

Maundy Thursday Worship Service – April 2, 2026

Worship words from *Fresh Winds of the Spirit*¹ by Lavon Bayler (indicated by †)
and *Prayers to Share Year A*² by David Sparks (indicated by *)

Welcome and Announcements

A Moment of Reflection

Call to Worship[†]

Come, people of God, to know again who you are.
Return to the One who gives you life.

**We come as children of God,
longing for a closer walk with our Creator.**

This is the memorial observance of Jesus' last supper,
a time for serious reflection and self-examination.

**We gather to break bread together
and to experience our common life in the body of Christ.**

This is a time to put away divisions and grudges,
to reach out with Christ's love to all sisters and brothers.

**As Jesus washed the feet of the disciples,
we would humble ourselves in simple acts of kindness.**

The mandate of this holy night comes from Christ-
"a new commandment ... that you love one another."

**Even as Christ has loved us,
we will enter wholeheartedly into love for all.**

Gathering Hymn *"Three Holy Days Enfold Us Now"* #930 (All Creation Sings)

1. **Three holy days enfold us now in washing feet and breaking bread,
in cross and font and life renewed:
in Christ, God's firstborn from the dead.**
2. **The myst'ry hid from ages past is here revealed in word and sign,
for Jesus' story is our own:
new life through death is God's design.**
3. **Christ, lifted high upon the tree, before you ev'ry knee
shall bend and ev'ry tongue in praise proclaim:
"You are the Lord of all. Amen."**

¹ *Fresh Winds of the Spirit: Liturgical Resources for Year A* by Lavon Bayler © 1986 The Pilgrim Press, New York, NY

² *Prayers to Share: Responsive Prayers for Each Sunday of the Church Year – Year A* by David Sparks © 2004 David Sparks, published by Wood Lake Books, Kelowna, BC

Opening Prayer *

We are ready to serve as Jesus served,
those closest to us: family and friends.

Our service reaches out, as the service of Jesus did,
**to touch the powerless, those deemed to be worthless,
 and troublemakers.**

It is hard to make the sacrifices we need, to meet crying needs;
yet we have a pattern before us, of Jesus the Compassionate One.

He went out of his way to identify those poor in resources,
 and poor in spirit;
and the strength of our discipleship is tested by his example. Amen.

Call to Confession +

We are welcome to come to Christ's banquet because of our own need. But we are also challenged to broaden our concern to include others – to identify with them in their difficulties, to feel with them the problems they face, to care about what happens to them, to be actively helpful. Unless our own needs are placed in this larger context, we cannot experience fully the forgiving love of God that Christ came to share with us. Let us come to God, recognizing how unworthy we are to approach the One who embraces the universe, yet believing we are known and welcomed in this Awesome Presence. Let us confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession +

Eternal God,
**made known to us in Jesus of Nazareth, we come to this holy night
 recognizing that we share the self-centeredness, inattention, and
 fearfulness of the disciples.**

**We are more concerned about our own place in life than we are about
 others' well-being. We say and do things that hurt others. We exaggerate or
 belittle our own gifts. We feel cut off from others, by our own action or
 theirs, by misunderstandings or deliberate intent. We have been more
 interested in saving face or getting even than in accepting the reconciling
 love Christ offers. We are reluctant to admit mistakes, ask forgiveness, or try
 new and better ways.**

**Grant us courage to confess our limitations to one another as well as to you.
 Give us insight to understand ourselves, to face up to those attitudes and
 actions that have separated us from our best selves, from others, and from
 you. We want to learn to love as you have loved us. In Christ's name. Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness ⁺

The apostle Paul wrote to church members in Corinth: "When we are judged by the Sovereign, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world." Times of self-examination and repentance are not to put us down, but to raise us up to new possibilities. This is a night for laying aside the burden of our fears, hatreds, and alienation, that God's love in Christ may reign in us. Forgiveness and renewal are God's gift to each of us; let us offer them to others. God loves you; accept that love and demonstrate it in your own life. Amen.

Hymn of Praise "God Loved the World" #323

1. **God loved the world so that he gave
his only Son the lost to save,
that all who would in him believe should everlasting life receive.**
2. **Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,
who was made flesh and suffered death;
all who confide in Christ alone
are built on this chief cornerstone.**
3. **If you are ill, if death draws near,
this truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus rescues us from death;
that is the firmest ground of faith.**
4. **Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
forgives all sins that you have done,
and justified by Jesus' blood,
your baptism grants the highest good.**
5. **All glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To you, O blessed Trinity, be praise now and eternally!**

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Exodus 12:1-4, 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. A reading from the book of Exodus, the 12th chapter:

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.

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."

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Hymn "Lamb of God" #336

1. **Your only Son, no sin to hide, but you have sent him from your side to walk upon this guilty sod and to become the Lamb of God.**

Refrain: **O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God.
Oh, wash me in your precious blood,
my Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.**

2. **Your gift of love we crucified. We laughed and scorned him as he died.
The humble king we named a fraud and sacrificed the Lamb of God.**

(Refrain)

3. **I was so lost, I should have died, but you have brought me to your side to be led by your staff and rod and to be called a lamb of God.**

(Refrain)

Scripture 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. A reading from the first letter to the Corinthians, the 11th chapter:

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.

Here ends the reading.

Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Gospel Acclamation "Return to God" (Lenten Verse from *Now the Feast*)

**Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy;
come, seek the tender faithfulness of God.** *(repeat)*

The Gospel: John 13:1–17, 31b–35

The holy gospel according to John, the 13th chapter.

