

# “CHURCH IS SOMETHING YOU ARE, NOT WHERE YOU GO: HE DID IT FOR US!”

Maundy Thursday

Peace Lutheran  
Grass Valley, CA

April 2, 2015

Texts:

Exodus 12: 1 – 14; I Corinthians 11: 23 – 26

Luke 22: 7 – 38

## TEACHING POINTS:

1. Story of the Kim family a few years ago is a metaphor of God's Love for us
2. God's sacrifice of his Son for the gift of salvation!
3. "He did it for us." And he'd do it again because he's rather die than live without us.

## MESSAGE:

Back in December, eight or so years ago, the world watched as the story of the Kim family unfolded.

James and Kati Kim left San Francisco to travel to Seattle for Thanksgiving. With the holiday over, they started home. There was to be a night at an expensive lodge on November 25. But they missed their turnoff from Interstate 5 and, after checking a roadmap, decided to get off and travel a secondary road to their destination at Gold Beach, Oregon.

With their daughters, four-year-old Penelope and seven-month-old Sabine, they drove for about a dozen miles. Then, in what would prove to be a terrible mistake, they took a fork to the right and started down the road where they would soon become stranded. Because of the danger of that route during winter, there is a locked metal gate to keep people from going that way. It was secured against traffic November 1. But a vandal had cut the lock and done away with the barrier!

Thus four people came to be stranded in rugged territory. They couldn't get a cell phone signal. All they could do was try to survive until either they could figure a way out of the remote area or search teams could find them.

Dwindling gasoline meant they could warm their car only occasionally. They found some wood to burn and then burned their car tires. When they exhausted their baby food and bottled water, they melted snow. Kati nursed the two girls. Stranded for more than a week now, James knew he had to do something. On Saturday, December 2, he started out on foot in the direction he and Kati believed the nearest help could be found. He walked for more than ten miles in the snow before dying of exposure and hypothermia.

Searchers found and saved Kim's wife and daughters on Monday, December 4. His body was found two days later. There would be no fairy-tale ending to the story. People around the world have grieved with the 35-year-old man's family. Gifts were sent. Card poured in. Many were moved by this testimony to one man's love for his family.

This story is a metaphor for the mission of the one in whose name we gather this Holy Week. It is moving testimony that reflects the love of another man for his family. It reflects the love that God has for us, his children.

Our world is full of crime and abuse, terrorism and violence, indifference and hate. Our world is full of all sorts of things that aren't very loveable. But love still exists. Great sacrifices are still made by believers and non-believers alike. Humans created in God's very image find ways to imitate God's self-giving love. Understanding that church is who we are, we gather in the image of the incarnate God whose Son, Jesus, is a testimony to God's love for his family.

James Kim's desperate attempt to save them is a testimony to one man's love for his family. As one person put it, he leaves them this legacy: "I did it for you!"

The Gospel of Jesus Christ echoes that same message. He did it for you. Ever since Bethlehem, ever since that meal in the upper room, ever since the cross, Jesus has been on a mission to bring us life. It was such a perilous mission that it meant he gave his life. He gave it so that we could be saved and gathered into His kingdom.

On this Holy Night, this Maundy Thursday, the message is as clear as it ever has been. The blood shed, the body broken, the life given up. Jesus did it for you. Jesus did it for me. Jesus did it for us.

And – in case you've wondered – yes, he'd do it all again because you see, he'd rather die than live without us.

Amen.