

Maundy Thursday Vespers
April 2, 2026, 6:30pm

Opening Words

This is a day of remembrance for us. We lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

God of love, during Holy Week, we give you thanks for this night Jesus shared with his disciples. Between the public parade and the public charade is this intimate hour. Though even now we do not fully understand, we long to follow his example: to serve as he served, to love as he loved. Jesus promised that if we know these things and do them, we will be blessed. Help us, then, to know and to do all that Jesus taught. Though we betray and deny, we still come seeking a blessing, for this much we do know: we cannot live unless you bless us. Amen.

Hymn ~ *All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly* ~ No. 509

All who hunger, gather gladly;
holy manna is our bread.
Come from wilderness and wandering.
Here, in truth, we will be fed.
You that yearn for days of fullness,
all around us is our food.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, never strangers,
seeker, be a welcome guest.
Come from restlessness and roaming.
Here, in joy, we keep the feast.
We that once were lost and scattered
in communion's love have stood.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, sing together;
Jesus Christ is living bread.
Come from loneliness and longing.
Here, in peace, we have been led.
Blest are those who from this table
live their days in gratitude.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.

Prayer of Confession

Gathered on this Holy Thursday, we confess that we are capable of denying and betraying you and one another, no less than the first disciples. Forgive us, merciful God, and cleanse us of all our sin; then guide our feet to walk with you always. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Jesus knows us fully and offers love and forgiveness unconditionally. In gratitude for the grace given to us, and as a witness to our faith in Christ, we will love one another.

Sharing of Prayers and Lighting of Candles

Scripture

Matthew 26:17-30 Common English Bible (CEB)

¹⁷ On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?”

¹⁸ He replied, “Go into the city, to a certain man, and say, ‘The teacher says, ‘My time is near. I’m going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’”¹⁹ The disciples did just as Jesus instructed them. They prepared the Passover.

²⁰ That evening he took his place at the table with the twelve disciples. ²¹ As they were eating he said, “I assure you that one of you will betray me.”

²² Deeply saddened, each one said to him, “I’m not the one, am I, Lord?”

²³ He replied, “The one who will betray me is the one who dips his hand with me into this bowl. ²⁴ The Human One goes to his death just as it is written about him. But how terrible it is for that person who betrays the Human One! It would have been better for him if he had never been born.”

²⁵ Now Judas, who would betray him, replied, “It’s not me, is it, Rabbi?”

Jesus answered, “You said it.”

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take and eat. This is my body.” ²⁷ He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from this, all of you. ²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many so that their sins may be forgiven. ²⁹ I tell you, I won’t drink wine again until that day when I drink it in a new way with you in my Father’s kingdom.” ³⁰ Then, after singing songs of praise, they went to the Mount of Olives.



Hymn ~ *Let Us Break Bread Together* ~ No. 525

Let us break bread together on our knees; (on our knees)
let us break bread together on our knees.

Refrain:

When I fall on my knees,
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)

Let us drink wine together on our knees; (on our knees)
let us drink wine together on our knees. (*Refrain*)

Let us praise God together on our knees; (on our knees)
let us praise God together on our knees. (*Refrain*)

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give you our thanks and praise

Eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe, You are our God, and we are the creatures of your hand. You made us from the dust of the earth, breathed into us the breath of life, and set us in your world to love and serve you. When we rejected your love and ignored your wisdom, you did not reject us. You loved us still and called us to turn again to you in obedience and in love. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Out of your great love for the world, you sent Jesus among us to set us free from the tyranny of evil. He lived as one of us, sharing our joys and sorrows. By his dying and rising, he releases us from bondage to sin and frees us from the dominion of death.

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Communion

Prayer

Hymn ~ *We Come as Guests Invited* ~ No. 504

We come as guests invited
when Jesus bids us dine,
his friends on earth united
to share the bread and wine;
the bread of life is broken;
the wine is freely poured
for us, in solemn token
of Christ our dying Lord.

We eat and drink, receiving
from Christ the grace we need,
and in our hearts believing
on him by faith we feed;
with wonder and thanksgiving
for love that knows no end,
we find in Jesus living
our ever-present friend.
One bread is ours for sharing,
one single fruitful vine,
our fellowship declaring
renewed in bread and wine:
renewed, sustained, and given
by token, sign, and word,
the pledge and seal of heaven,
the love of Christ our Lord.

Blessing

