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**Holy (Maundy) Thursday**

**Chronicles of the King**

“Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood be for my soul the highest good!” *LSB* *618*

**AS WE GATHER**

We begin the three-day journey that traces our Lord’s exodus as He led His people from death to life through the depths of the earth. In II Chronicles, we read how the Israelite exodus from Egypt was to be celebrated. God’s people were to commemorate it and God’s Sinai covenant in the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. King Hezekiah did a lot of preparation to observe the Passover, but his efforts were overlooked and forgotten by the time of his successor. In Christ, the “son” of Hezekiah, though, His preparation made sure that everyone is welcome to come for the forgiveness He won for us and the new life He promises.

The Lord is eager to come into our presence in the Sacrament of His body and blood. So we hasten to His Passover. Hurry up! The salvation of God is at hand. Come to His Table; it is prepared. Come soon and come often. Whether you have been to communion every week for year after year or whether you have been away for many years like the Judeans in Hezekiah’s day, let us rejoice tonight.

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION, CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Hebrews 9:11–12*

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

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Brothers and sisters in Christ, we have come together intending to receive our Lord Jesus Christ’s body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper. The Sacrament provides comfort for troubled hearts and freedom from the wrath we deserve. When we look at our lives and conduct, though, we find sin and rebellion. Worse, we cannot free ourselves by our own strength. “But when Christ appeared as a high priest . . . He entered once for all into the holy places . . . by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.” Let us therefore confess our sins to our heavenly Father, imploring Him for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

**People: O almighty God, merciful Father, I confess that I am a poor, miserable sinner. I have sinned in my thinking, speaking, and acting. I deserve Your punishment here in time and hereafter in eternity. In Your boundless mercy, hear my sincere repentance and for the sake of Your Son’s giving Himself over to suffering and death on my behalf, be merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

Pastor: God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

**People: Amen.**

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

**People: 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.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in +peace.

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN** *“When You Woke That Thursday Morning”* (*LSB* 445)

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**COLLECT**

Pastor: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, You have promised mercy and every blessing in Your gracious eternal covenant. Grant that we may in true faith receive our Savior’s body and blood in this Holy Meal and show forth in our lives and conduct His rule in forgiveness and mercy; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT** 2 Chronicles 30:1-5, 10-13, 22b-27

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** Hebrews 9:11-22

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** Matthew 26:17-30

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN** *“O Lord, We Praise Thee”* (*LSB* 617)

**SERMON *“Prepared Food: Hezekiah”***

**THE NICENE CREED** (*LSB*,back inside cover)

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and LORD’S PRAYER

*(after each petition):* Pastor: … let us pray to the Lord.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

**OFFERING**

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However, if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**DISTRIBUTION**

*“I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table”* (*LSB* 618)

*“Go to Dark Gethsemane”* (*LSB* 436)

**HOLY GOSPEL** John 18:1-11

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR**

[*As members of the altar guild and elders remove all items and paraments from the altar and chancel, and Psalm 22 is heard, the congregation remains silent. Following this work and psalm, the worship service is concluded remembering that by the time we gather tomorrow evening at 7:00 pm, our Savior’s body will be already entombed after His death. Tonight, we leave in silence.*]