

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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February 18 & 19, 2023

Transfiguration of Our Lord

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
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 festival is a bridge between the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany cycle that comes to a close today and the Lent-Easter cycle that begins in several days. On a high mountain Jesus is revealed as God's beloved Son, echoing the words at his baptism. This vision of glory sustains

us as Jesus faces his impending death in Jerusalem. We turn this week to Ash Wednesday and our yearly baptismal journey from Lent to Easter. Some churches put aside the alleluia at the conclusion of today's liturgy. This word of joy will be omitted during the penitential season of Lent and will be sung again at Easter.

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.)

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who makes all things new, whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin, first privately then together publicly.

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

P Holy One, source of our renewal,

C we confess that we are wrapped up in sin, and cannot free ourselves. We have not practiced your righteousness. Our hearts, at times, have turned away from you. For the sake of the world you so love, forgive us, that we may be reconciled to one another for the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P Thus says our God: "The former things have come to pass and new things I now declare." God's mercy makes us new. We are forgiven in the name of ☩ Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

* **HYMN ELW - #834 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"**

1. **Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!**
2. **Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

3. **To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.**

4. **Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!**

CCLI Song #124466 Words: Walter Chalmers Smith Music: Traditional Welsh Melody; arr. John Roberts
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* **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, in the transfiguration of your Son you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the witness of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice from the bright cloud declaring Jesus your beloved Son, you foreshadowed our adoption as your children. Make us heirs with Christ of your glory, and bring us to enjoy its fullness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

FIRST READING: Exodus 24:12-18

A Our first reading is from Exodus, chapter 24, verses 12-18.

At Mount Sinai, Moses experienced the presence of God for forty days and forty nights. The "glory of the LORD" settled on the mountain, and on the seventh day God called out to Moses. On the mountain God gave Moses the stone tablets inscribed with the ten commandments.

The reading begins:

¹²The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." ¹³So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them." ¹⁵Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. ¹⁷Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 2

A The Psalm today is Psalm 2. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

¹Why are the nations in an uproar? Why do the peoples mutter empty threats?

²Why do the kings of the earth rise up in revolt, and the princes plot together, against the LORD and against the LORD's anointed?

³"Let us break their yoke," they say; "let us cast off their bonds from us."

⁴God whose throne is in heaven is laughing; the LORD holds them in derision.

⁵Then in wrath God speaks to them, and in rage fills them with terror.

⁶"As for me, I have anointed my king upon Zion, my holy mountain."

⁷Let me announce the decree of the LORD, who said to me, "You are my son; this day have I begotten you.

⁸Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession.

⁹You shall crush them with an iron rod and shatter them like a piece of pottery."

¹⁰And now, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.

¹¹Submit to the LORD with fear, and with trembling bow in worship;

¹²lest the LORD be angry, and you perish in a sudden blaze of wrath. Happy are all who take refuge in God!

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 1:16-21

A Our second reading is from 2 Peter, chapter 1, verses 16-21.

At the transfiguration, God's voice was heard, declaring Jesus to be the beloved Son. By the activity of the Holy Spirit, God's voice continues to be heard through the word of scripture.

The reading begins:

¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

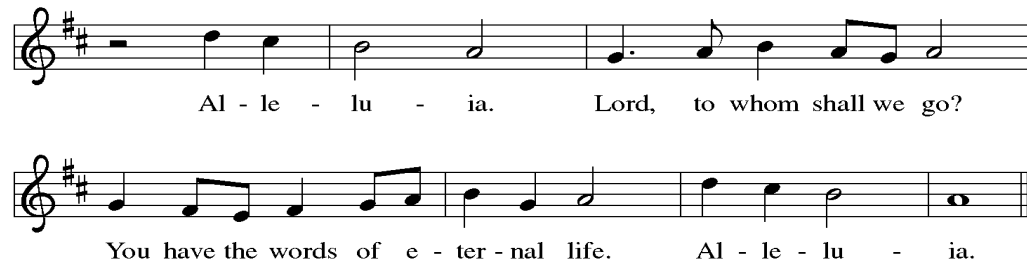
¹⁸We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, ²¹because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from 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)



* **GOSPEL:** Matthew 17:1-9

Shortly before he enters Jerusalem, where he will be crucified, Jesus is revealed to Peter, James, and John in a mountaintop experience of divine glory called the transfiguration.