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.”

ter 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.

When Judas was gone, Jesus said, “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.”

The gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: *Passover Transformed*

Hymn of the Day “*Christ, You Often Sat at Dinner*”³ (tune #678 ELW)

- 1. Christ, you often sat at dinner with the outcasts and the poor;
You reached out to every sinner, sharing bread and wine and more —
You proclaimed that God’s great table is a joyful, welcome place;
No one wears an outcast label or is turned away from grace.**

³ text © 2011 Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (www.carolynshymns.com)

2. **Some who heard your gracious teaching
murmured at the things they saw,
For your love was more out-reaching than the limits of their law.
When they judged the ones you welcomed,
when they noted others' sin,
You responded, "In God's kingdom, all are gladly welcomed in!"**
3. **Lord, you blessed a meal and shared it,
giving meanings that were new:
"It's my body; take and eat it! It's my blood poured out for you!"
Risen Christ, they knew your presence in the breaking of the bread;
In that meal was God's abundance: All remembered! All were fed!**
4. **Christ, we know that you are able to bring healing through your cross;
Bring together at your table all for whom you paid the cost.
Though the feasting in your kingdom may still seem so far away,
May we share your meal of welcome as we wait that glorious day.**

Apostles' Creed

Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession ⁴

On this night when Jesus gave us a new commandment to love one another, let us bring our prayers before the One whose love knows no bounds. Each

⁴ *Prayers of Intercession* from **Sundays and Seasons** © Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN.
(sundaysandseasons.com)

petition will end with “Hear us, O God” and the congregational response “Your mercy is great.”

A brief silence.

Gracious host, you knelt to wash your disciples’ feet. Cleanse us from pride and self-centeredness, and teach us to love one another as you have loved us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creator God, the earth is yours and everything in it. Awaken us to care for all you have made and conserve the rich diversity of your good creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of the nations, guide the world’s leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Where they wield power unjustly, confront them. Where they are indifferent to suffering, awaken their conscience. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate One, embrace all who are lonely or in captivity, comfort the grieving, and relieve those in pain. Draw near to all who suffer (*especially...*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed redeemer, we give you thanks for this community of faith, and for all who gather around your table of grace. Unite us in love for you and for one another. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, we praise you for the great cloud of witnesses who now rest from their labors. At the last, gather us with them at your heavenly banquet. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, confident that you will strengthen us by your Spirit to love one another as Christ has loved us. We ask this in Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

Offering

(an offering plate is placed on the altar)

Offertory Prayer *

Bless, O God, all we have given in the service of Christ,
and bless these gifts as tokens of our continuing wish to serve.

Through them the hungry will be fed, the suffering will be supported, the exploited will have their eyes opened, and the Good News will be preached.
And the name of Jesus Christ will be honoured.

God be praised! Amen.

Choir Anthem “Remember Me”

The Great Thanksgiving ⁵

Blessed are you, O living God, sovereign of time and space.
 You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine.
 Your word leads us across the waters to freedom,
 passing over with us from death to life. Blessed be God forever!
Blessed be God forever!

Blessed are you, O living God, for your glory revealed in Jesus Christ.
 He is the Lamb, whose blood saves us from sin.
 He is your Servant, who washes our feet with mercy.
 He is himself our Food, the bread and cup of salvation.
 Blessed be God forever!
Blessed be God forever!

On the night in which he was betrayed, he 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. Blessed be God forever!
Blessed be God forever!

Blessed are you, O living God, for your Spirit of love.
 Feed us at this table with the body and blood of your Son.
 Make us servants of one another and of everyone in need.
 Bring us with all your people to the joy of the resurrection.
 Blessed be God forever!
Blessed be God forever!
 Amen, amen.
Amen, amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

We pray as our Servant and Lord Jesus Christ taught us, saying:

⁵ From *Pray, Praise, and Give Thanks: A Collection of Litanies, Laments, and Thanksgivings at Font and Table* by Gail Ramshaw, copyright © 2017 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.

**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.**

Those Communing online are invited to eat the bread and drink the wine/juice.

The congregation is ushered forward to the Altar Rail to receive the elements.

Prayer after Communion⁶

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. Amen.

Commission and Blessing⁺

You have been cleansed; you have communed;
you are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

**We have received God's forgiveness and blessing;
we have been reconciled with our sisters and brothers.**

Take with you the mandate we have from Christ:
"Love one another, as I have loved you."

**We will love in word and in deed,
reaching out with helping hands and caring hearts.**

Even in the face of rejection and suffering
we can this night rejoice with Jesus the Christ.

**We are free to make our witness to God's love
without fear of the consequences.**

You are the body of Christ and individually members of it;
go forth to serve in Christ's name.

We face the world well equipped and unafraid.

God, in Christ, goes with us every step of the way.

⁶ *Prayer after Communion* from **Sundays and Seasons** © Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN.
(sundaysandseasons.com)

Closing Hymn "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" #338

1. **Beneath the cross of Jesus I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness, a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat and burdens of the day.**
2. **Upon the cross of Jesus, my eye at times can see
the very dying form of one who suffered there for me.
And from my contrite heart, with tears, two wonders I confess:
the wonder of his glorious love and my unworthiness.**
3. **I take, O cross, your shadow for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame, my glory all, the cross.**

Stripping of the Altar

*As the closing hymn is being sung the altar area is stripped in preparation for Good Friday.
Once the altar area is empty the congregation is asked to leave the sanctuary in silence.*