

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

PH# (979) 732-2423 Fax (979) 733-0489

E-mail: admin@splctx.org www.splctx.com **Pastor:** pastor.akethan@gmail.com

April 1 & 2, 2023

Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<i>Home:</i> (979)-942-9060	<i>Cell:</i> (830)-708-1200
Deacon of Word and Service			Sandye Fletcher
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Music Minister			Robert Eaton
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomasa Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon
Organist			Elena Holub

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (*Luke 10:27*)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshiping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***
- *Hearing Assist devices are available for those who need assistance in hearing worship service better. Please see a person in the Sound Room (Usher Room) to request the use of a device during worship.*

* **This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.**

INTRODUCTION

Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into

our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

* GATHERING

The assembly gathers at the front entrance so that all may enter in procession. Palm branches are distributed before the service begins. The presiding minister begins:

P Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

C Hosanna in the highest.

* PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL: Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus enters Jerusalem.

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 21, verses 1-11.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, ⁵"Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." ⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" ¹⁰When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

* **BLESSING OF PALMS**

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept.

P We praise you, O God, for redeeming the world through our Savior Jesus Christ. Today he entered the holy city in triumph and was proclaimed messiah and king by those who spread garments and branches along his way. Bless these branches and those who carry them. Grant us grace to follow our Lord in the way of the cross, so that, joined to his death and resurrection, we enter into life with you; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

* **PROCESSION**

P Let us go forth in peace,

C in the name of Christ. Amen.

* **HYMN ELW - #344 "All Glory, Laud and Honor"**

REFRAIN:

*All glory, laud, and honor to you, redeemer, king,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.*

1. **You are the king of Israel and David's royal Son,
now in the Lord's name coming, our King and Blessed One. REFRAIN**
2. **The company of angels are praising you on high;
creation and all mortals in chorus make reply. REFRAIN**
3. **The multitude of pilgrims with palms before you went;
our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present. REFRAIN**
4. **To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise.
To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise. REFRAIN**
5. **Their praises you accepted; accept the prayers we bring,
great author of all goodness, O good and gracious king. REFRAIN**

CCLI Song #4771399 © Words: Public Domain | Music: Public Domain CCLI Lic #1729377

The presiding minister concludes the procession.

P Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

C Hosanna in the highest.

* **GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you. *(You may be seated.)*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a

A Our first reading is from Isaiah, chapter 50, verses 4-9a.

The servant of the Lord expresses absolute confidence in his final vindication, despite the fact that he has been struck and spit upon. This characteristic of the servant played an important role in the early church's understanding of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The reading begins:

⁴The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens — awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. ⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. ⁶I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. ⁷The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; ⁸he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. ⁹It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 31:9-16

A The Psalm today is from Psalm 31, verses 9-16. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

⁹Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.

¹⁰**For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing; my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.**

¹¹I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to my acquaintances; when they see me in the street they avoid me.

¹²**Like the dead I am forgotten, out of mind; I am as useless as a broken pot.**

¹³For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.

¹⁴**But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said, "You are my God.**

¹⁵My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

¹⁶**Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."**

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:5-11

A Our second reading is from Philippians, chapter 2, verses 5-11.

Paul uses an early Christian hymn to help us comprehend Jesus' obedient selflessness on the cross and how God has made Christ lord over all reality. The perspective of the cross becomes the way we rightly understand God, Christ, our own lives, and fellowship within the community of Christ.

The reading begins:

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #335 "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"**

1. **Jesus, keep me near the cross, there's a precious fountain;
free to all, a healing stream flows from Calv'ry's mountain.**

REFRAIN:

***In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.***

2. **Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;
there the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me. *REFRAIN***

3. **Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;
help me walk from day to day with its shadow o'er me. *REFRAIN***

4. **Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,
till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river. *REFRAIN***

CCLI Song #36736 Words: Fanny Jane Crosby Music: William Howard Doane
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* **NICENE CREED**

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**C We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;

