

# MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 2, 2026



# Bethlehem

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LUTHERAN CHURCH

**100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
**1926 - 2026**

*Proclaiming Christ. Nurturing Faith. Restoring Hope.*

## ***Welcome to Worship***

*We're so glad you're here. For a century, Bethlehem has gathered God's people around His gifts. Rooted in the historic liturgy and the teachings of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, worship here has always centered on what God does for us. We gather around His Word and His Sacraments, where Jesus Himself is present—speaking forgiveness, sustaining life, and giving hope. Worship is not first about what we bring, but about how God serves us, and how we respond with praise, prayer, and thanksgiving.*

*For one hundred years, this has been our shared calling: Proclaiming Christ. Nurturing Faith. Restoring Hope. Generation after generation, God has been at work here—gathering His people, forming them through His Word and gifts, and sending them into the world. And He is not finished yet. As a Gospel presence in our neighborhood, we trust that the same faithful God who carried us through the past is shaping what is to come. Whether this is your first visit or your spiritual home, you belong here. May this time of worship nurture your faith, fill you with Christ's hope, and send you out ready to proclaim His love in word and deed.*

## **REGARDING THE LORD'S SUPPER**

At Bethlehem, we believe that in the Lord's Supper, Jesus gives us more than a symbol—He gives us Himself. In, with, and under the bread and wine, we receive His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, the strengthening of faith, and the unity of His people. This is how Christ continues to proclaim His saving work and nurture our faith today.

As we prepare to receive this gift, we follow the Scriptures and the Small Catechism in examining ourselves: Do I believe I am a sinner in need of God's grace? Do I trust in Jesus as my Savior? Do I believe that Christ is truly present in this meal? Do I desire to turn from sin and live in faith and love? Whoever answers yes to these is truly worthy and well prepared.

Bethlehem is a congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and we ask that all who commune share our confession of faith. If you are not yet instructed in this teaching or have questions, we warmly invite you to come forward for a blessing—simply cross your arms over your chest—or speak with our pastor after the service. We are glad you're here, and we would love to walk with you as we grow in Christ together.

***Children's Activity bags are available in the Narthex.  
Please remember to return them to the rack after the service.***

# + PREPARATION +

## PRESERVICE MUSIC

### WELCOME

### RINGING OF THE BELLS

### HYMN

LSB #420 (sts. 1, 2, 4, 5)

## CHRIST, THE LIFE OF ALL THE LIVING



1 Christ, the life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the death of  
2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast tak - en on Thee Bonds and stripes, a  
4 Heart - less scof - fers did sur-round Thee, Treat - ing Thee with  
5 Thou hast suf - fered men to bruise Thee, That from pain I



death, our foe, Who, Thy - self for me once giv - ing  
cru - el rod; Pain and scorn were heaped up - on Thee,  
shame - ful scorn And with pierc - ing thorns they crowned Thee.  
might be free; False - ly did Thy foes ac - cuse Thee:



To the dark - est depths of woe: Through Thy suf - f'rings,  
O Thou sin - less Son of God! Thus didst Thou my  
All dis - grace Thou, Lord, hast borne, That as Thine Thou  
Thence I gain se - cu - ri - ty; Com - fort - less Thy



death, and mer - it I e - ter - nal life in - her - it.  
soul de - liv - er From the bonds of sin for - ev - er.  
might - est own me And with heav'n - ly glo - ry crown me.  
soul did lan - guish Me to com - fort in my an - guish.



Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.

*(Stand)*

## **INVOCATION AND OPENING SENTENCES**

Pastor In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation Amen.**

Pastor I will go to the altar of God,

**Congregation to God my exceeding joy.**

Pastor Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**Congregation who made heaven and earth.**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Pastor O almighty God, merciful Father,

**Congregation I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

Pastor God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

**Congregation Amen.**

Pastor Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

**Congregation Yes.**

Pastor Let it be done for you as you believe.

