

**Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen!**

Tonight is not just a remembrance. It's not merely the eve of Good Friday. It's not simply a holy tradition. It is all of those things—but more. Maundy Thursday is a moment in which our Lord Jesus draws near to us and places into our hands a gift unlike any other: His true body and blood, given and shed for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke tells us that Jesus was reclining with His disciples to eat the Passover meal. It was a moment steeped in memory. God's people were remembering how He had delivered them from slavery in Egypt—how the blood of a lamb marked their homes and spared them from death.

But now Jesus takes that ancient meal and makes it new. He is the true Passover Lamb. And instead of saying, "Remember what God did in Egypt" Jesus says, "Take, eat... take, drink." It is a new Passover with a new Lamb and a new deliverance. The focus shifts from participating in the remembering an event rooted in the past to receiving the fresh blessing for the present. Jesus says, "This is My body, given for you. This cup is the new covenant in My blood, poured out for you." The Israelites were transported back in time and joined themselves with those around the Passover table in Egypt. In an even greater way, we today are spiritually connected to those who shared the bread and the cup with Jesus in the Upper Room.

These words "this is my body and This is my blood" are not metaphors. They are not symbolic poetry. Jesus means what He says. He gives us Himself—His true body and true blood—in, with, and under the bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins.

And we need that forgiveness. The world around us may try to minimize sin or excuse it away, but the Law of God is not vague. It tells the truth. And when we examine our lives honestly, we see the truth too. Words spoken in anger. Moments we let pride or selfishness guide us. Neglected opportunities to show mercy or speak truth. Even hidden thoughts that never make it to our lips—all of it bears witness that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed.

We know what regret feels like. People carry the weight of it for years: a father who pushed his son away with harshness and silence; a woman who quietly mourns the bitterness she never let go of with her sister. Even long after the moment has passed, the guilt can still hang heavy.

But that is exactly the kind of weight Jesus came to bear. That is why He came to the cross. And it is why He gives us this Supper—not to reward the strong, but to sustain the weak; not to honor the righteous, but to forgive the sinner.

There was a man named George. George was well into his seventies. One Sunday he came to his pastor after worship. His voice was quiet and hesitant. Years earlier, in a moment of anger, he had said something to his adult son that drove a wedge between them. They hadn't spoken in over a decade. George believed in Christ, but still wondered whether he could ever be free of that guilt. The pastor reminded him that Christ's forgiveness is not a feeling we chase—it's a promise Christ seals with His own body and blood. That next Sunday, George came to the altar, knelt down, and received the Lord's Supper. And in that moment, as he received the words, "Given and shed for you," he wept—not from sorrow, but from peace.

That is what Jesus gives tonight. Not merely a reminder of what He did, but the very thing He accomplished: forgiveness. He gives you His true body and blood for your real sins. And in doing so, He declares: "You are mine. You are clean."

This is the "new covenant" Jesus speaks of—the covenant Jeremiah foretold when God said, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Not a covenant of rules written on stone, but one written in blood. Christ's blood. Poured out. For you.

And what a comfort that is. You don't have to wonder if you've done enough. You don't have to guess whether God loves you. You don't even have to rely on your feelings. This meal is objective. It's solid. It doesn't change based on your emotions. Christ is really present. His body and blood are really given. And His promise is really for you.

The Supper is not only personal; it's also communal. Jesus gave it to His disciples together. And He continues to give it to His Church, gathered around the altar. As the Apostle Paul says, "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." In this meal, Christ not only strengthens our bond with Him—He strengthens our bond with one another.

Consider what happened to a lady by the name of Clara. Clara was widowed and had no family nearby. She quietly attended services but often slipped out early. One Maundy Thursday, another woman noticed her at the communion rail. Clara didn't seem to be connected in any way to those on her left or those to her right. She made sure to sit beside her at the next service. In time, the two became close friends. They even began serving on the altar guild together. The Supper that drew them both to Christ also drew them to each other. That's what the Lord's Table does—it gathers, heals, and unites.

Tonight, Jesus invites you to His Table again. Whether you are in your 40s or your 80s, whether you've walked a long road of faith or have recently returned, whether you feel strong or weak—He invites you.

Come with repentance. Come with faith. Come with your burdens. And receive the One who bore them all on the cross.

Tomorrow is Good Friday. We will remember the horror of the cross. But tonight, Jesus prepares us for what He will do. He anchors us in the gift He gives—not just in history, but right now. The same body nailed to the cross, the same blood spilled on Golgotha, is given to you in this Sacrament.

There is no deeper comfort. No stronger assurance. No better preparation for death or life.

So come. Come and receive the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Come and eat and drink the very price of your redemption. Come and hear again the words that make all the difference:

“This is My body, given for you. This is My blood, shed for you, for the forgiveness of sins.”

Thanks be to God.  
Amen.

Pastor Ron Breight                      Christ Lutheran Church   Forest Hills, Pennsylvania

*Join us for worship online on our Facebook page, [ChristLutheranChurchfh](#). There you can view our 10 am Sunday service recording at your convenience. There is no need to register with Facebook or log in to visit our page.*