

*This is my body  
that is for you*

1 CORINTHIANS 11:24

**Maundy Thursday Worship**  
**with Holy Communion**  
**April 2, 2026**

The name of this service is derived from the Latin word:  
“Maundatum” which means “Commandment”.  
We remember Jesus’ giving his disciples a new  
commandment on the eve of his betrayal and arrest:  
“Love one another as I have loved you.”

Prelude

**Gary Roberts**

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship / Call to the Body

We bring our bodies in to the worship of God.  
You may do so standing or seated,  
By listening to your heartbeat or noticing the rise and fall  
Of your abdomen with each breath.  
A call to worship is a call to presence.  
**We long to *be* fully present here,**  
**And to feel God’s presence here.**  
Notice the space around us,  
the way it looks, smells, and sounds.  
**With all our senses, we recognize a sacred space**  
**And our belonging in it.**  
We gather as good creation, wonderfully made.  
**We join our bodies into one body as we remember the**  
**Life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

**What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul?**

**When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,  
When I was sinking down, sinking down,  
When I was sinking down beneath God’s righteous frown,  
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,  
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.**

**To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing;  
To God and to the Lamb I will sing;  
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,  
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,  
While millions join the theme, I will sing.**

**And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on;  
And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on;  
And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing God’s love for me,  
And through eternity I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on;  
And through eternity I’ll sing on.**

### Opening Ritual

In a few minutes, we’ll hear the story of Jesus washing  
The disciples’ feet on the night of his betrayal and arrest.  
It is a story of deep intimacy and sacred connection.  
It is also a story about human resistance  
To god’s grace and our discomfort with the ways that Jesus  
demands the disruption of hierarchies.  
In this story, Simon Peter first objects  
To Jesus’s plan to wash his feet.  
Jesus does not rebuke him but he does insist,  
For he knows what is to come.

As we prepare to lay down our burdens before God  
In confession, we place our trust in God's desire  
To know us and be with us.

As we enter into the sacred story of John's gospel,  
Let us take a few moments to notice our feet.

Take off your shoes if you wish.

Wiggle your toes.

Plant your feet firmly on the ground.

As you experience these sensations,

Consider the wonder of god, who meets us

Not only from on high but also kneeling at our feet.

*As we hear the music playing, open your heart to God's Spirit  
By noticing the gift of our feet and how Jesus chose them  
As a way to convey the kind of love we should have for others -  
A humble, caring, serving and compassionate love.*

### Prayer of Confession & Assurance of forgiveness

Confession returns us to our bodies by reminding us  
That god claims us, exactly as we are.

Through repentance, we name that which

We have left undone and ask for the help of God

And our community to seek repair, restoration, and renewal.

Let us pray together our prayer of confession:

**Loving God, you pour out grace upon us exactly as we are,  
But we confess we are suspicious**

**And react from fear of scarcity.**

**You invite us to take our shoes off**

**And receive the care our bodies need,**

**But we sit on our heels.**

**We sort bodies into worthy and unworthy ones**

**To mask our insecurities.**

**We reject and punish fat bodies, Disabled bodies,**

**Transgendered bodies, and racialized bodies -**

**Even when these bodies are our very own.**

**God, remind us that we are made in your image.**

**Help us learn to receive from your abundance  
So we can share all that we have with others.  
Let us see that the cups we longingly hold out  
are already full.**

**May they overflow so that all will have enough!**

As he does with Peter in the foot-washing,  
Jesus transforms our confusion and rejection  
Into joy and connection.

With God's help and mercy,

We can reciprocate abundance

With one another and with Creation.

In Jesus Christ we are loved and befriended by God.

**Thanks be to God.**

\*Prayer of the Day

Celebrate pg. 1

\*Hymn

*"Spirit of God"*

Red #800

**Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;  
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;  
Stoop to my weakness, strength to me impart,  
And make me love you as I ought to love.**

**I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,  
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,  
No angel visitant, no op'ning skies;  
But take the dimness of my soul away.  
Have you not bid me love you, God and King;  
All, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind:  
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling.  
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!**

**Teach me to love you as your angels love,  
One holy passion filling all my frame:  
The baptism of the heav'n descended dove,  
My heart an altar, and your love the flame.**

First Reading Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14 **Celebrate pg. 2**

Psalm Psalm 116:1-2; 12-19 **Celebrate pg. 2**

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 **Celebrate pg. 3**

\*Gospel John 13:1-17, 31b-35 **Celebrate pg. 3**

P: The Holy Gospel acc. to St. John the 13th chapter

C: **Glory to You, O God.**

Sermon **Rev. James P. Lapp**

\*Hymn *“God, Bless the Hands” ACS (Blue) #1022*

**God, bless the hands stretched out in love  
through floods below and storms above;  
they search and rescue, comfort, calm,  
give shelter, offer healing balm.  
Oh, guard them by your steadfast hand;  
Reach out in love to help us stand.**

