



Now the blood shall be a sign for
you on the houses where you are.
And when I see the blood, I will
pass over you; and the plague
shall not be on you to destroy you
when I strike the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:13



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As We Gather

As we gather this afternoon, we are confronted by the solemn reality of our sin and the righteous judgment it demands. Left to ourselves, we deserve nothing but God's wrath. Yet, today we are invited to look back to a dark night in ancient Egypt and behold a breathtaking shadow of the cross. We see the blood of a spotless lamb painted on rough wooden doorposts—the sole mark of salvation for a captive people. Why would a holy God see our profound guilt and yet spare our lives? As we prepare our hearts for worship today, we marvel at the blood of Jesus, our true Passover Lamb, eagerly anticipating *The Good News of a God Who Passes over Us in Mercy*.

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn 142 (1-2, 5-6) – A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Opening Sentences Psalm 118:1; 145:8; 103:11-12; 130:7

- P** Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!
- C** **For His mercy endures forever.**
- P** The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
- C** **Slow to anger and great in mercy.**
- P** For as the heavens are high above the earth,
- C** **So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;**
- P** As far as the east is from the west,
- C** **So far has He removed our transgressions from us.**
- P** Let Israel hope in the LORD;
- C** **For with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption.**

Confession and Absolution

- P** Dear friends in Christ, we gather in the presence of the holy and righteous God. By our own merits, we deserve only judgment, for the wages of our sin is death. Yet, our God is a God of deliverance who provides the perfect sacrifice. Let us therefore draw near to our heavenly Father with true hearts, confessing our sins and pleading His grace, confident that He will pass over our offenses for the sake of His Son.

C O God, our heavenly Father, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, covers your guilt. As a called servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

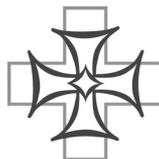
... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

⁶ Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.



- P** Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart,
C **In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.**
- P** The works of the LORD are great,
C **Studied by all who have pleasure in them.**
- P** His work is honorable and glorious,
C **And His righteousness endures forever.**
- P** He has made His wonderful works to be remembered;
C **The LORD is gracious and full of compassion.**
- P** He has given food to those who fear Him;
C **He will ever be mindful of His covenant.**
- P** He has declared to His people the power of His works,
C **In giving them the heritage of the nations.**
- P** The works of His hands are verity and justice;
C **All His precepts are sure.**
- P** They stand fast forever and ever,
C **And are done in truth and uprightness.**
- P** He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever:
C **Holy and awesome is His name.**
- P** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.
C **His praise endures forever.**

Passion History Reading

IV. The Guiltless for the Guilty

The Jews were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.”

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood there and vehemently accused Him. Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate. That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for before that they had been at enmity with each other.

Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, “You have brought this Man to me as one who misleads the people, and indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I

have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him. No, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him, and indeed nothing worthy of death has been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him.

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished, whomever they requested. And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow-insurrectionists. He had been thrown into prison for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder. And the multitude cried aloud and began to ask Pilate to do just as he had always done for them. For it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast. Therefore when they had gathered together, Pilate answered them, saying, "You have a custom, that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ? For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man; for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

But the chief priests and elders stirred up the crowd and persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" Then they all cried out at once, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas. Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas."

Pilate therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. He said to them, "What then do you want me to do with Jesus, who is called Christ, Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" And they all shouted, "Let Him be crucified!" The governor said to them, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." But they were insistent. They cried out more exceedingly, demanding with loud voices, "Let Him be crucified!" And the voices of these men and of the chief priest prevailed.

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but that rather a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. You see to it." And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children!" And wanting to gratify the crowd, Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested, and he released Barabbas to them, who for insurrection and murder had been thrown into prison.

Response

P Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.

C Amen.

Confession of Faith

Luther's Explanation of the Second Article

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true.

Hymn

156 – Not All the Blood of Beasts

Sermon Text

Exodus 12:1-14

¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸ Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. ¹¹ And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover. ¹² ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ ‘So this day shall be to

you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.