**by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

A Save your creation, O God. Every living being you have made has purpose. Give us renewed appreciation of farm animals who labor in the fields, service animals who accompany their human companions, and beloved pets who live alongside us. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine. We also pray for the tornado victims in Mississippi and those affected by the school shooting in Nashville. Bring an end to war and the destruction of lives and your creation. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:

Elrose Kollatschny; Larry Flores; Robert Eaton; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* Merciful God, GayLynn Willms Burk; Carl Norton; Barbara Farley; Laura Harris; Todd Foster; Cher Marino; Cindy Tanner; Joe Reck; Melinda Rodiek; Melda Coleman; Donna Culton; Nancy Hartmann; Lydia Rojas; Catherine Poppe; Larry Stolar; Vivian Fortenberry; Rick Davis; Darryl Stancik; Jerry Ordner; Michael Yancey; Bubba Bencal; Al Gene Canik; Jane Venghaus Taylor; George Wright; Sandy Mosley; Charlene Tesch; Jeffrey McDaniel; Karen Bailiff; Julian Divin; Nancy Biers; Angie Beggs; Pam Potter; Charlie Hammock; Brad Bryson; Lynette Frnka; Riana Jamison; Jenna Escamilla; Margaret Ortiz; Keith Korth; Jodi Sebesta; Cathy Siglow; Paul Casinger; Fran Gillett; DeQuincy Lister; Angela Mazoch; Lily Presswood; Denise Lange; Doug Mason; Dr. Tom Hancher; Joe Berry; Gracie Brune; Margaret Rogers; Leonard Kahlden; Curtis Wallin; Megan Burch; Lisa Grazier; Phyllis Behrend; Jessica Mauchlen; Donna Tiner; Libby Divin; Diane Brooks; Bob Loy; Stanley King; Monty Gillett; Dawn Foster; Edward Halcolm; Amber Smith Kutach; Louis Camacho; Melvin Schobel; Janet Greene; Sabrina Galindo; Debbie Grimes; Horst Traub; Margie Fisk; Preston Carter; Penny Miller; Carl Hahn; Megan Cain; Amanda Fuchs; Cyndi Wallace; Karen Broussard; Donna Young; Sharon Heimann; and Brenda Baker.

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for all expectant mothers, and especially for: Magen Schindler Altieri; Katie Pagel Walcik; Kelsey Kethan McNeely; Montana Appelt; Dina Anton de Espinoza; Olivia Leyendecker; Daya Latiolais; and Cassidy Zajceck Parks that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:

Linda Frank; Helen Hammack; Joey Denby; Edwin Oevermann; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Doug Hill; John Zwiengel; Robert Saunders; Coy Dell Schindler; Barbara McMath; Linda Munos Rodgers; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Delores Purcell; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Curtis Berger; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; Carolyn Renz; and Rita Noska that they receive your caring and compassion. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel that they are protected and kept safe. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* Merciful God,

Law enforcement officers: Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Luke Kanz; Bruno Flores; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron

Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Garrett Flores; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Randy Wendt; Travis Neuendorff; Brenda Henkes; and Jan Willette, as well as those active duty military members including Brian Anderson; Michael Graham; Bryan Kubena; Brad Bergfeld; Cody Jowers; Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Ryan Neisner; Anthony D'Angelo; Dalton Kapel; Kindra Dawson; William Phillips; and Kevin Gonzalez.

C receive our prayer.

A O God, we pray for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregations Cristo Rey and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

P We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

* **PEACE**

P The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.

