

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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

April 22 & 23, 2023

Third Sunday of Easter

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (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
Saturday Organist			Carol Ripper
Sunday 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's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel!

Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord's day.

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.)

60 SECONDS OF STEWARDSHIP – Worship Team

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another, first privately then together publicly.

Silence for reflection and private confession of personal sins, then join in with combined voices this printed confession.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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 In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

* **HYMN ELW - #471 “Let Us Break Bread Together”**

1. **Let us break bread together on our knees;
let us break bread together on our knees.**

REFRAIN:

*When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.*

2. **Let us drink wine together on our knees;
let us drink wine together on our knees. REFRAIN**

3. **Let us praise God together on our knees;
let us praise God together on our knees. REFRAIN**

Text: African American spiritual Music: African American spiritual

* **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.**

* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P O God, your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

A Our first reading is from Acts, chapter 2, verses 14a and 36-41.

Today's reading is the conclusion of Peter's sermon preached following the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The center of his preaching is the bold declaration that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord and Christ.

The reading begins:

^{14a}Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd], ³⁶“Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” ³⁸Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” ⁴⁰And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

A The Psalm today is from Psalm 116, verses 1-4 and 12-19. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

¹I love the LORD, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication,

²for the LORD has given ear to me whenever I called.

³The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me; I came to grief and sorrow.

⁴Then I called upon the name of the LORD: “O LORD, I pray you, save my life.”

¹²How shall I repay the LORD for all the good things God has done for me?

¹³I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people.

¹⁵Precious in your sight, O LORD, is the death of your servants.

¹⁶O LORD, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

¹⁷I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the LORD.

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people,

¹⁹in the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:17-23

A Our second reading is from 1 Peter, chapter 1, verses 17-23.

The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.

The reading begins:

¹⁷If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. ¹⁸You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. ²¹Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. ²²Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

A Please stand as you are comfortable for the gospel.

* **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** (Sung)

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

* **GOSPEL:** Luke 24:13-35

The colorful story of Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

P The holy gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 24, verses 13-35.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³Now on that same day [when Jesus had appeared to Mary Magdalene,] two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." ²⁵Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. ²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to

stay with them. ³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #496 "One Bread, One Body"**

REFRAIN:

One bread, one body, one Lord of all; one cup of blessing which we bless, and we, though many throughout the earth, we are one body in this one Lord.

- 1. Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
woman or man, no more. REFRAIN**
- 2. Many the gifts, many the works,
one in the Lord of all. REFRAIN**
- 3. Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,
gathered to one for all. REFRAIN**

Text: John Foley, SJ Music: John Foley, SJ Text and Music © 1978 John B. Foley, SJ, and OCP Publications

* **APOSTLES' CREED**

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

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A Ever-present God, you make yourself known in the breaking of the bread and in the bonds of community. Reveal yourself to us in the faces of all we meet. Strengthened by your body and blood, let us boldly live out your good news. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for your revelation in all the world. Bring an end to the war in Ukraine and the destruction of lives and your creation. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Misti Retzer; Garrett Grounds; Jane Darby; Mary Ann Peirsol; Nicole Roybal; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for all those battling cancer and especially for:
Zelda Lanford; Michelle Thraen; Pauline Gosnell; Nina Naumann; 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; 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 that they may know comfort and strength. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

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

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:
Robert Eaton; Linda Frank; Helen Hammack; Joey Denby; Edwin Oevermann; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Doug Hill; Robert Saunders; Coy Dell Schindler; Barbara McMath; Linda Munos Rodgers; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Curtis Berger; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; and Rita Noska that they receive your caring and compassion. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for all law enforcement officers and especially for 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; Jan Willette; and Terri Neunendorff, 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 that they are protected and kept safe. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for 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. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

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.)

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)



C Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles-sing. 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 Generous God, receive our offerings for your work in the world. In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One. In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

* **GREAT THANKSGIVING** (Responses Sung)

P The Lord be with you.



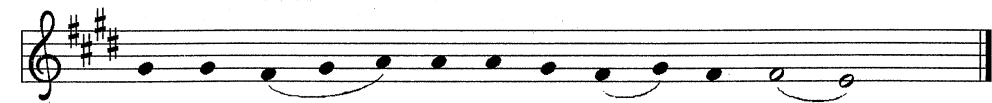
And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.



