

Maundy Thursday Evening Devotions - April 9 2020 7pm

Good evening everyone,

As we have guests joining us this evening, I have included my usual directions to prepare for devotions. **Please read this through first.**

I hope you are able to gather everyone in your household together this evening. Perhaps around your kitchen or dining room table. I hope you find this time together supportive and uplifting.

If you are not alone - assign parts of this beforehand. **Esp. the roles of Lucy & Charlie Brown in the homily.** If you don't have a Bible you can google the scripture readings and print them out too. Adjust the font size for your use if you print this doc. out. Liturgy is from LBW.

Place a focus piece in the centre of your table – a candle, a cross, **and a wine glass with wine or juice and some bread.** Include a Bible also.

Perhaps print out copies of this for everyone present. Shut off all the distractions in your home. Sit in the quiet for a bit –take a few deep (yoga) breaths.

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Gathering Together

The Lord be with You: and also with you.

Grace to you and peace from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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 the 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.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

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.

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 been 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. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day:

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of His betrayal, Jesus gave us one commandment, to love one another as He loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts. 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

The Word

Exodus 12: 1-4, 11-14 Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 1Corinthians 1:23-26

John 13: 1-17, 31-35

Homily

My granddaughter asked me to explain what Passover means. So here is this very short explanation, “In the [Book of Exodus](#), (in the Old testament) God helped the [Israelites](#) escape from slavery in [ancient Egypt](#) by inflicting [ten plagues](#) upon the Egyptians before the [Pharaoh](#) would release the Israelite slaves. The last of the plagues was [death](#). The Israelites were instructed to mark the doorposts of

their homes with the blood of a slaughtered spring lamb and, upon seeing this, the spirit of the Lord knew to **pass over** these homes. Hence the English name of the holiday.”^{[11] 1}—from Wikipedia.org/Passover

As a major Jewish holiday the Passover and Seder meals celebrate freedom and are a remembrance and retelling of the story of the deliverance from Egypt. Many of you have participated in the ritual meal on past Maunday Thursdays at St. James.

As you read all the scripture texts in this service you will see a glimpse of the Passover. “The Passover provides an essential background for the New Testament presentation of the death of Jesus and for understanding the meal Jesus shared with his disciples on the night before he died. In the Synoptic gospels, Jesus’ Last Supper with his disciples is a Passover meal” {Sparks pg 255 **Feasting on The Word**}.

We remember that Jesus was crucified on Good Friday as the Passover Lamb. We all have seen the beautiful paintings of the Last Supper completed by many artists.

In tonight’s gospel Jesus washes the disciples’ feet. If there’s anybody who should NOT be on his knees washing the others feet, it is Jesus. Suddenly, the mood in the room changes from anger to guilt. Then for the disciples and for us this evening, we have been given again the new commandment of John 13: vs 34 “*love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.*”

We are all in the middle of a global health crisis right now. When there is any kind of a family crisis – we gather together and talk earnestly with each other. We talk about what we are going to do in dealing with the present situation. Differences are laid aside. Personal desires are really not important when it comes to dealing appropriately with the crisis at hand. In our responses, the learning curves for all of us are fast and steep. But it is hard to *talk about LOVE*.

Thanks to Charles M. Schultz for this conversation –I think **Lucy and Charlie Brown** make the point. **Lucy** says to Charlie Brown: “*You know what I don’t understand? I don’t understand love!*”

Charlie Brown: *"Who does?"*

Lucy: *"Explain love to me, Charlie Brown"*

Charlie Brown: *"You can't explain love! I can recommend a book or a poem or a painting, but I can't explain love."*

Lucy: *"Well, try, Charlie Brown, try!"*

So Charlie says: *"Well, let's say I see this beautiful, cute little girl walk by!"*

Lucy interrupts-*"Why does she have to be cute?" HUH? Why can't someone fall in love with someone with freckles and a big nose? Explain that!"*

Charlie: *"Well, maybe you are right. Let's just say I see this girl walk by with this great big nose"*

Lucy shouts, *"I didn't say GREAT BIG NOSE."*

Hanging his head, which he often did when he dealt with Lucy, **Charlie says,** *"not only can you not explain love - you can't even talk about it."*

So maybe we can't talk about love but we can look to the model of love that Christ set out before us. As we accept His love for us, we are empowered to give it freely to others. As we give away the love we have received, we become co-workers with the Spirit who seeks to draw the entire world to Christ. There is also a lot of grace packed into this command of His. Everytime you reach out to another person during this time of distancing – is an example of love. We are God's hands and feet in the world today. God has claimed each and every one of us – each forgotten brother-and each neglected sister. We are empowered to live as Christ in the world today. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 278 in The Lutheran Book of Worship - The doxology.

Now take away all of your devotional centerpieces, as tomorrow when we gather it will be Good Friday and there will just be the bare wooden table.