**Bring comfort to the hearts that mourn,  
Left broken, emptied by the storm.  
Give hope to those in deepest grief;  
Empower us to bring relief.  
To you, O God, we raise our hands.  
Save us, we pray, from sinking sands.**

**O God, our strength and refuge sure,  
our hope while storms of life endure;  
Teach us to live in harmony  
with earth and river, sky and sea,  
preserving waters, air, and lands  
as holy work for human hands.**

## Remembrance of Baptism

With simple elements and simple acts,  
Jesus flipped the scripts of power to bring about  
new possibilities for God's love in the world.  
Before his betrayal and death,  
Jesus touched his followers and sealed their connection.  
Jesus taught us to wash one another's feet so that we  
Might witness each other's goodness and be made clean.  
Through the waters of baptism, God claims us as God's own  
And marks the calling for our lives onto our bodies.  
Together, we will remember our baptisms.  
First, let us pray: God who poured forth water,  
God who formed each one of us,  
We give you thanks for the sacrament of Baptism.  
Allow the cool drip of water on our bodies  
To bring us closer to you so that we might live  
As your people, with justice, kindness, and humility.  
As we remember your promises to us,  
Renew in us a heart of compassion for others and help us  
Recognize your presence in all whom we meet. **Amen.**

(music begins playing)

*As we hear the music calling us, you are invited to anoint  
Yourself at the baptismal font. Dip your fingers in the water,  
Make the sign of the cross on your forehead and say,  
"I am a child of God."*

\*Hymn                      *"Borning Cry"*    Red #732

**"I was there to hear your borning cry,  
I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized  
to see your life unfold.  
I was there when you were but a child,  
with a faith to suit you well;  
In a blaze of light you wandered off  
to find where demons dwell."**

(hymn continued)

**“When you heard the wonder of the Word  
I was there to cheer you on;  
You were raised to praise the living Lord,  
to whom you now belong.  
If you find someone to share your time  
and you join your hearts as one,  
I’ll be there to make your verses rhyme  
from dusk till rising sun.”**

**“In the middle ages of your life,  
not too old, no longer young,  
I’ll be there to guide you through the night,  
complete what I’ve begun.  
When the evening gently closes in  
and you shut your weary eyes,  
I’ll be there as I have always been,  
with just one more surprise.”**

**“I was there to hear your borning cry,  
I’ll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized  
to see your life unfold.”**

**\*Nicene Creed**

Red pg. 104

**We believe in one God, the Father , the Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only son of God,  
Eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
True God from true God, Begotten, not made,  
Of one Being with the Father;  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
He came down from heaven,**

**Was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
And became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
He suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
In accordance with the scriptures;  
He ascended into heaven  
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead,  
And his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
Who with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
Who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
And the life of the world to come. Amen.**

\*Prayers of the Church

Celebrate pg. 4

\*Sharing the Peace

Offering

Through the sacraments, God meets us in physical space,  
Offering God's self to us again and again.  
In a spirit of grateful response,  
We offer what we have to meet the needs of our neighbors, to  
serve Creation, and to glorify God.  
Let us give our tithes and offerings.

(Please place your worship slips & gifts in the plates among you)

**Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.  
Thorough your goodness you have blessed us  
with these gifts:**

**Our selves, our time, and our possessions.  
Use us, and what we have gathered,  
In feeding the world with your love,  
Through the one who gave himself for us,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

\*Prayer of Thanksgiving

May God be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

God who took on flesh and lived among us,  
We greet you in worship.  
We greet you as a creator  
Who made us good in our bodies;  
We greet you as a Redeemer  
Who was perfectly divine and totally human;  
We greet you as a Sustainer, and advocate,  
A helper who surrounds us in all our ways and all our days.  
We come in our bodies of all sizes, races, genders,  
Abilities, sexualities, ages, and appearances,  
So that we might join with your body  
As we encounter you tangibly,  
through bread and cup.  
Through this joyful feast,  
you fill our spirits to overflowing.