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 17, verses 1-9.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #315 "How Good, Lord, to Be Here"**

1. **How good, Lord, to be here! Your glory fills the night; your face and garments, like the sun, shine with unborrowed light.**

2. **How good, Lord, to be here, your beauty to behold where Moses and Elijah stand, your messengers of old.**
3. **Fulfiller of the past and hope of things to be, we hail your body glorified and our redemption see.**
4. **Before we taste of death, we see your kingdom come; we long to hold the vision bright and make this hill our home.**
5. **How good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not remain; but since you bid us leave the mount, come with us to the plain.**

CCLI Song #1532129 Words: Joseph Armitage Robinson

Music: W. Mercer, *The Church Psalter and Hymn Book*, 1854 /Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

* **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 Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A Make us eager to receive your Word in scripture. Help us recognize Jesus' voice in the needs of our neighbors; make us confident to follow the way of the cross. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A We pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine. Bring an end to war and the destruction of lives and your creation. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:

Edna Supak; Graeme Gibbs; Rita Noska; Leon Dittmar; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A We pray for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* Merciful God, Mary Gail Flake; Cher Marino; Cindy Tanner; Joe Reck; Melinda Rodiek; Melda Coleman; Donna Culton; Nancy Hartmann; Lydia Rojas; Catherine Poppe; Rodney Hackemack; Larry Stolar; Vivian Fortenberry; Rick Davis; Mack Machacek; Darryl Stancik; Jerry Ordner; Michael Yancey; Bubba Bencal; Al Gene Canik; Jane Venghaus Taylor; George Wright; Sandy Mosley; Charlene Tesch; Cynthia Coufal; 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 We pray for all expectant mothers, and especially for: Ashley Dungen; Magen Schindler Altieri; Katie Pagel Walcik; Kelsey Kethan McNeely; Montana Appelt; and Dina Anton de Espinoza that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for: Joey Denby; Edwin Oevermann; Paul Minar, Sr.; Bobby Zajicek; Adrian Fritsch; Verna Coufal; 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; and Chris Thraen that they receive your caring and compassion. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A 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; Abbigail 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 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 bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

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

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 Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power, and transform our hearts and actions to reveal your love.

C Amen.

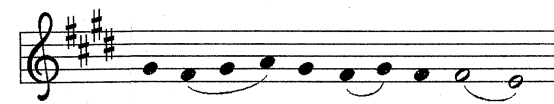
* GREAT THANKSGIVING (Responses Sung)

P The Lord be with you.



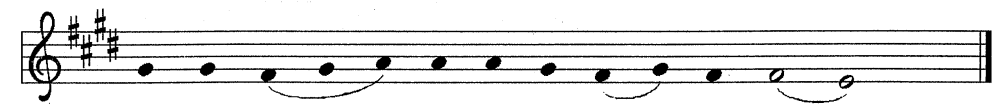
And al - so with you.

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 be transformed by Jesus' gift.

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.

* **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 re-joice and proud-ly 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 Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table. Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you.

C Amen.

* **BLESSING (DOXOLOGY)** ELW - #885 "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"
(Melody is found in #883.)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

CCLI Song #56204 Words: Thomas Ken Music: Louis Bourgeois
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* **HYMN** ELW - #815 "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

1. I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus.

REFRAIN:

*In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*

2. I want to see . . . the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
and show me the way to the Father.

REFRAIN:

*In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*

3. I'm looking for . . . the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run . . . with patience the race,
we shall know the joy of Jesus. **REFRAIN**

CCLI Song #89848 Words and Music: Kathleen Thomerson © 1970, 1975 Celebration CCLI License #1729377

* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace transformed to transform.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

POSTLUDE

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USHERS: SAT: Kenny & JoAnn Venghaus; Janeen Venghaus; Emily Frank

SUN: Charleen Andrus; Darlene Ahlschlager; Brad Hajdik; Emily Brod

LAY READERS: SAT: JoAnn Venghaus

SUN: Deacon Barten

ACOLYTE:

SUN: Leira Gonzalez

STREAMING:

SUN: Brian Lighthill

SOUND: Robert & Sydney Eaton

ALTAR GUILD: Carol Ripper and DyAnn Lauzon

WELCOME: God, you said to your disciples, "This is my Son, the Beloved; ... listen to him!"
(Matthew 17:5, NRSV). Help us always listen to Jesus too.

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: Feb. 11 & 12, 2023 – 154

Contributions: Feb. 11 & 12 – \$8,839.18

Power of One: Feb. 11 & 12, 2023 – \$46.00

Building Fund: Feb. 11 & 12 – \$726.44

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

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., Feb. 15 – **84 Total**

BLAST/Confirmation: 64

Adult Bible Study: 2

Support Staff: 18

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! ☺

Offering Envelopes are HERE!! Our offering envelopes *finally* arrived! You can find them in the narthex in alphabetical order according to your last name. If you have any questions, please let the church office know. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we waited for the envelopes. ☺



The 2023 Flower Calendar is up in the narthex! It is hanging by the glass entrance doors. If you would like to have flowers in church on a certain weekend, please sign your name next to the date for that special weekend and write your phone number. Elena will call you the beginning of that week to remind you that you signed up for flowers and will ask for the occasion (such as birthday, wedding anniversary, in memory of someone, etc.) to put in the bulletin. The monthly newsletter will also have who signed up for flowers for the month. Thank you for adding beauty to our sanctuary and worship services!