C And also with you. *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

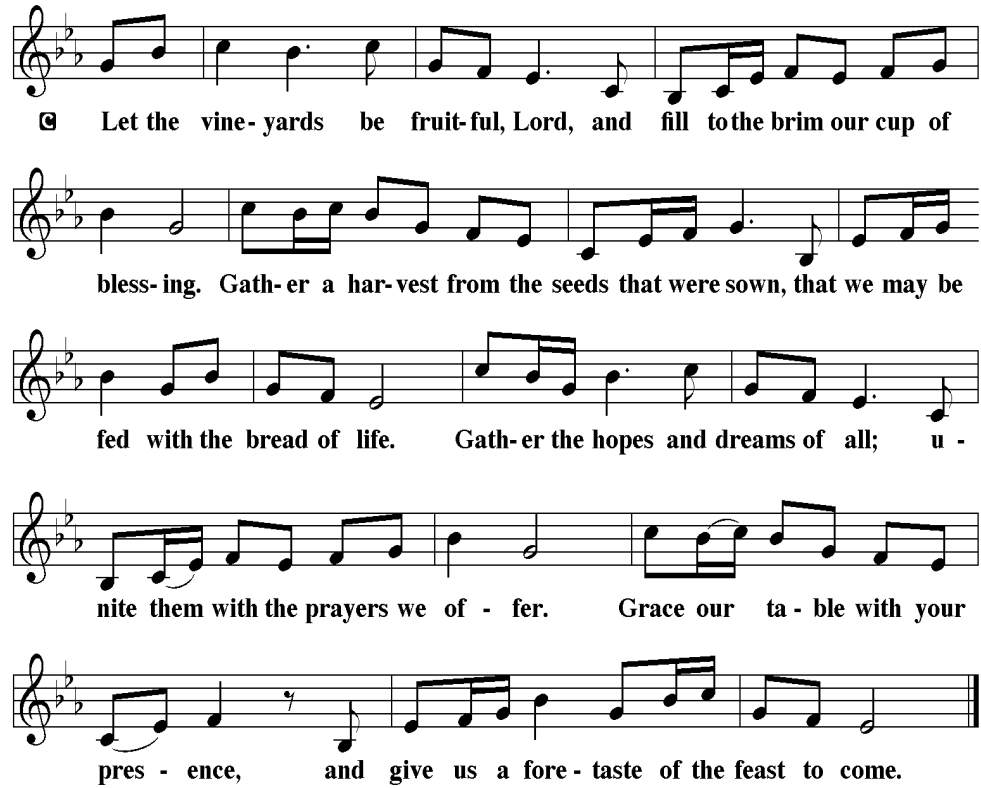
(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

60 SECONDS OF STEWARDSHIP – Worship Team

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

* OFFERTORY (Sung)



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

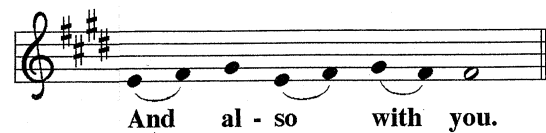
* OFFERING PRAYER

P God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

C Amen.

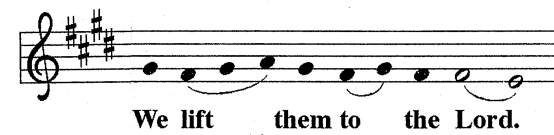
* GREAT THANKSGIVING (Responses Sung)

P The Lord be with you.



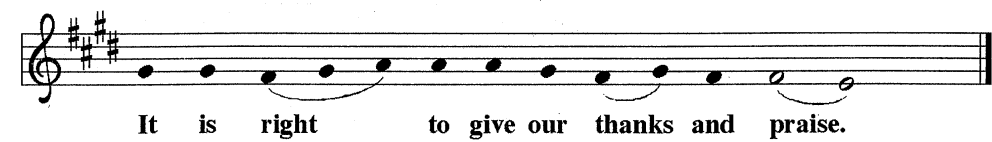
And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.



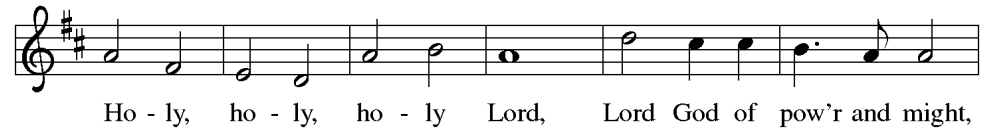
We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

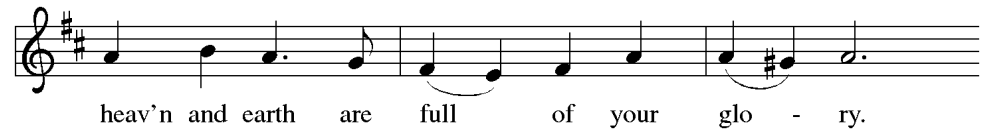


It is right to give our thanks and praise.