Sermon

The Good News of a God Who Passes over Us in Mercy

General Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

☐ Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

☐ The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

☐ Amen.

Hymn

652 – I Lay My Sins on Jesus

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✝ Announcements ✝

Upcoming Schedule – winterhavenlutheran.com/church-calendar

March 11	2:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship
March 13	10:30 am	Learning with Littles
March 15	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
March 18	2:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship
March 22	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)

Upcoming Meetings: Here is a schedule of our upcoming meetings:

- **April 5** – Quarterly Voters’ Meeting
- **May 3** – Education/Elders
- **June 7** – Trustees/Church Council

In Our Prayers: Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers: Don Beymer, Bob & Joan Doriot, Johanna Jaehnigen, David & Elsie Kleinschmidt, Shirley Rosenberry, and Mike Sheffield.

Looking Forward to Sunday: Have you ever been absolutely certain you were right, only to discover you were completely in the dark? Next Sunday, we turn to John 9 and the dramatic healing of a man born blind. Yet, the physical miracle is only half the story. The true tragedy unfolds among the Pharisees—religious experts who proudly boasted, “We see,” while remaining dead in spiritual darkness. Their self-righteous pride blinded them to the Savior standing right before their eyes. Join us next week as we explore “The Blindness of ‘Seeing.’” Come and hear how Jesus, the true Light of the world, graciously washes away our natural, sinful blindness so that we may clearly behold our crucified Redeemer in faith.

Midweek Lenten Series: Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus: Our midweek Lenten services have begun. This year, our meditation follows the theme “Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus.” We are exploring how the Old Testament account of Israel’s rescue from Egypt foreshadows our own rescue from sin and death. Just as God heard the cries of His people in bondage, He hears us and answers us in Christ Jesus.

Please join us for the remainder of these opportunities to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Savior’s passion. All services are at 2:00 PM.

Service Schedule:

- **Mar 18:** The Good News of a God Who Makes a Way for Us (Exodus 14:5-31)
- **Mar 25:** The Good News of a God Who Sustains on Our Journey (Exodus 16:1-18, 35)

Learning with Littles – Easter Bag Donations Needed: We're planning to put together special Easter bags for the children to enjoy at our March 27th Learning with Littles Session! We're aiming to assemble about 70 bags for children ages 4 and under, and we'd love your help. We're looking for both food and non-food items to fill the bags. Some suggestions include:

- **Food items:** fruit snacks, Cutie oranges, granola bars, Goldfish crackers, Easter-themed chocolate or candy
- **Non-food items:** small containers of Play-Doh, mini slinkies, bubbles, stickers, sticky hands, toy cars, hair bows, pop-its, slap bracelets

Thank you for supporting this outreach and helping us share the love of Jesus with young children and their families in our community!

Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday: We invite you to help beautify our sanctuary for Easter Sunday by purchasing an Easter lily in honor or memory of a loved one. Each lily is \$10. If you would like to participate, please sign up at the back of church by March 29.

CLC Call News: Calls were returned by Pastor Johnathan Schnose (Bethel, Morris, MN) to Messiah (Eau Claire, WI), Pastor Stefan Sonnenfeld (Redeemer, Sister Lakes, MI) to Living Hope (Appleton, WI), and Teacher Katie Naumann (Immanuel, Winter Haven, FL) to Redeemer (Cheyenne, WY). Calls were accepted at Immanuel (Mankato, MN) by Teacher Debra Mayhew for full-time grades 1-2, and Pastor Emeritus Paul Nolting for a one-year part-time religion post. Calls were received by Pastor Tom Naumann (Mt. Zion, Madison Heights, MI) to both Holy Cross (Phoenix, AZ) and Grace (Fridley, MN), and by Teacher Noah Ohlmann (Grace, Valentine, NE) for grades 3-4 and associate principal at Messiah (Eau Claire). Additionally, the CLC Call Committee called Dr. Daniel Sullivan as a professor and Dr. Daniel Schierenbeck for a two-year term as President at Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary (Eau Claire). Finally, Teacher Karen Swyter resigned from Faith (Markesan, WI).