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 season of Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday** which is this **Wednesday, February 22, 2023**. The Ash Wednesday service is a service with Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes. **Ash Wednesday** worship will be at **4:00 PM and 7:00 PM**. The remainder of the Wednesdays during Lent we will have worship services at 4:30 PM only. We will participate in a rotation of pastors for each of those Wednesdays. Following the Wednesday evening services and in between the Ash Wednesday services, the youth will provide a meal of soup, sandwiches, and desserts from 5:00-6:30 PM in The Lighthouse. The meal is a youth service project for our church, so, a goodwill offering is greatly appreciated. We look forward to having you join us for worship during this special time, and enjoy food and fellowship after the services.

** **OYSTER/FISH FRY TICKETS!!** If you are in need of tickets for the annual Columbus Volunteer Fire Department's Oyster & Fish Fry, please **see Pastor Alan** – or a fireman of your choice. The event will be **Sunday, February 26, 2023 at Columbus Hall** (formerly K. of C. Hall) 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The meal will be dine in or drive-thru. Advance tickets are \$30 for the oyster/fish combo ticket; at the door are \$35. (If you want only oysters, you need to purchase the combo ticket.) Advance tickets for fish only are \$20.00; at the door are \$25.00. **

God's Gals: God's Gals will meet **next Sunday, February 26, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Joe's Italian Restaurant** in Columbus. All women of St. Paul are invited for food, fellowship and laughter! Guest are always welcome!! Contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127 for more details. ☺

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, March 4!**

+ The **Women of JOY Bible Study** group will begin a **new study on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 6:00 PM** at the Hackfeld Family Room (3234 FM 109, Columbus, Texas). They will be studying Bold: A Study of Praying Bible Women: Six Praying Women, One Faithful God by Rachel Risner. You can purchase the paperback book on Amazon for \$14.97. For more information about the group, please contact Gerri Hackfeld at 979-732-4711. +

SR. EXPLORERS ARE REACHING OUT: On **Wednesday, March 22, 2023**, we will adventure to Reach Unlimited in Cypress, Texas. Reach Unlimited is for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their mission is to provide a home where these individuals can live a life full of joy, purpose and accomplishment in a safe and caring environment. Founded in 1983, they give tours one day per month. We will dine for a lite lunch at the facility with some of the residents. We will have some time for their gift shop. We may stop on the way home for a

second course or dessert. That extra food stop would be your only expense. We will depart the church at 10:30 AM and should return around 3:30 PM. **Please sign up in the narthex (foyer) by Sunday, March 19, 2023.** Please call Kevin Page with any questions at 979-732-0845.



Calling all actors, actresses and play production folks! It is time, once again, to sign up for the Good Friday drama. The drama will be performed **Good Friday, April 7, 2023** at the **7:00 PM** service. Please see the sign-up sheet in the narthex (foyer). We need actors and actresses (22 cast parts) as well as people to help with lighting, set design/props, costumes and set construction. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Alan.

♪♪♪ If you have a child ages 2nd grade – high school interested in being part of the **Children's Choir** for **Easter Sunday** April 9, 2023 at the **9:00 AM service**, please sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex (foyer). Practice will be held after BLAST from 6:30-7:00 PM beginning the last week of February. If you have any questions about the choir, please contact Robert Eaton at 281-881-4497. ♪♪♪



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:

Mon., Feb. 20 – Office Closed! (Presidents' Day)
1:00 PM – Deacon Sandye to TLC
6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (Hackfeld Family Room)

Tues., Feb. 21 –
10:00 AM – Pastor Alan to Columbus Oaks
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
5:30 PM – Prayer Team (library)
6:00 PM – The Gathering (Schulenburg)

Wed., Feb. 22 –
9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:00 AM – Deacon Sandye to Columbus Oaks
2:00 PM – Deacon Sandye to The Oaks
4:00 PM – Ash Wednesday Worship
4:30 PM – Confirmation (2nd yr.)
5:00-6:30 PM – Soup & Sandwiches Meal (Lighthouse)
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation (1st yr.), Adult Class & HS Youth
7:00 PM – Ash Wednesday Worship

Thurs., Feb. 23 –
10:00-11:30 AM – Manna for Moms (Lighthouse)

Fri., Feb. 24 –
10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)

Sat., Feb. 25 –
7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship

Next Sun., Feb. 26 –
9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship
11:00 AM-1:00 PM – CVFD Oyster/Fish Fry (Columbus Hall)
6:00 PM – God's Gals to Joe's Italian Restaurant, Columbus

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Thursday, February 23, 2023 Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, died 156
Because he is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, as well as the important early church fathers Irenaeus and Ignatius, Polycarp serves as a vital link in church history. He was burned at the stake at age 86 for refusing to renounce his faith.