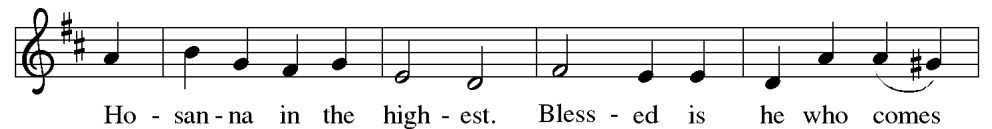
P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



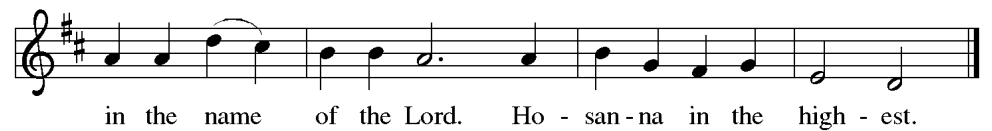
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

* **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C 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.**

* **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Kneeling at Rail)

{You will be coming forward to the rail for distribution. **All are welcome for communion.** You will be ushered down the center aisle beginning in the front. Fill in at the railings starting at the side and work your way around to the center, then kneel if you are able. Pastor will hand out the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. An acolyte follows with an empty tray for you to place your empty individual cup. After receiving communion, please remain at the rails until Pastor has dismissed the entire table with a blessing. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

(Sung)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

(Please be seated.)

* **BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

P Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love.

C Amen.

* **BLESSING**

P God, the giver of love, ☩ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

C Amen.

* **HYMN ELW - #346 "Ride On, Ride On in Majesty"**
{sing to tune ELW - #676 "Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak"}

- Ride on, ride on in majesty! Hear all the tribes hosanna cry;
O Savior meek, your road pursue, with palms and scattered garments strewed.**
- Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die.
O Christ, your triumphs now begin o'er captive death and conquered sin.**
- Ride on, ride on in majesty! The hosts of angels in the sky
look down with sad and wond'ring eyes to see the approaching sacrifice.**
- Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp ride on to die,
bow your meek head to mortal pain, then take, O Christ, your pow'r and reign!**

"Ride On, Ride On in Majesty" - CCLI Song #2725907 Words: Henry Hart Milman

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"Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak" - Music: Robert Schumann

* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace following the example of Jesus.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

POSTLUDE

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USHERS: SAT: Kenny & JoAnn Venghaus; Janeen Venghaus; Emily Frank
SUN: Robin Maertz; Ruth Bedford; Emily Brod
LAY READERS: SAT: JoAnn Venghaus
ACOLYTES: SAT: Henry Jones
STREAMING:
ALTAR GUILD: Gloria Ilse, Emily Brod and Charleen Andrus

WELCOME: Hosanna in the highest! Welcome as we bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Tom & Cheri Moore in celebration of their 64th wedding anniversary.

ADDITIONAL FLOWERS are placed in loving memory of Robert “Bobby” Zajicek by his family.

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.

Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

Attendance: March 25 & 26, 2023 – 162
Power of One: March 25 & 26, 2023 – \$39.00
Contributions: March 25 & 26 – \$5,872.23
Building Fund: March 25 & 26 – \$38.23

Attendance: Wed., March 29, 2023 – 38
Power of One: Wed., March 29, 2023 – \$6.00
Contributions: Wed., March 29 – \$840.45
Building Fund: Wed., March 29 – \$95.00

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., March 29 – **69 Total**

BLAST/Confirmation: 69

Adult Bible Study: 2

Support Staff: 16

ATTENTION: Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available for use by our young members and guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the narthex.**

Thank you! ☺

Attendance Pads Reminders: Thank you to everyone for doing such a good job signing the attendance pads each week when you attend worship! Our records are more accurate when

you sign the attendance pads. Here are a couple of things that will help get our records even more accurate and up-to-date: **1) When signing in, please write everyone in your family who is attending worship.** When you write “John Doe Family”, we do not know how many people that is and we don't know who exactly attended worship. Was it John, Sue and Sally Doe, or the whole family of John, Sue, Jim, Tom and Sally Doe? **2) Please include your address and phone number.** This is helpful especially when we have guests signing in. When they see the members writing addresses and phone numbers, guests are more likely to do the same. We like to welcome our guests by sending them a card after their visit. That is hard to do when we do not have contact information. It is also a way for us to keep up with our members when they have a change of address or phone number. Thank you for taking the time to do these items. Our staff and volunteers who take care of the personal records and oversee attendance records greatly appreciate your help.

