

**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](mailto:admin@splctx.org) [www.splctx.com](http://www.splctx.com) **Pastor:** [pastor.akethan@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.akethan@gmail.com)

February 25 & 26, 2023

First Sunday in Lent

\*\*\*\*\*

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			Joan Hunsicker

\*\*\*\*\*

**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 worshipping 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 tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our*

*Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.*

**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 journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace.

**C Amen.**

P Let us acknowledge before God and one another our need for repentance and God's mercy, 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 God,

**C we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we spoil rather than steward your creation; we cause hurt though you call us to heal; we choose fear over compassion. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way of life. Amen.**

P Hear the good news: God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all may receive life. This promise is for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, ☩ forgives you in Christ's name, and revives you in the Spirit's power.

**C Amen.**

**\* HYMN ELW - #325 "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"**

**1. I want Jesus to walk with me;  
I want Jesus to walk with me;  
all along my pilgrim journey, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.**

**2. In my trials, Lord, walk with me;  
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;  
when my heart is almost breaking, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.**

3. **When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;  
when I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;  
when my head is bowed in sorrow, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.**

Text: African American spiritual Music: African American spiritual; arr. hymnal version Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

\* **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.**

\* **KYRIE** *(Responses Sung)*

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



☞ Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



☞ Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



☞ Lord, have mer - cy.

P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



☞ Lord, have mer - cy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



☞ A - men

\* **HYMN OF PRAISE:**

P Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



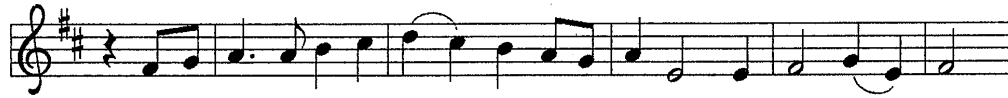
wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



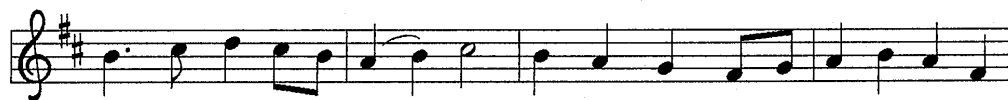
you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

\* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, 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:** Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

A Our first reading is from Genesis, chapter 2, verses 15-17 and chapter 3, verses 1-7. *The annual harvest festival, called the Feast of Weeks, provides the setting for this reading. This festival celebrates the first fruits of the produce of the land offered back to God in thanks. In this text, worshipers announce God's gracious acts on behalf of Israel.*

The reading begins:

**Chapter 2:**

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

**Chapter 3:**

<sup>1</sup>Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" <sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; <sup>3</sup>but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; <sup>5</sup>for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM:** Psalm 32

A The Psalm today is Psalm 32. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

<sup>1</sup>Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

<sup>2</sup>**Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

<sup>3</sup>While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

**4For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

<sup>5</sup>Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

**6Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

<sup>7</sup>You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

**8"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

<sup>9</sup>Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."

**10Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

<sup>11</sup>Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

**SECOND READING:** Romans 5:12-19

A Our second reading is from Romans, chapter 5, verses 12-19.

*Paul reminds the Christians at Rome of the foundation of their creed, the confession of faith in the risen Christ as Lord.*

The reading begins:

<sup>12</sup>Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned — <sup>13</sup>sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup>Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come. <sup>15</sup>But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup>And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup>If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup>For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

A The word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

A Please stand as you are comfortable for the gospel.

\* **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** (Sung)



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

\* **GOSPEL:** Matthew 4:1-11

*After being filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism, Jesus is led in the wilderness. Through his responses to the temptations of the devil he defines what it means to be called "the Son of God."*

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 4, verses 1-11.

**C Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup>But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" <sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" <sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" <sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

