

RETURN to the LORD



No matter your sin.
No matter your fear.
He calls you to return.

HOLY THURSDAY

April 1, 2021
Faith Lutheran Church – Pierre, SD
Website: www.faithluth.com
Email: faith@faithluth.com
Church Phone – (605) 224-2216

Rev. Dr. Cory J. Rajek – (608) 359-2646
Senior Pastor
Rev. Sam Handschke – (314) 489-9181
Associate Pastor
Church Fax – (605) 224-2226



*A Christ Caring People Who Gather Around Word and Sacrament,
Yoked Together, In Personal Service to Christ in World Wide Missions*



HOLY THURSDAY

In the book of Joel, the prophet paints a vivid picture of the coming judgment of God, the day of the Lord. But right in the middle of this frightening portent of judgement, we find a tender invitation from the Lord: "Return to the Lord your God for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster" (Joel 2:13b). During this season of Lent, we will consider this "call to return," and how it played out for those who walked alongside Christ during His Passion, and for us today.

Jesus invites us to join Him once again at the Table. He repeats the invitation again and again because He feeds us in order to build us up and strengthen our faith. His invitation draws us into a place where we have fellowship with all believers. And yet, our fellowship is stained by sin: "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me, one who is eating with Me" (Mark 14:18). We are not asked to root out the offender, not commanded to judge one another. That is God's task, not ours. Instead, Jesus gives us His own body and blood, and with it a promise: "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14:24). His invitation to return is accompanied by His promise to make all things new, when once again we will share the fruit of the vine with Christ Himself.

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T DIVINE SERVICE T

OPENING

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P I will go to the altar of God,

C **to God my exceeding joy.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

CONFESSIONAL ADDRESS

P During this Lenten season, we have heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving one another. Since it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, it is proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit, He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you." It is as if He said, "I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat."

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Again, it is as if He said, "I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink."

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples' feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and

one Body, even as we are all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with the wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one Body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word but also in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.

C Amen.

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

P Like all of Jesus' followers who long ago on this night forsook Jesus and fled, we have not been constantly faithful to You, O Lord.

C We, who are sinful by nature, have turned to other gods and have neglected to love You with our whole heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

P Because of our sin, we do not deserve Your love or Your forgiveness.

C Turn to us, Lord, and forgive us. Bring us back to You. Restore us again as Peter was restored to You even after denying You, and as You later came to the disciples who had forsaken You and declared Your peace to them. Amen.

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

C Yes.

P 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 T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P 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 T peace.

C Amen.

SALUTATION *and* COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P 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.

C **Amen.**

(Please be seated)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Exodus 24:3-11

³ 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." ⁴ 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. ⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷ 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." ⁸ 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."

⁹ Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ And He did not lay His hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE READING

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM (11:00 & 7:00)

"In Remembrance" (Courtney/Red, arr. Lloyd Larson)
Helen Kiepke, *vocalist*

(Please stand)

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 14:12-26

¹² On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, [Jesus'] disciples said to Him, "Where will You have us go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?" ¹³ And He sent two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, Where is My guest room, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?' ¹⁵ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." ¹⁶ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ And when it was evening, He came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me, one who is eating with Me." ¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to Him one after another, "Is it I?" ²⁰ He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with Me. ²¹ For 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."

²² And as they were eating, He took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is My body." ²³ And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

(Please be seated)

HYMN

"Your Table I Approach"

(LSB 628)

SERMON

"Return To the Kingdom of God"
Pastor Sam Handschke

(John 18:28-38)

(Please stand)

NICENE CREED *(Please see the inside back cover of your hymnal)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Remembering Jesus' love shown in both the washing of His disciples' feet and in instituting the Lord's Supper, let us bring our prayers before the Father, trusting in His abundant mercy for us.

For the Church, that, following Jesus' example of washing feet, we obey His command and love one another as He has loved us. And that, nourished by Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper, our lives reflect the One who first gave the Supper. In prayer,

C we return to You, O Lord.

P For leaders throughout the world, for national, regional, and local leaders, that they choose to lead as servants rather than as lords. In prayer,

C we return to You, O Lord.

P For those in our community who struggle with poverty, addiction, or unemployment, that You use us to serve them and love them as You loved and served them during Your earthly ministry. In prayer,

C we return to You, O Lord.

P For those who struggle with poverty in our community that You use us to serve and love them. And for those who are ill, hospitalized, or close to death. Bless them with Your presence and heal them according to Your will. Use us to touch their lives in ways that reflect Your servant heart. In prayer,

C we return to You, O Lord.