♪♪ The **Columbus Community Choir** will be presenting their annual Easter cantata on **Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 5:00 PM** at **Columbus High School Auditorium**. The title of this year's cantata is The Body of Christ: Glorified, Anointed, and Sacrificed by Pepper Choplin. Support your fellow neighbors as they share the “retelling of the final days of Jesus' life, focusing on the meaning of His words and actions leading to the cross”.

Columbus Ministerial Alliance is sponsoring an Easter Sunrise Service on Sunday, April 9, 2023 at **6:30 AM** at Beason Crossing Park. All are welcome to attend this service to celebrate the resurrection!

☘ **Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023 the Men In Mission will be serving their delicious breakfast of pancakes, fruit, etc. in the St. Paul Lutheran Lighthouse after the 7:00 AM Sunrise Service. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for you to sign if you plan to attend.** If you have any questions, please contact Danny Kautz at 979-732-7897. ☘

Sr. Explorers Learn How to Make Knives: On **Thursday, April 13, 2023**, we will be traveling to Phenix Knives/The Blacksmith Shop in Bellville, Texas. **We will depart at 8:30 AM and return around 1:00 PM.** We will have the full tour of the blacksmith shop where Phenix Knives are made. They will show us the forges and tools of the trade and how they are used by these craftsmen as they also demonstrate knife making. A very interesting and educational hour with very little walking accompanied by many benches. Also, time for browsing and shopping before heading to the Texas Star Cafe for lunch. **Cost of the tour is \$15.** This tour has a maximum of 25 capacity. Please call Kevin Page at 979-732-0845 with any questions, and **sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex (foyer) by Sunday, April 9, 2023.**

Sr. Explorers Save the Dates: **1) Thursday, May 11, 2023:** BeeWeavers of Navasota tour with Bee Expert Chat, honey tasting and private hive tour. **2) Thursday, June 22, 2023:** Movie Day and Lunch at St. Paul – “The Jesus Revolution”.

WESTERN CLUSTER SPRING GATHERING: Let's get together again now that Covid is behind us. The Gathering will be **Saturday, April 22, 2023** at **St. Paul Lutheran Church of Shelby**, 6814

Skull Creek Rd., Fayetteville, Texas. (Use Fayetteville for nav, church is in Shelby).

With this Gathering, we will not have a formal program. Rather, we want to emphasize getting together to re-energize and catch up on what is going on throughout our Cluster. We will have **brunch, beginning at 8:30 AM**, and socializing along with an abbreviated business meeting. Let's get things rolling again and share what our individual units have been doing and suggestions for future gatherings. All women of the ELCA are invited! Please RSVP by Saturday, April 15, 2023 to Betty Huebner at 979-277-5303 (call or text) or Lana Aschenbeck at lanaaschenbeck@gmail.com.



Wharton County Junior College Colorado County Senior Citizen Program is hosting a stuffed baked potato **fundraiser Wednesday, April 19, 2023 from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM**. The meal includes one baked potato with chopped beef, shredded cheese, sour cream, chives and butter. Cost is \$12.00 per meal. *Tickets are pre-sale only* and can be purchased by calling 979-532-6430. The location for the drive-thru / to-go orders only meal will be **Noah's Ark Coffee House** located at 816 Wallace Street, Columbus, Texas. Your purchase will help provide meals and services to local senior citizens.

