

## COMMENTS/QUESTIONS ON THE LESSONS FOR HOLY WEEK 2026

### Maundy Thursday

- We call this day “Maundy” from the Latin word *maundate*, which means, “command.” It is taken from the passage that is read from John 13 after Jesus has washed the feet of the disciples:  
*<sup>34</sup>I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’ (John 13:34-35)*
- In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus celebrates the Last Supper on the night he was betrayed. What is the significance that Holy Communion takes place in the context of a Passover Seder Meal? How does Passover shed light on the meaning of communion?
- Meanwhile, in John, Jesus dies on the day of Passover. What significance does Passover have on the Crucifixion?
- In our second lesson, we have the earliest recorded words of the Last Supper. Paul writes to the Corinthian community at least 15 years before the first gospel was likely written. If you make a comparison, Luke seems to use Paul’s wording, whereas Matthew uses Mark’s.

### Good Friday

- Though some churches have Good Friday services that use the “seven last words” of Jesus, that is a later and – I believe – a misguided development. Since the gospel of John is typically not heard for its Passion account, our Good Friday service gives space to this gospel. Here are some of its differences:
  - There is no last supper. The footwashing occurs in John 13, followed by Jesus talking (John 14-16) and praying (John 17).
  - Only in John is Peter named as the one who cut off the slave’s ear. And only in John is that slave given a name (Malchus).
  - Only in John do we have Pilate’s famous – and misinterpreted – question of “What is truth?” (18:38)
  - Only in John does Jesus carry his cross all by himself (19:17).
  - Only in John does Jesus say the following words from the cross:
    - “Woman, here is your son.” ... “Here is your mother.” (19:26-27) – Consider what this might mean if the woman is meant as a symbol for the church and the disciple is meant as a symbol for the ideal disciple.
    - “I am thirsty” (19:28) – How does this fulfill Scripture?
    - “It is finished” (19:30) – We also have here that he “gave up his spirit,” which some consider to be John’s version of Pentecost
  - Only in John does blood and water come from Jesus’ side when he is pierced.
  - Only in John does Jesus get buried with a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes.

### Easter Reading – Acts 10:34-43

- According to Peter’s sermon, what is the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus?

### Easter Reading: Colossians 3:1-4

- According to Colossians, what is the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus?

### Easter Reading: Matthew 28:1-10

- Only in Matthew do we hear about the stone being rolled away.
- Matthew has a brief resurrection appearance in which Jesus tells the women to tell the disciples that he will appear to them in Galilee, 75 miles away.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord 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. 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.

**Luke 22:14-20**

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, ‘Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying,

‘This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’

And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying,

‘This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.’

**Matthew 26:26-29**

While they were eating,

Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said,

‘Take, eat; this is my body.’

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying,

‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’

I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.’

**Mark 14:22-25**

While they were eating,

he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said,

‘Take; this is my body.’

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them,

‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.’

Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.’

**Matthew 28:1-10**

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." This is my message for you.'

So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

**Mark 16:1-8**

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?'

When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them,

'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.'

So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

**Luke 24:1-12**

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared.

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.'

Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

**John 20:1-13**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.