P For this congregation, that You guide us toward being a people known in our community for serving others in love, as You loved and served Your disciples by the washing of feet and giving them the food of Your body and blood. In prayer,

C we return to You, O Lord.

P In remembrance of those who during their lives loved and served You and are now embraced in Your love forever, help us to follow their example of love and service, as we await that day when we join them in the eternal feast of heaven. In prayer,

C we return to You, O Lord.

P You make us one in the body and blood of Christ, O Lord. Let both our individual prayers and these prayers of our worshiping community rise to You, for You promise to hear them and to give us what is good, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

OFFERING *Thank you for your support of this ministry. There are several opportunities available for you to continue to support your church and its ministry. Check out our website (www.faithluth.com) and click on the "electronic giving" link for more information.*

IN REGARD TO HOLY COMMUNION: According to Scripture, Holy Communion should be celebrated by those who are: **United in a common faith** (1 Cor. 10:16-17, 21-22; Rom. 16:17); **Repentant of sins** (1 Cor. 5:11, Matt. 18:17-18); **Able to examine their lives** (1 Cor. 11:27-29); and believe that in this precious meal they **receive the true body and blood of Jesus** given and shed for the forgiveness of their sins (Luke 22:19-22).

Since Scripture teaches that those people who do not fully understand the meaning of this meal eat and drink to their own harm (1Cor. 11:27-29), and because the Lord's Supper is the supreme act of stating our unity in faith and doctrine, we would ask those people who are visiting with us to **please speak with one of our pastors**, before communing, in order that we might fulfill our responsibility of properly instructing people in the right use of the precious Sacrament.

T SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT T

PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this night long ago established His Supper, that life-giving food and drink that now this night and throughout our lives nourishes us in body and soul. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

P Thanks and praise we give to You, O Lord, for returning to Your people again and again in mercy. When Adam and Eve walked away, You came to them with the promise of a Savior. When the world forgot Your ways, You saved Noah and his family in the flood. When the Israelites complained in the wilderness, still You provided manna and quail. When so many of the kings were unfaithful, You sustained a faithful remnant. At just the right time, You sent Jesus, Your only-begotten Son, to suffer, die, and be raised, so that the whole world might return to You.

As we return to the Table this night, where we receive Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins, bring us near to You, guide us, sustain us, until we join together around Your eternal Table with angels, saints, and all the company of heaven at the feast where death is swallowed up forever and tears from all faces are wiped away. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

C **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.**

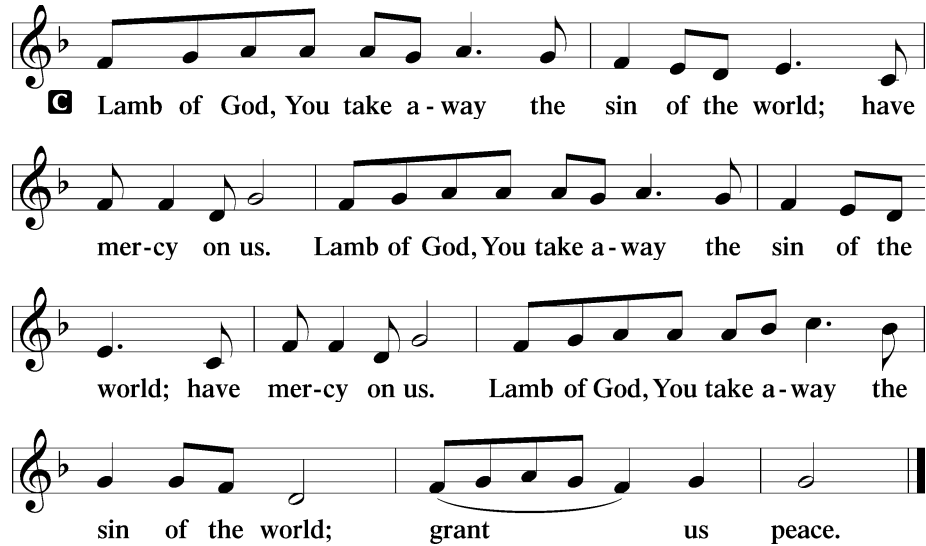
THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

AGNUS DEI



G Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

ANTHEM (7:00 pm only) "Aria" (Paul Manz, arr. Mark Meuser)
Andrew Wulf, flute soloist

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"When You Woke That Thursday Morning" (LSB 445)

"Break Your Hearts" (See insert)

DISMISSAL OF COMMUNICANTS

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

P Let us pray.

Lord, for Christ's body and blood given and shed for us, we give You thanks. By this gracious gift, lead us to love one another as Jesus first loved us, which He showed us long ago by washing His disciples' feet; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The 11:00 am service concludes on page 15 with the Closing Prayer.

T THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR T

(7:00 pm only)

At the appropriate time during the Psalm, the Communion vessels are reverently removed, the altar is stripped, and the chancel is cleared in preparation for the solemn services of Good Friday.

PSALM 22

¹ My God, My God, why have You for- | saken Me?*

Why are You so far from saving Me, from the words of My | groaning?

² O My God, I cry by day, but You do not | answer,*

and by night, but I | find no rest.

³ Yet You are | holy,*

enthroned on the praises of | Israel.

T Communion Ware is removed T

⁴ In You our fathers | trusted;*

they trusted, and You de- | livered them.

⁵ To You they cried and were | rescued;*

in You they trusted and were not | put to shame.

T Offering Plates are removed T

⁶ But I am a worm and | not a man,*

scorned by mankind and despised by the | people.

⁷ All who see Me | mock Me;*

they make mouths at Me; they | wag their heads;

⁸ "He trusts in the LORD; let Him de- | liver Him;*

let Him rescue Him, for He de- | lights in Him!"

T Processional Cross is removed T

- ⁹ Yet You are He who took Me | from the womb;*
 You made Me trust You at My | mother's breasts.
- ¹⁰ On You was I cast | from My birth,*
 and from My mother's womb You have | been My God.
- ¹¹ Be not far from Me,
 for trouble | is near,*
 and there is | none to help.

T Processional Torches are removed T

- ¹² Many bulls en- | compass Me;*
 strong bulls of Bashan sur- | round Me;
- ¹³ they open wide their | mouths at Me,*
 like a ravening and roaring | lion.

T Altar Candles are removed T

- ¹⁴ I am poured out like water,
and all My bones are | out of joint;*
 My heart is like wax;
 it is melted with- | in My breast;
- ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and My tongue sticks | to My jaws;*
 You lay Me in the | dust of death.

T Missal Stand is removed T

- ¹⁶ For dogs en- | compass Me;*
 a company of evildoers encircles Me;
 they have pierced My | hands and feet—
- ¹⁷ I can count | all My bones—*
 they stare and gloat | over Me;
- ¹⁸ they divide My garments a- | mong them,*
 and for My clothing they | cast lots.

T Altar Linens are removed T

- ¹⁹ But You, O LORD, do not be | far off! *
O You My help, come quickly | to My aid!
²⁰ Deliver My soul | from the sword, *
My precious life from the power | of the dog!
²¹ Save Me from the mouth of the | lion! *
You have rescued Me from the horns of the wild | oxen!

T Altar Parament is removed T

- ²² I will tell of Your name to My | brothers; *
in the midst of the congregation I will | praise You:
²³ You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glo- | rify Him, *
and stand in awe of Him, all you offspring of | Israel!
²⁴ For He has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and He has not hidden His | face from Him, *
but has heard, when He | cried to Him.

T Pulpit and Lectern Paraments are removed T

- ²⁵ From You comes My praise in the great congre- | gation; *
My vows I will perform before those who | fear Him.
²⁶ The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek Him shall | praise the LORD! *
May your hearts live for- | ever!
²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn | to the LORD, *
and all the families of the nations
shall worship be- | fore You.
²⁸ For kingship belongs | to the LORD, *
and He rules over the | nations.

T Palms and Cloth are removed T

- ²⁹ All the prosperous of the earth eat and | worship;*
before Him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep him- | self alive.
- ³⁰ Posterity shall | serve Him;*
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming gener- | ation;
- ³¹ they shall come and proclaim His righteousness to a people | yet unborn,*
that He has | done it.

CLOSING PRAYER

- P Let us pray. Gracious Father, grant that we may put off our old selves with all our sinful deeds and put on the new person, which bearing the image of Your Son, Jesus, has been given to us in Holy Baptism, that when we let go of our earthly habitation, we may not be found unclothed, but being transformed may receive the garment of a new glorious body like His, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.
- C **Amen.**
- P As He has blessed us by His Word and Sacrament, Jesus remains with us.
- C **As we return to the Lord our God, may we share with others the love He has freely given to us.**
- P Let us go forth in peace,
- C **In the name of the Lord.**

After the pastors have exited the Sanctuary, the congregation leaves in silence. There is no Benediction.

Acknowledgments

Holy Thursday and Divine Service, Setting One from *Lutheran Service Book*.

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Midweek Lenten-Easter Schedule

April 2, 2021
Good Friday
2:00 am & 7:00 pm
"Return to Truth"

April 4, 2021
Easter Sunday
6:30 am, 8:30 am, 10:00 am, & 11:30 am
"Return and See"