♦ **Lutherhill Serve Day:** St. Paul Lutheran Church's day to serve will be **Saturday, April 22, 2023** from 8:30 AM-2:30 PM. Adults and youth are invited to come help. Mike Hackfeld will be trimming trees, and we will help clear them away as well as help with clearing of worship sites. Lunch will be served. Please sign up in the narthex or contact Stephanie to **sign up by Friday, April 21, 2023**. Stephanie will also drive the van for anyone that would like to ride along. We will leave at 8:00 AM from the church.



Attention all graduates!! If you or a family member (child, grandchild) is graduating from high school, college or trade school, please contact Stephanie or the church office for a graduation form to fill out. The form asks for information about the graduate – name, place graduating from, degree, activities, awards, future goals, etc. We would like to congratulate you and share your wonderful accomplishments in the upcoming newsletter! Once again, please contact Stephanie or the church office for a form, and **return the completed form as soon as possible**. Thank you!

Crawfish Boil and Dessert Auction: We are excited to bring back our Annual Crawfish Boil and Silent Dessert Auction. It will be **Sunday, May 7, 2023 at 12:15 PM in the Lighthouse**. **Tickets are \$30 each for crawfish, potatoes and corn**. Tickets for hamburger/hot dog & chips are \$9 each. Tea, water and lemonade will be served. **All tickets** (crawfish and hamburger/hot dog) **are dine-in ONLY**. Tickets may be purchased before worship starting Sunday, April 16, 2023 or from the church office. If you would like to send a dessert for the silent auction, please bring it to the Lighthouse that morning (May 7). Funds support the confirmation youth attend summer camp at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in Colorado and the high school youth summer retreat. Thank you for your support!



CRAFTING CAMP: Students that enjoy making art and crafting are invited to this summer's Crafting Camp. Children who have completed the 2nd grade up to 8th grade are invited to come craft on **Thursdays starting June 1 to July 6, 2023 from 1:00-2:30 PM** in the Lighthouse. Led by Debbie Eaton and her crew, students will have the opportunity to make a different craft each week. *Space is limited to 10 students, and the cost is \$10 per student*, which will cover the cost of their crafting supplies. Register online at form.jotform.com/spolasek21/craftcamp or contact Stephanie Polasek at 979-732-1858. **For the Crafting Camp, we are in need of the following items:**

- Cardboard tubes from paper towels and toilet paper
- Crayons – broken pieces are great! (no matter the size)

Items may be dropped off in the church office between now and the end of May. If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Eaton at 512-757-2251. Thank you!

Stellar VBS!! Mark your calendars for “Stellar” VBS! Join us at Vacation Bible School **July 10-14, 2023** as kids go on a cosmic quest and have a blast shining Jesus' light to the world! A meal will be served 5:30-6:00 PM, and VBS will be held 6:00-8:30 PM. VBS is open to children in preschool up to students who have completed 5th grade. Registration is free, however, t-shirts will be available to purchase for \$8 each. *Space is limited so register early!* Parents may register their students online by visiting vbspro.events/p/spfu2023. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 or by email at stephaniepolasek@yahoo.com.

Be a Vacation Bible School Volunteer!! VBS is a wonderful way to connect with the youth and to share how God has worked in your life. Sharing your love for Christ with the younger generation can be a humbling and rewarding experience and can impact the youth in so many ways. Last year we hit our capacity of 100 students! This year we have increased our capacity to 125 students, but, in order to accomplish this, more volunteers are needed. We all have gifts to give no matter what age, and we invite you to join our team. You may register online by visiting vbspro.events/p/spfu2023. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 or by email at stephaniepolasek@yahoo.com.

♣ **Day Camp at Lutherhill!** Youth completing K-5th grade are invited to experience a week at camp without the over-night stay during the week of **July 30-August 4, 2023**. Camp starts each day at 8:00 AM and will end at 5:15 PM. Stephanie Polasek will shuttle youth each day to and from camp. We will leave the church at 7:20 AM and will return at 5:50 PM. **Cost is \$195 for the week**. Register online at lutherhill.org and then contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 for transportation. It's always a great time for the kiddos!



