

Maundy Thursday

April 2, 2026



PROCLAMATION POINTS

The following are some thoughts and questions to be used for a text study on the weekly lessons, or for jump-starting the imagination of the preacher and hearer in preparing for the proclamation event.

Now, what is the Sacrament of the Altar?

Answer: It is the true body and blood of the Lord Christ, in and under the bread and wine, which we Christians are commanded by Christ's word to eat and drink. It is bread and wine set within God's Word and bound to it.

-Martin Luther-

The Large Catechism

John 13:1-35

Jesus was fully aware that he was about to be betrayed, as he shared his last supper with his closest friends. Even so, he humbled himself and washed each of the disciples' feet, including Judas. For us human beings, this kind of sacrificial love is difficult to understand. Our pride and sense of how things are supposed to go get in the way of what Jesus is doing for us. The notion that the Living God would stoop down to save sinners who don't deserve it can be rather off-putting. We prefer some system of merits because that is the only thing we experience in our daily lives. But the self-giving love of Jesus Christ is our only hope.

- Why did Peter find it inappropriate for his teacher to be washing his feet?
- Why is it much harder to allow someone to serve us than for us to serve another? What can we learn by letting others serve us in our times of need?

Exodus 12:1-14

This passage, as well as the others for this Maundy Thursday, deal with the shedding of blood. After Moses had been on Mount Sinai the first time, he was with the leaders of Israel at the foot of the mountain where God invited him, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu along with 70 elders to come up and worship from afar. Before they ascended, Moses explained all of the rules of the covenant with God. The people answered in one accord that they would be obedient to God's will. There Moses built an altar at the base of Mount Sinai and erected twelve pillars. There they made sacrifices to the Lord. Blood from the sacrificed animals was thrown on the altar and on the people. Then Moses and the other men went up the mountain near the Lord and they saw God and had a meal there.

- What exactly was the Sinai covenant all about? What were the two sides of the covenant promising to do for each other?
- Was this blood a foreshadowing of the bloodshed that Jesus would endure? If so how?

Psalms 116:12-19

The psalmist makes a votive offering to the Lord as a sign of his gratefulness that God has answered his prayers and saved his life. He who once cried, "Save me!" now makes a solemn promise of devotion to the Lord and is thankful for

all that God has done.

- In what ways do we show God that we are grateful for all he has done for us?

Hebrews 9:11-22

The author of Hebrews explained in this passage how Jesus is the new mediator of the covenant between God and his people. Sins against the first covenant at Sinai were committed against the Lord, but Jesus' death on the cross redeems the people, or pays back the covenant debt.

- How does Jesus' death, according to Hebrews, fulfill the covenant promise made between Israel and the Lord in the wilderness long ago?

In Hebrews 9:9-10 we hear how under the original covenant, the high priest could make sacrifices for the people, but these sacrifices only served for atoning the sins of ritual purity. They did nothing for a guilty conscience.

- How does Jesus' shed blood serve to grant forgiveness of the conscience as well as other sins?
- How does Jesus usher in the "New Covenant" while at the same time he IS the New Covenant? (Compare verse 15b with verse 26b.)

Matthew 26:17-30

At their final Passover meal together, Jesus was at the table with his disciples and he told them that there would be a betrayal. It's as if a ripple of murmurs went around the table as everyone present said to Jesus, "Is it going to be me, Lord? Am I the one?"

- Why do you suppose Judas asked Jesus if he would be the one to betray him? Didn't he already know what he was about to do?

Even though Jesus predicted that his friends would betray him, he still instituted the Sacrament of Holy Communion (our human label, not his) for them and for the future Body of Christ - the Church. He even says to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:28) He informed them that this would be the last time they would partake of this cup until he comes again.

- What did Jesus mean when he said that he would not drink again of this fruit of the vine until he is with them again in his Father's kingdom? Does it have anything to do with Holy Communion here and now? Or is it strictly about the end times?