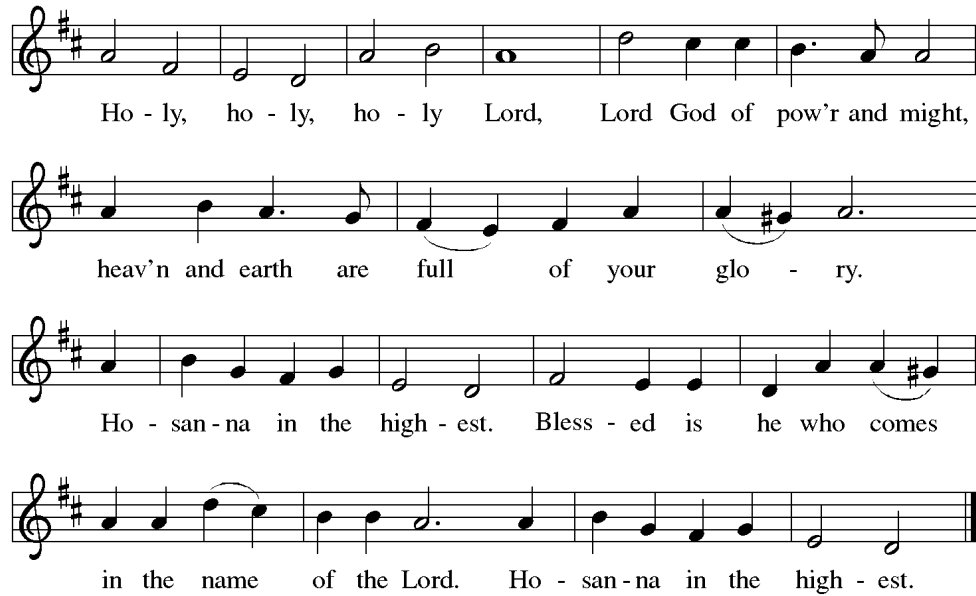
We lift them to the Lord.

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 know Christ, broken and poured out for you.

C **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

{Distribution will be continuous. **All are welcome for communion.** Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Pastor will hand you 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. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

(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.**

* **POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE** (Sung)



☞ **Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.**



Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being. With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together. Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name.

C **Amen.**

* **BLESSING**

P The God of all, who raised ☩ Jesus from the dead, bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation.

C **Amen.**

* **HYMN ELW - #547 "Sent Forth by God's Blessing"**

1. **Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing, the people of God from this dwelling take leave.**

The supper is ended. Oh, now be extended the fruits of this service in all who believe.

The seed of Christ's teaching, receptive souls reaching, shall blossom in action for God and for all.

Your grace shall incite us, your love shall unite us to work for your kingdom and answer your call.

2. **With praise and thanksgiving to God everliving, the tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face –**

our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring, embracing God's children, the whole human race.

With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us; unite us as one in this life that we share.

Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving give honor to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt. Music: Welsh folk tune Text ©1964 World Library Publications

* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Reveal God to others.

C **Thanks be to God, and we will.**

POSTLUDE

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USHERS: SAT: The Brent Gorman Family

SUN: Sonny & Tiffany Lauzon; Cambry Barten

LAY READERS: SAT: Brent Gorman, Sr.

SUN: Tiffany Lauzon

ACOLYTES: SAT: Gracelynn Gorman

SUN: Leira Gonzalez

STREAMING:

SUN: Janel Barten

ALTAR GUILD: Gloria Ilse, Emily Brod and Charleen Andrus

WELCOME: Welcome to worship, Christian education and fellowship. May God bless and strengthen you here today.

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Pastor Alan and Debbie Kethan in honor of their 24th wedding anniversary on the 24th of April.

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: April 15 & 16, 2023 – 131

Contributions: April 15 & 16 – \$6,388.01

Power of One: April 15 & 16, 2023 – \$43.00

Building Fund: April 15 & 16 – \$263.23

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

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., April 19 – **71 Total**

BLAST/Confirmation: 58

Support Staff: 13

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! ☺

**** Thank you** for wearing your name tag! If you would like a magnet version of the name tag instead of the alligator clip, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex, and your Evangelism Team will convert it over. ******

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.

★ **NOTICE!!** The **Women of JOY Bible Study Group** is not meeting during the month of April.