Habitat for Humanity: The Outreach Team is in search of a Team Leader to represent St. Paul Lutheran Church for Habitat for Humanity. The churches in our community coordinate and build a couple of houses a year for our neighbors in

need. ***We need someone to represent St. Paul and be the liaison between Habitat for Humanity and our congregation.*** You do not have to build the house yourself, but help coordinate our efforts. Please let Kevin Page know (979-732-0845) if you are interested or have any questions. Thank you, and thank you, God, for our most generous church family!

♥ ***Grief Support Group:*** Are you experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, loss of friend who has moved? The Grief Support Group is a place to share and discuss these issues with other individuals. The group meets the **third Thursday of each month from 5:30-6:30 PM in the church library.** For questions or more information, contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Today, (April 2) – 12:00 PM – Construction of Stage
1:00 PM – Good Friday Play Practice

Mon., April 3 – 9:30 AM – Staff Meeting
1:00 PM – Deacon Sandye to TLC
6:00 PM – Evangelism Team (library)
6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (Hackfeld Family Room)

Tues., April 4 – 12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
5:30 PM – Prayer Team (library)
6:30-8:00 PM – The Gathering

Wed., April 5 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
12:00 PM – Ministerial Alliance
1:30-3:00 PM – Continuing Education (Lighthouse)
7:00 PM – Dress Rehearsal for Good Friday Play

Thurs., April 6 – 10:30 AM – Pastor Alan to The Oaks
4:30 PM – Confirmation (2nd yr.)
5:00-6:30 PM – Soup & Sandwich Meal (Lighthouse)
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation (1st yr.), Adult Class & HS Youth
7:00 PM – Maundy Thursday Worship

Fri., April 7 – **Office Closed! (Good Friday)**
10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)
7:00 PM – Good Friday Worship

Sat., April 8 – **No Worship Service!**

Next Sun., April 9 – 7:00 AM – Easter Sunrise Holy Communion Worship
8:00 AM – Easter Breakfast (Lighthouse)
8:30 AM – Easter Egg Hunt
9:00 AM – Easter Holy Communion Worship
10:30 AM – Easter Egg Hunt
11:05 AM – Easter Holy Communion Contemporary Worship

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Tuesday, April 4, 2023 Benedict the African, confessor, died 1589

Born into slavery on the island of Sicily, Benedict lived as a hermit until the pope ordered all hermits to attach themselves to a monastery, at which time Benedict joined the Franciscans. Though illiterate, he was highly respected as a confessor and later superior of his community.

Thursday, April 6, 2023 Albrecht Dürer, died 1528; Matthias Grünewald, died 1529; Lucas Cranach, died 1553; artists

These great artists revealed through their work the mystery of salvation and the wonder of creation. Dürer's work reflected the apocalyptic spirit of his time. Though he remained a Roman Catholic, he was sympathetic to Martin Luther's reforming work. Grünewald's paintings are known for their dramatic forms, vivid colors, and depiction of light. Cranach's work includes many fine religious examples and several portraits of Martin Luther. Cranach was also widely known for his woodcuts.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: TRUE HUMILITY

Look carefully at the complexity of the humility in today's readings. We hear about Christ's triumphant ride on a humble donkey as we journey in the next week to the humiliation of the cross. How can these stories set up a reflective theme carried through to Easter about who or what we regard as humble? How does our own humility compare? Which characters gain or lose humility in the course of the story from the triumphant entry to the resurrection? A deep and meaningful understanding of humility is a worthy and lasting gift to take away from the season of Lent and the celebration of Easter.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

We join in the joy of the palm procession, and we gather in sorrow at the foot of the cross. Come to sing both "Hosanna!" and "Lord, have mercy upon us." Welcome to worship! Christ enters the assembly now, just as he did then, and we praise his presence among us. "Hosanna" is now our song!

Since at least the fourth century and universally in the church since the eighth, Christians have kept the Sunday before Easter as a memorial of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and a literal procession of palms, started in Jerusalem, has spread throughout the world. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem heightens the expectations of those who were waiting for a Messiah to take the throne in Jerusalem. He upends their expectations with his humility and refusal to engage with Rome or the religious leaders on their terms.