Saturday, February 25, 2023 Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, died 1921
Born in Norway and trained there as a deaconess, Fedde was asked to come and minister to the poor and to seamen in New York City. She established the Deaconess House in Brooklyn as well as Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: FINDING GOD IN THE CLOUDS

We often speak of and remember “mountaintop experiences” as joyous times. We look forward to experiencing them with excitement and look back upon them fondly. Eventually, of course, the time comes to leave that mountain. Like the disciples, we take the journey with Jesus down to the valley to get dusty with the ashes of daily life. Today is the end of a glorious season celebrating Christ’s light and the beginning of a no-less-real season of Jesus’ life and of our own lives that is the “valley” of the season of Lent. But don’t worry – there is plenty to learn and plenty to do down in the valley! The traditional disciplines of Lent - fasting, prayer, and gifts to the poor - all help us maintain the eyes, ears, and heart to see, hear, and serve God whenever and however God appears. Are your eyes, ears, and hearts open to receive and welcome God?

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Today we conclude the time after Epiphany by celebrating the Transfiguration. Jesus went up a mountain and showed himself to be divine. Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, is in when

Jesus walks up another mountain and shows himself to be human. Welcome to worship! Praise Jesus Christ! Hear him speak. Partake of his body.

The mountaintop moments in today’s readings are quite different than our common definition. They are awe-inspiring but also full of devouring fires, clouds, and fear. The disciples’ vision is obscured. The familiar becomes unknown. Afterward, nothing is the same. People get lost in fires, clouds, and fear in everyday life. We become unable to find our way. God’s presence is where we get both lost and found.

In the narrative of the transfiguration, Jesus’ divinity is shown to the disciples. God’s glory breaks through to give us testimony to Jesus’ status as the beloved Son of God. Glory is something that belongs to God and is given or reflected in the world around us.

We might first associate glory with splendor in the natural world, like literally experiencing the vast expanse and beauty of a mountaintop. Be open to the glory and splendor plentiful in your everyday life. It will interrupt the mundane with brilliance! When do you experience God’s glory? Perhaps you notice it in a neighbor’s smile or the quiet sounds of your morning routine. Glory is something that points God’s people back to God. As much as we would like, the truth is we can neither plan our mountaintop experiences with God nor decide how long we stay there. God’s place is to invite. Our place is to respond, faces bowed to the ground. Can you think of a mountaintop experience of glory that led you to recognize or praise God in a new, meaningful way? Did this experience inspire a search for glory elsewhere?

KID STUDY:

Today, Jesus and his disciples go on a hike. They go to the top of a mountain, and when they get there, something amazing happens! Jesus’ appearance is *transfigured*. That’s a big word that means *to be changed or transformed*. Jesus was *transformed* in front of the disciples so they would understand that he was the son of God. Think about how you have transformed. You look quite different than you did when you were born. You can walk and talk. You can ride a bike. You can learn and you can read. You can think about things. You can decide how you will behave. Transformation will happen throughout your life. The world around us transforms with the changing of the seasons. The look of our worship space also transforms when the church seasons change. Today the paraments are white, and next week they will change to purple, the color for the season of Lent.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

I think in the transfiguration, Jesus collapses any meaningful distinction between lofty mountains and dusty valleys. Fulfilling the words of the prophet Isaiah that

“Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together.”

Jesus has made low even the mount of his own transfiguration to be with us. You need not reach for glory, because Holiness has come to dwell with us, in the valley of our shadows. You need no

longer climb up to, strive for, or achieve holiness - for it is too busy already reaching into the troubled dirt of your humanity. Holiness has come to dwell with us in the valley of our shadows. The curtain of the temple is being torn in two so that grit and glory are indistinguishable. Holiness has come to dwell with us in the valley of our shadows. And so the brokenhearted, and the fearful, and the confused, and the lost and the least and the lonely can say... Amen. - Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber

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Next Week’s Theme (Wed., Feb. 22): Ash Wednesday

Next Week’s Scriptures (Wed., Feb. 22):

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
“Return to the LORD, your God.”

Psalm: Psalm 51:1-17
“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.” (Ps. 51:1)

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
“Now is the day of salvation.”

Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
“The practice of faith.”

Next Week’s Theme (Feb. 25 & 26): Jesus’ temptations

Next Week’s Scriptures (Feb. 25 & 26):

First Reading: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
“Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

Psalm: Psalm 32
“Mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.” (Ps. 32:10)

Second Reading: Romans 5:12-19
“Death came through one; life comes through one.”

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11
“The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days.”