In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation Amen.**

# + SERVICE OF THE WORD +

HYMN

TFBF #275 (sts. 1, 3, 4)

## GOD IS SO GOOD



1 God is so good, God is so good.  
3 He saved my soul, he saved my soul.  
4 I praise his name, I praise his name.

God is so good, he's so good to me.  
he saved my soul name, he's so good to me.  
I praise his name, he's so good to me.

Text: traditional

Music: God Is So Good, traditional

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor The Lord be with you.

**Congregation And with thy spirit.**

Pastor Let us pray. O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifest in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Congregation Amen.**

(Sit)

**OLD TESTAMENT**

Exodus 24:3-11

<sup>3</sup>Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the just decrees. And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do.” <sup>4</sup>And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup>And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. <sup>6</sup>And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. <sup>7</sup>Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” <sup>8</sup>And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

<sup>9</sup>Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, <sup>10</sup>and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. <sup>11</sup>And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

Leader                      This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation              Thanks be to God.**

## **EPISTLE**

Hebrews 9:11-22

<sup>11</sup>When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) <sup>12</sup>he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. <sup>13</sup>For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, <sup>14</sup>how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. <sup>15</sup>Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. <sup>16</sup>For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. <sup>17</sup>For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. <sup>18</sup>Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. <sup>19</sup>For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, <sup>20</sup>saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." <sup>21</sup>And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. <sup>22</sup>Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Leader                      This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation              Thanks be to God.**

*(Stand)*

**HOLY GOSPEL**

Matthew 26:17-30

<sup>17</sup>Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?” <sup>18</sup>He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’” <sup>19</sup>And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

<sup>20</sup>When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. <sup>21</sup>And as they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” <sup>22</sup>And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?” <sup>23</sup>He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. <sup>24</sup>The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” <sup>25</sup>Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

<sup>26</sup>Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” <sup>27</sup>And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, <sup>28</sup>for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup>I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

<sup>30</sup>And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Pastor                      This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Congregation            Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

(Sit)

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

LSB #634 (sts.. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)

**THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD**



1 The death of Je - sus Christ, our Lord, We cel - e -  
2 He blot - ted out with His own blood The judg - ment  
3 That this for - ev - er true shall be He gives a -  
4 His Word pro - claims and we be - lieve That in this  
7 But blest is each be - liev - ing guest Who in these



brate with one ac - cord; It is our com - fort  
that a - gainst us stood; For us He full a -  
sol - emn guar - an - tee: In this His ho - ly  
Sup - per we re - ceive His ver - y bod - y,  
prom - is - es finds rest; For Je - sus shall in



in dis - tress, Our heart's sweet joy and hap - pi - ness.  
tone - ment made, And all our debt He ful - ly paid.  
Sup - per here We taste His love so sweet, so near.  
as He said, His ver - y blood for sin - ners shed.  
love re - main With all who here His grace ob - tain.

Text and tune: Public domain

**SERMON**

*“Jesus Gave Up His Rights”*

*(Stand)*

**APOSTLES' CREED**

LSB pg.192

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.**

**From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting.**

**Amen.**

*(Sit)*

**OFFERING**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

## + SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +

(Stand)

### PREFACE

LSB pg. 194

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation **And with thy spirit.**

Pastor Lift up your hearts.

Congregation **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Pastor Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

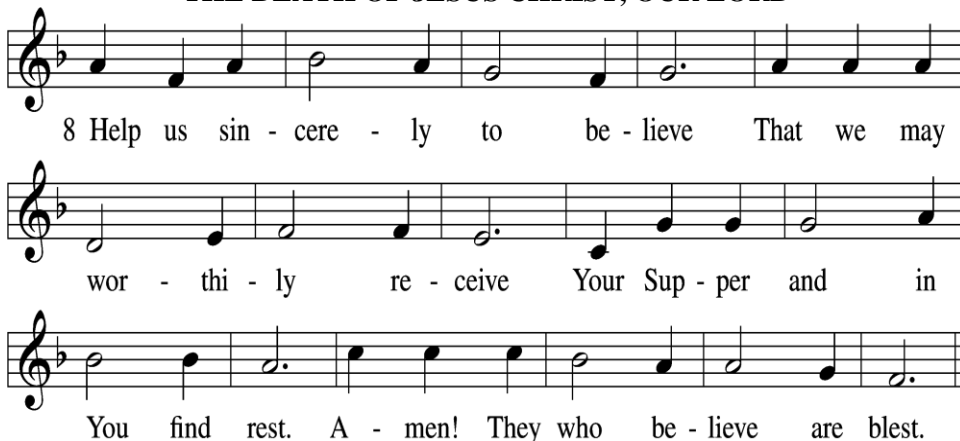
Congregation **It is meet and right so to do.**