Two opposite images of Christ come in the readings. First, *Christ is king*. He will be falsely accused as presenting himself as Messiah, yet affirmed by believers as the Christ. Much in American culture resists "king" as a positive image, yet the hope that someone has ultimate power, absolute justice, and endless mercy persists in human imagination. Second, *Christ is servant*. We are to adopt the mind of Christ Jesus, who became a servant - a slave for us. Again, much in American culture resists "servant" as a positive image. Martin Luther's essay "The

Freedom of the Christian” can help us here: through our baptism, we are both free, slaves to none, and at the same time, servants to all.

In Philippians, Paul quotes a Christian hymn celebrating how Jesus’ emptying of himself in humility leads to being praised and exalted by God. Paul begins with this admonition: “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.” Baptized people are called into a life like Jesus’ of emptying, humility, and complete trust in God. Take a moment to write down all the things you need to empty from yourself to be filled with the mind of Christ. Being filled with the mind of Christ is life-giving! When you emulate and show examples of self-giving love for others, it is the path to true life! It eases the burden on those around us of having to live up to unhelpful and unhealthy expectations.

This practice of spiritual emptying becomes an opportunity to fill oneself with awareness of God and needs of the neighbor. By spiritually emptying ourselves of our attachment to attitudes and things that separate us from God, we create the necessary space for the holy. Just as you cannot add to a full vessel, a soul full of itself has no room for God. A gap must be created.

KID STUDY:

How many times have you seen the Columbus homecoming parade or another type of parade? It’s a celebration! People from all over the community come together to celebrate. We line the streets to see the colorful floats and hear the music. We wave flags, our hats, and our hands. We yell and laugh and catch candy! While Jesus was coming into Jerusalem, the people gave him a parade. They lined up to welcome Him. They put their coats on the ground, sort of like a fancy red carpet, but also to show Jesus that they respected him and considered Him their king. They waved palm branches like you might wave a flag at a big parade. The people in Jerusalem thought He was going to be an earthly king and would save them from the leaders who mistreated them, but this is not what happened. Sometimes we want to put our own expectations on Jesus. We have an idea of how we think He should answer our prayers or work in our lives. We get confused or upset when God’s ways don’t look like we would hope. But we can be assured that God has much bigger plans in mind. Our job is to continue following and praising Him. Tell everyone about the amazing works of Jesus and tell everyone how wonderful He is! Let our words and our lives declare His power. Hosanna! Amen!

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

*Don’t go from the glory of Palm Sunday to the glory of Easter Sunday and skip the cross, because as Christ’s broken and blessed body you move into this week with only one certainty: that as you enter it, you do so in the company of a self-emptying God who pursues you and saves you with relentless, terrifying love and who ultimately will enter the grave and the very stench of death in order to say **even here, even here I will not be without you.** Hosanna in the highest indeed. Welcome to Holy Week. Amen. - **Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber***

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Next Week's Theme (Thurs., April 6): Maundy Thursday – Last Supper “Love one another”

Next Week's Scriptures (Thurs., April 6):

First Reading: Exodus 12:1-14
“The passover of the LORD.”

Psalm: Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
“I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.” (Ps. 116:13)

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
“Proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.”

Gospel: John 13:1-17, 31b-35
“The service of Christ: footwashing and meal.”

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Next Week's Theme (Fri., April 7): Good Friday – Trial and Betrayal of Jesus

Next Week's Scriptures (Fri., April 7):

First Reading: Isaiah 52:13 - - 53:12 *“The suffering servant.”*

Psalm: Psalm 22:1-24 *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Ps. 22:1)*

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:16-25 *“The way to God is opened by Jesus' death.”*

Gospel: John 18:1 - - 19:16 *“The passion and death of Christ.”*

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Next Week's Theme (April 9): Easter Sunday

Next Week's Scriptures (April 9):

First Reading: Acts 10:34-43
“God raised Jesus on the third day.”

Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
“This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Ps. 118:24)

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4
“Raised with Christ to seek the higher things.”

Gospel: Matthew 28:1-10
“Proclaim the resurrection.”