There are lots of events and activities taking place this month. The group will begin meeting again in May. Watch upcoming bulletins and newsletter for more details. For more information about Women of JOY, please contact Gerri Hackfeld at 979-732-4711. ★



St. Paul's Blood Drive is **Sunday, April 23, 2023** from **8:00 AM-12:30 PM** in The Lighthouse! All successful donors will receive a free t-shirt! Make your appointment online at CommitForLife.org and use **sponsor code P732**. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 979-820-8793. Also, if anyone is interested and willing to help with this Outreach Ministry, please let me know. Any help is greatly appreciated! Thank you, and God Bless! – *Melinda Zajicek*

God's Gals: God's Gals will meet **Sunday, April 23, 2023** at **6:00 PM** at **Blake's Kitchen and Kocktailz** in Columbus for food, fellowship and visiting!! All women of St. Paul Lutheran are invited. Bring a friend! Questions? Please contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127.
{**NOTE:** There will be **no** God's Gals in **May** due to Memorial Day.}

◆ **DINNER & A MOVIE:** You are invited to Dinner & A Movie featuring "Jesus Revolution" **Sunday, April 30, 2023** at St. Paul Lighthouse. Dinner begins at 5:30 PM; the movie starts at 6:00 PM. **Please text your RSVP to Sammy at 281-513-8584 or sign up in the narthex (foyer).**



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 and after worship services or from the church office. **Deadline to purchase tickets is Sunday, April 30, 2023!!** 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 attending summer camp at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in Colorado and the high school youth summer retreat. Thank you for your support!

* The **2023 National Day of Prayer** will take place **Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 12:00 PM** on the Colorado County Courthouse lawn. Please join in this opportunity to pray for our government, military, media, business, education, church, and family with local Christian leaders. *

Men In Mission: Men In Mission is a group of men of all ages who meet at **7:00 AM** on the first Saturday of each month in The Lighthouse. Breakfast is served, which typically includes conversations pertaining to sports, the arts, entertainment, and occasionally politics. We then have a short devotion, discussion, then close with the Lord's Prayer around 8:00 AM. If you are seeking a closer connection to the men of St. Paul, this is an excellent way to do so. You will make friends for life. Come join us on **Saturday, May 6!**



St. Paul Senior Explorers are in the "Honey"!! St. Paul Senior Explorers will be going to Bee Weavers of Navasota on **Thursday, May 11, 2023** for a tour and honey tasting. We will depart St. Paul at 9:45 AM, then eat an early Italian lunch at 11:00 AM at Joe's in Hempstead. We will then "buzz" on over to Bee Weavers of Navasota! The tour and tasting cost \$7.50 each. We will return to St. Paul around 3:00 PM. Please sign up in the narthex by Sunday, May 7, 2023. If you have any questions, please call Kevin Page at 979-732-0845.



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.

• **VBS FOOD DONATIONS:** To help defray the cost, we are asking for donations to help with the meals served each evening before Vacation Bible School. We served about 200 kids and volunteers *each night* of VBS last year. If you would like to help, you can either give a **monetary donation or** donate **specific food items**. For monetary donations, an envelope will be on the table in the narthex (foyer) that can be placed in the offering bowl. If you wish to donate specific food items, just pull a slip off the board and return it with the donation on the date specified to the St. Paul Lighthouse. If you have any questions, please contact Loraine Gast at 979-732-1296. Each donation is and will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

♣ **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!

♥ **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 23) – 8:00 AM-12:30 PM – Blood Drive (Lighthouse)
6:00 PM – God's Gals to Blake's Kitchen, Columbus

Mon., April 24 – 9:30 AM – Staff Meeting

Tues., April 25 – 9:00 AM-12:30 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)
6:00 PM – CLA Board

Wed., April 26 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
10:00 AM – Deacon Sandye to Columbus Oaks
2:00 PM – Deacon Sandye to The Oaks
4:30 PM – Confirmation (2nd yr.)
5:00 PM – Meal
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation (1st yr), HS Youth

Thurs., April 27 – 10:00-11:30 AM – Mann for Moms (Lighthouse)

Fri., April 28 – 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)

Sat., April 29 – 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship & Healing

Next Sun., April 30 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship & Healing
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship & Healing
5:30 PM – Dinner for “Dinner & A Movie” Night (Lighthouse)
6:00 PM – Movie Jesus Revolution Begins (Lighthouse)

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Sunday, April 23, 2023 Toyohiko Kagawa, renewer of society, died 1960

Born in Kobe, Japan, Kagawa was orphaned as a young child. Later, when he became Christian, he was disowned by the rest of his family. Wishing to bring Christian principles into society, he worked among poor people, established schools and hospitals, and worked for peace.

Tuesday, April 25, 2023 Mark, Evangelist

He was not numbered among the twelve apostles, yet Mark was probably a member of the early church community. The gospel that bears his name is the shortest and most direct, and many scholars think it was the first to be written.

