



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

April 6, 2023

Pastor James Enderle

Maundy Thursday

First Lesson: [Exodus 12:1-14](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 115

Second Lesson/Sermon Text: [1 Corinthians 11:23-28](#)

Gospel Lesson: [John 13:1-15, 34](#)

For You

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

Can you imagine the anticipation? They had been given instructions about the dinner, what to do and how to prepare everything. They knew it was a special night. They knew that something was going to happen and then had ideas that things weren't going to be the same. As they prepared the meal, they prepared that lamb and got it ready, knowing what God was going to do for them, what God had done and had promised, what does that sound like? I'm sure as I speak those words you think of that Maundy Thursday, but how similar was it on the night of the Passover? Many, many years ago, as the Israelites were preparing that meal and they knew that God had sent these plagues and then this final plague where God was going to come and He was going to take the firstborn of the Egyptians but God would pass over the Israelites, those who would sacrifice that perfect lamb and put the blood of the lamb on the door frames. This was the Passover, the meal that the disciples and Jesus prepared and were celebrating. They celebrated this meal just like they had done many times and they knew the promises that God had made. God had delivered His people and He had promised a Messiah and He would deliver His people again. But then things changed.

Things changed as Jesus took the bread and said ***"This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."*** ***In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*** That's what Paul was explaining, what this meant for the disciples that night and for us, as we now take part in that Passover meal, but different. It was not just a picture of what God had done for the Israelites but what God had done for us all, what God was about to do with Jesus and what it meant for us.

There are important words in here as it speaks about the “new covenant.” The Israelites had all these covenants that they were to follow. They were God’s chosen people, but they fell short. They fell short over and over again and as many times as they said “God, we’ll follow you. We’ll be your people. Even though we’ve turned away, we won’t do it again.” But they did it over and over again. So God needed a new covenant.

What was that covenant? It was a covenant that was brought through a Lamb, a perfect Lamb. That perfect sacrifice of Christ. One who came under the Law to redeem us and to keep the Law perfectly in all the ways that we could not. As it speaks in [Jeremiah](#) of what this new covenant would be, He would forgive our sins and remember them no more. What a joy it is for us to know this; to know that as we come to Communion, this is what we receive—that forgiveness, that new covenant.

Where does this all come from? It all stems from that promise that God made to Adam and Eve way back when. God would send a Savior, a Redeemer, to crush the head of the serpent, to destroy the power of the devil, to send a Savior for YOU. In the same way that God sent and gave the Israelites that lamb and that blood to redeem them, we know that as Jesus spoke the words, “This is the bread, given for you. This is my body, given for you. This is my blood, shed for you,” He also redeems us.

We struggle so much to not make things about us, because we’re so prideful. We continually bring everything back to us, making us the most important thing. We do that so often. We struggle to put God first, to put others first and it’s all about us. We know that when we do that, it’s sinful. But what does God do? God makes it all about us in the right way. He says, “This is done for you. You are loved. You are redeemed, and this goes out to you so you know that you are forgiven.”

What should we do as we come up and prepare to take the Lord’s Supper? We talk about those in the Exodus, we talk about those on Maundy Thursday, the anticipation; that new meal and the difference that they were each receiving, this new command to do this. We have some today in the congregation who will be taking the Lord’s Supper for the first time, our new Confirmands. I’m sure there is a little anticipation doing this for the first time; receiving that forgiveness of sins knowing you are redeemed and forgiven again and to know that Christ died and suffered for you.

I wonder sometimes though, as Paul says here, ***So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.*** Our Confirmands prepared and went through everything for Good Confession and they thought about what it means to examine themselves. They know that definition. But I wonder each time we come up, are we doing that? Are we examining ourselves and remembering what Communion is all about? It’s this fellowship together, but mostly with our Lord, our Lord who went to

the cross to suffer and die for you. Do I examine myself and remember my sins? Or do I put off some of those sins and say "That one's not a big deal. I don't need God to forgive me for that one because I just kind of want to keep doing that one." Do I see my need for a Savior and that I too have fallen short? It's not that if you're a sinner you can't come up or if I've sinned recently. If that was true, none of us could come up. The Lord's Supper is for sinners. It is to give that forgiveness for you, to know that we, as sinners, are redeemed and loved.

But I wonder and encourage us to have that anticipation, the same anticipation and wonder like back in the Exodus, the same as Maundy Thursday, and the same as what our Confirmands are probably going through as well; to think and cherish this special gift but to know what it means.

In all of these different examples, there is something that kind of hangs over it. There was the death of that lamb in the Exodus. In Maundy Thursday, Jesus was preparing for His death and saying "This is my body and blood. I will be sacrificed." We know that's what hangs over each and every one of us as well; that there is death and we're under the consequences and results of sin and death. But thanks be to God that Jesus sacrificed Himself to redeem us, to forgive us so that as we come up and every week as we hear those words of forgiveness, as we remember our baptism but then as we taste and drink that sacrament, to know we are redeemed and forgiven. Not by anything that we have done but for that continual message that comes from God, for you, that you are redeemed, that you are forgiven. That God sent His Son for you.

So as you come up today and as we remember what God did for us, what Jesus did for us on Maundy Thursday, giving that command to continue the Lord's Supper and to love one another as He has loved us, to remember we are forgiven and loved, what a joy it is to come up today (and the rest of this week) to take part in that blessed sacrament. As you do, remember those words and hear those words, given for you, for your forgiveness and your salvation. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.