### PROPER PREFACE

#### HYMN

LSB #634 (v.8,5)

#### THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD



8 Help us sin - cere - ly to be - lieve That we may  
wor - thi - ly re - ceive Your Sup - per and in  
You find rest. A - men! They who be - lieve are blest.

5

We dare not ask how this can be, But simply hold the mystery  
And trust this word where life begins: "Given and shed for all your sins."

Text and tune: Public domain

### LORD'S PRAYER

LSB pg. 196

**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 trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

# THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

LSB pg. 197

## PAX DOMINI

LSB pg. 197

Pastor The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Congregation Amen.

## HYMN

LSB #637

### DRAW NEAR AND TAKE THE BODY OF THE LORD



1 Draw near and take the bod - y of the Lord,  
2 He who His saints in this world rules and shields,  
3 Come for - ward then with faith - ful hearts sin - cere,



And drink the ho - ly blood for you out - poured;  
To all be - liev - ers life e - ter - nal yields;  
And take the pledg - es of sal - va - tion here.



Of - fered was He for great - est and for least,  
With heav'n - ly bread He makes the hun - gry whole,  
O Lord, our hearts with grate - ful thanks en - dow



Him - self the vic - tim and Him - self the priest.  
Gives liv - ing wa - ters to the thirst - ing soul.  
As in this feast of love You bless us now.

Text: Latin, 7th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.

Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois

Text and tune: Public domain

*(Sit)*

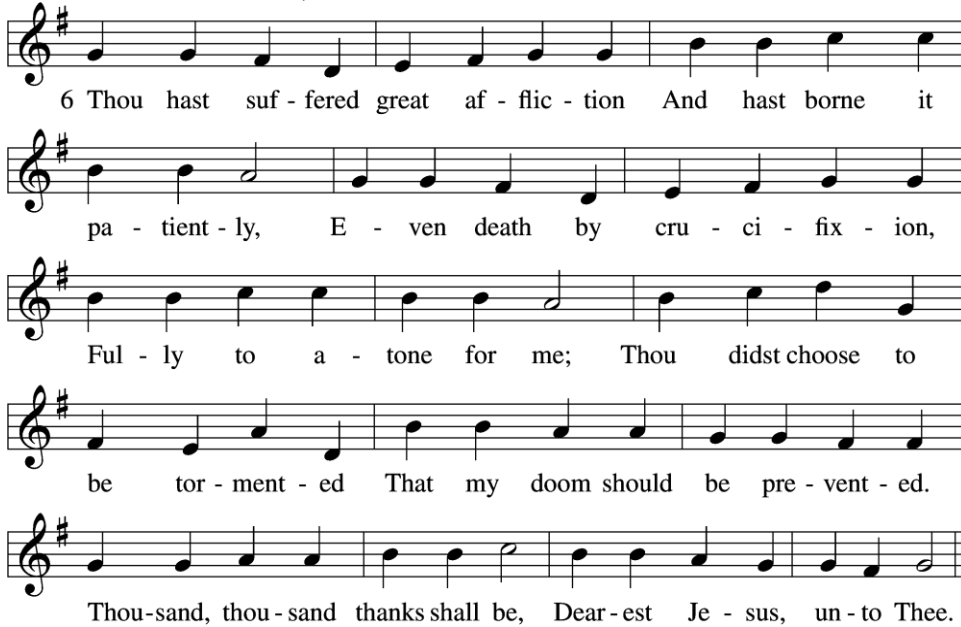
**DISTRIBUTION**

*Prayerful Meditation*

(Stand)  
HYMN

LSB #420 (sts. 6, 3, 7)

### CHRIST, THE LIFE OF ALL THE LIVING



6 Thou hast suf - fered great af - flic - tion And hast borne it  
pa - tient - ly, E - ven death by cru - ci - fix - ion,  
Ful - ly to a - tone for me; Thou didst choose to  
be tor - ment - ed That my doom should be pre - vent - ed.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.