Saturday, April 29, 2023 Catherine of Siena, theologian, died 1380

This theologian was the first woman among Roman Catholics to receive the title "Doctor [teacher] of the Church." Catherine was a Dominican sister known for her mystical visions as well as her work on behalf of people who were poor and imprisoned.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: CHANGE OF HEART

The people who hear Peter's testimony and preaching are cut to the heart. The writer of 1 Peter instructs believers to love deeply from the heart. The disciples who encounter the risen Christ notice afterward that their hearts were "burning" within them as Jesus reveals the scriptures and then himself to them in the breaking of the bread. Whether a call to repentance, hope, recognition, or love, people are deeply affected by encounters with the one raised from death to become followers of Jesus' way. They not only turn from their sin and doubt but literally change direction, going back from Emmaus to Jerusalem with renewed courage, faith, and hope. These heart-changing encounters with Jesus fulfill a promise from God for the whole community: from little children to those who have lived a long life.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Today we hear the Emmaus story. The men are surprised to discover that the guest they have invited to share a meal is actually the Risen Christ. Welcome to worship! Celebrate your baptism. Find Christ in the scriptures. Recognize Christ at our table.

It was an understandably difficult time for the two disciples headed to Emmaus. After all, it was a day filled with astounding stories about Jesus - that he had risen from the dead. The women’s story of the empty tomb caught them off guard. Was it true? They were so engrossed in recalling the recent events that they did not recognize the stranger who joined them in their journey. Anyone can easily miss those great “aha” moments in life when we are preoccupied with our own life stories. It is possible we may miss recognizing Jesus as he comes to us through unexpected people and in unexpected places.

The two disciples were probably tired. Think of the physical and emotional exhaustion of the previous three days they had to have endured. However, their experience of recognizing Jesus as he broke the bread with them was so powerful that it rejuvenated their tired bodies, minds, and souls. They could not shut up that fire in their bones! They had to return to the other disciples and share this “aha” moment. They had to proclaim this good news of Jesus’ resurrection - a powerful and life-giving message. This is what the Easter message does to wearied bodies, souls, and minds. The power of resurrection enters the valley of bones and makes them stand on their feet to proclaim the good news: Jesus is risen. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

It has only been two weeks since we celebrated Easter. To the world, which spends all the time before Easter pre-celebrating, it is already a memory. Remember that Easter is a 7-week season and not just one day. The celebration lasts for a full seven weeks! We get seven wonderful weeks to fully realize this gift from God. Lean into the season! Celebrate completely!

KID STUDY:

When Jesus died, his followers thought that he was gone forever. They didn’t know what to do. They were very sad. They couldn’t see things clearly because they were so mixed up and upset. Two of Jesus’ friends were sadly walking back to their home in the village of Emmaus when another traveler joined them on the road. They didn’t recognize who it was, but they began to talk to him and tell him all about what had happened to Jesus and how sad they were. When it was evening they arrived at their home and invited the stranger to stay with them and have supper. They sat down to eat and when the traveler broke the bread and blessed it, something happened. Suddenly they saw clearly what they hadn’t seen before even though they had been looking right at it most of the day. They realized that the stranger who had joined them on the road was really Jesus - alive and well. After Jesus left them, they ran back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

Lord! Open our eyes that we may behold thee. Open our ears that they may recognize thy voice. Not in some special religious experience, some great moment or wonderful service or perfect

setting, but just as we go along the common road. Come to us with your living touch on events; your sacred hand opening the scriptures. You have the words of eternal life. Lord! Give us courage and love to open the door and constrain you to enter, offer all my resources, whatever the disguise you come in, even before I fully recognize my guest. Come in! Enter my small life! When out of the heart of my own homely circumstances you feed me, then my eyes are open to the presence I long for and can never understand. Come and abide with me! Meet me, walk with me! Enter my humble life with its poverty and its limitations as you entered the stable of Bethlehem, the workshop of Nazareth, the cottage of Emmaus. Bless and consecrate the material of that small and ordinary life. Feed and possess my soul! - Evelyn Underhill [Evelyn Underhill, Mediations and Prayers (London: Longman, Green and Com., 1949), 14, 17, 20.]
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Next Week's Theme (April 29 & 30): Jesus the Shepherd

Next Week's Scriptures (April 29 & 30):

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47
“The believers’ common life.”

Psalm: Psalm 23
“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.” (Ps. 23:1)

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:19-25
“Follow the shepherd, even in suffering.”

Gospel: John 10:1-11
“Christ the shepherd.”