

Thursday, April 9, 2020

Dear Members, Friends, and Guests of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

Today is Maundy Thursday. The day gets its name from the Latin Mandatum or commandment, for the new commandment Christ gives us to love one another. Tonight, we commemorate Jesus creating Holy Communion out of the Passover meal. We also remember on this night, Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. It is the night of Judas' betrayal, the time in the Garden of Gethsemane, the arrest, and the beginning of the trials.

One question is why, out of the seven major Jewish Holidays, did Jesus pick Passover to confront Jerusalem and the temple and the authorities and the power of Rome? Was it because Passover was the remembrance of God saving the people from slavery and leading them out in the Exodus? Every Passover, all Jews are praying for a new Exodus and a return of God as King. In Jesus, now we have a new Passover and a new Exodus; for we are remembering in the meal we are set free from the slavery of sin by God's forgiveness in Christ's body and blood.

Tonight, we remember that Jesus gave his body and blood for the new Exodus out of darkness. You can join Pastor Nelson and me as we celebrate Maundy Thursday tonight at 5 pm; the first of the three days of worship during Holy Week. You may join us from your homes with bread and wine or grape juice, hear the words of our Savior, take and eat, and take and drink.

My hope is that the stranglehold of the virus is weakening, and we will be soon gathered together for worship with clean hands, and perhaps masks, singing and praying to our Lord and Savior just the same.

Be safe. Tomorrow we will gather virtually for Good Friday and then our Easter Celebrations this weekend. Be safe, be strong. Our God is great.

Pastor Martin