3

Thou hast borne the smiting only That my wounds might all be whole;  
Thou hast suffered, sad and lonely, Rest to give my weary soul;  
Yea, the curse of God enduring, Blessing unto me securing.  
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

7

Then, for all that wrought my pardon, For Thy sorrows deep and sore,  
For Thine anguish in the Garden, I will thank Thee evermore,  
Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing, For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,  
For that last triumphant cry, And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

Text and tune: Public domain

### THANKSGIVING

Pastor O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
Congregation and His mercy endureth forever.

### POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

## † STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR †

Pastor After the Last Supper, less than twenty-four hours remained in the earthly life of our Lord. Events moved rapidly: prayer in Gethsemane; betrayal by Judas; arrest, mock trial, painful beating; the trudge to Golgotha and execution. Jesus' offered body and His shed blood have been given to us in, with, and under the bread and wine in the sacred mystery that is the Sacrament. As He was removed from us in the grave, so we remove the elements and vessels of this Sacrament.

*(Communion vessels are removed.)*

Pastor The cross is where Jesus took on our punishment to be able to give us the gift of heaven. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). As this statement was fulfilled on the cross, the cross is removed from the altar area.

*(The cross is removed.)*

Pastor The missal stand holds our worship books that guide our worship life together as we sing praises to God. As Jesus suffers, joyous songs are not heard. As sounds of joy are removed from our lips, we remove the missal stand and its book.

*(The missal stand and altar book are removed.)*

Pastor Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). The events at Golgotha snuffed out the human life of Jesus, the light of the world. As creation was dark while He suffered, so we extinguish our candles and remove them.

*(All candles are extinguished and removed.)*

Pastor Our offerings represent one way of serving God and others. They reflect God's greatest offering to the world and to us in the sending of His Son, Jesus, in human form. As the offered body of Jesus was removed from sight in burial, so we remove our offerings.

*(The offerings are removed.)*

Pastor The altar is the place where our Lord Jesus serves us as both host and Meal at His banquet feast. The coverings and paraments are made of fine linen and brocade, materials appropriate for feasting with our King. As our King's body was stripped in crucifixion, so our altar is stripped of its coverings.

*(The altar cloths and paraments are removed.)*

**PSALM 22** (*Pastor reads aloud*)

*(The congregation leaves the church in silence. The omission of the benediction today indicates that our worship is not complete until joined with the celebration of Easter.)*



## MINISTRY TEAM

### **The Reverend Ben Ahlersmeyer**

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### **Kasey Needham Hapner, Music Director**

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### **Janelle Deal, Organist**

Email ..... [janelle.buford@my.wheaton.edu](mailto:janelle.buford@my.wheaton.edu).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President – Greg Shediack**

**Vice President – John Stafford**

**Secretary – Blake Sebring**

**Treasurer – Brian Bates**

## At Large Members:

**Dan Bates**

**John Bates**

**Rachelle Dance**

**David Schult**

## SCHOOLS

**Lutheran South Unity School.....[lsusfw.org](http://lsusfw.org).....744-0459**

**Concordia Lutheran High School....[clhscadets.com](http://clhscadets.com).....483-1102**

## COUNSELING NEEDS

*Please talk to Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer for a referral for counseling to Cross Connections.*

## BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

3705 South Anthony Boulevard, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46806-4329

[www.bethlehemlcms.org](http://www.bethlehemlcms.org)

Church Office, (260) 744-3228 Fax Number, (260) 744-3229

Office Hours: 10:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Friday)

### ***Our Worship Schedule:***

*Saturday Afternoon Worship Service at 4:00pm*

*Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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