(please be seated)

Hymn     *“Eat This Bread , Drink This Cup”*

Red #492  
(sing twice)

*REFRAIN*

***Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
Taste and see the goodness of God.  
Bread of life, cup of love,  
We rejoice in your presence***

**I will bless the Lord at all times,  
Praise with heart and voice;  
In my God I glory forever:  
Listen and rejoice!**

REFRAIN

**Look upon the Lord, be radiant,  
Never turn away.  
God will save in ev'ry affliction,  
Hear us when we pray.**

REFRAIN

**Angels fold their wings around us,  
Guard through good and ill.  
Those who seek the Lord will lack nothing;  
Taste, and have your fill.**

REFRAIN

**Saints of God, bow down and worship,  
Bless the holy name.  
Rise to tell God's greatness forever,  
Wondrous deeds proclaim!**

REFRAIN

Eucharistic Prayer

As you nourish us through this holy meal  
Leave us hungry for your Kin-dom.  
Leave us thirsty for the justice  
That you pour out on the world.  
Let us encounter the bodies around us.  
Let us see you in the faces of strangers and friends,  
Taste you in the sourness of grapes,  
Hear you in the creaks of the sanctuary  
And the whisper of the breeze.

Through Holy Communion,  
Teach us how to be for others  
As you are for us:  
Sustaining help, loving accompaniment, eternal hope.  
Help us to embrace the mystery of the sacrament  
As the symbolic and literal blur together  
Until all that remains is your presence with us.  
We do not come to the Table  
With perfect understanding.  
Some of us come with child-like faith;  
Some of us wrestle with questions and doubt;  
Some of us bear wounds  
That make us suspicious of this ritual of faith.  
With your grace we trust  
The sacred possibilities that become tangible  
When we eat the bread and drink from the cup.  
We have hope that in doing this,  
We might gain a glimpse of all that you offer to us.  
We give thanks for the familiarity of rituals  
And ask that we would continuously notice the possibilities  
you offer in them.  
Be with us as we pray the familiar prayer  
That Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

\*Lord's Prayer

**1. Holy God of ours, hear our prayer.  
Keep us always in your care.  
May your Kingdom come to us.  
And may we learn how to trust.**

**2. Do your will among us now,  
As we here before you bow.  
Give to us but what we need,  
As upon your Word we feed.**

**3. Forgive us for the things we have not done,  
When we've failed before we've yet begun;  
And may we as children of yours  
Give forgiveness in return.**

**4. Keep us from the things that do you wrong,  
When we're weak because we think we're strong.  
Save us from our selfish desire;  
Fill us with your love inspire.**

**5. Honor, greatness belong to you,  
Love & peace & mercy too!  
Praise to you again and again!  
A-a-ahh—Amen. Amen. Amen.**

### Words of Institution & Preparing the Elements

Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed,  
Took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks,  
He broke it and said,  
“This is my body that is for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”  
In the same way he took the cup also,  
after supper, saying,  
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”  
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Table of the joyful feast is not our Table but God's .  
Nothing you do, nothing you say,  
Nothing about you can prevent you from partaking,  
For in Holy communion God reveals  
The wholeness of who we are together and with God.  
So as you receive this joyful feast,  
come exactly as you are.  
There is more than enough. Come, for all is ready.

*Everyone is invited to come forward to receive  
Holy Communion. The wine is red. The grape juice white.*



He offered a new commandment:  
To love others as he loves us.  
This is not an abstract, sentimental love.  
This is bread-breaking, foot-washing, messy love.  
We have visited the font,  
We have been nourished at the Table,  
And now we go out into the world  
To live out Jesus's commandment.  
As we leave this place,  
May the presence of the Creator,  
The Redeemer, and the Sustainer  
Fill the nooks and crannies of our lives. Go in love!

**We go out together in love. Amen.**

Stripping of the Altar

*(Psalm 22:1-11 is said in unison Red pg. 339)*

*The stripping of the altar is symbolic of Jesus' humiliation at the hands of the soldiers that will take place on Good Friday. The altar is made bare so that we may focus only on the cross.*

Lights are dimmed. The service ends in silence to signify that we continue this 3-day worship service tomorrow on Good Friday.

**Good Friday Observance**

**"The Seven Last Words"**

**April 3 at 7 pm**

**Easter Sunday Celebration April 5 – 10 am**

**Bring Flowers for the Easter Cross**

**Breakfast 8:30 – 9:45**

## **Reconciling in Christ**

*“We welcome all who are seeking God’s love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status.*

*We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.”*

## **Our Mission Statement**

St. Stephen’s is a welcoming, healing community who worship God in Christ, nurture people growing in faith, serve others with acceptance & love, and invite people to share the joy of the Spirit.

### **St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church—E.L.C.A.**

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Ministers: The People of St. Stephen’s

Pastor: Rev. James P. Lapp

Church Administrator: Leslie Lapp

Music Directors: Gary Roberts

Sunday School Coordinator: Leslie Lapp

Child Development Center Director: Kathy Berens

Custodian: John Hopping

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