthew does not include come from? Check out the other gospels if you need to. Discover why each gospel writer tells this story differently. What is Matthew's aim and goal for us to get out of this and why is it different from the other three?

Gathered by God, we live our faith with: Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy

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2026 Summer Reading Challenge

Throughout this summer, First Lutheran Church will engage the Gospel of Matthew.

Each week we will read 2 chapters of Matthew.

Resources will be available along the way, including:

- An introduction to the week
- A Deep Dive into a big theme of Matthew's Gospel
- A Deep Dive into one part of this week's reading
- A Devotional based on one part of this week's reading
- A Video to read along with Pastor Jamie.

Check out our website and our Facebook page for weekly and daily postings related to this reading challenge.