P The gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**SERMON**



**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.

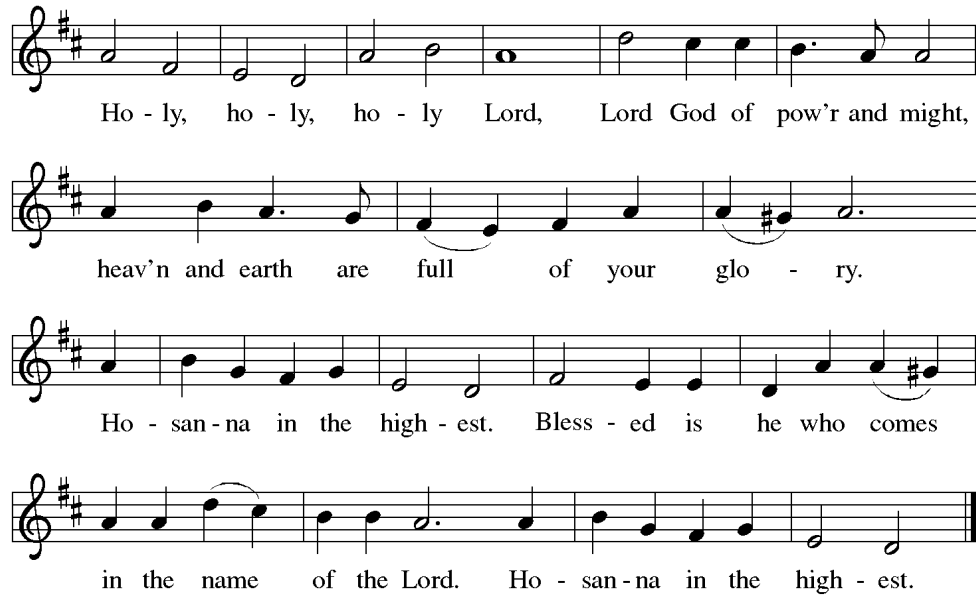
P Lift up your hearts.

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**

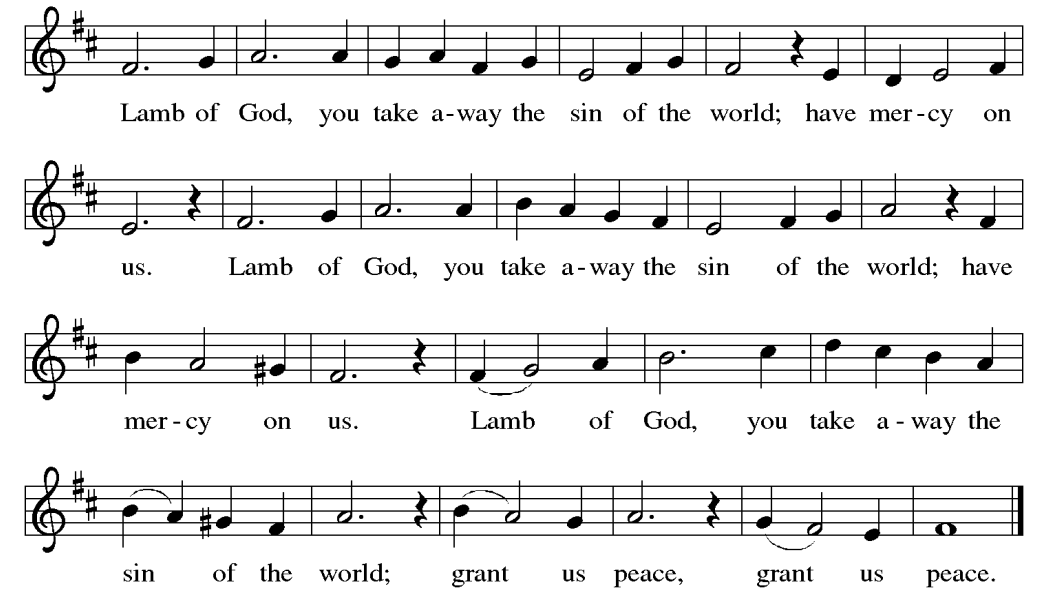
P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

**C Amen.**

**DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION** (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.}

(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 - #618 "Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer"**

1. **Guide me ever, great Redeemer, pilgrim through this barren land.  
I am weak, but you are mighty; hold me with your pow'rful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me now and evermore,  
feed me now and evermore.**

2. **Open now the crystal fountain where the healing waters flow;  
let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through.  
Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer, shield me with your mighty arm,  
shield me with your mighty arm.**

3. **When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside;  
death of death and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side.  
Songs and praises, songs and praises I will raise forevermore,  
I will raise forevermore.**

CCL Song #1448 Words: William Williams and Peter Williams Music: John Hughes  
©Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #17293771

\* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace with faith, hope and love.

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

**POSTLUDE**

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.  
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.  
New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.  
Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress.  
Used by permission.

**USHERS: SAT:** Harvey Poenitzsch; JoAnn Venghaus; Emily Frank

**SUN:** Robin Maertz; Ruth Bedford; Emily Brod

**LAY READERS: SAT:** Pastor John Hunsicker

**ACOLYTE:**

**SOUND:** Robert & Sydney Eaton

**ALTAR GUILD:** Carol Ripper and DyAnn Lauzon

**SUN:** David Stancik

**SUN:** Cambry Barten

**WELCOME:** Welcome to worship on the first Sunday in Lent. A warm welcome to visitors joining us today.

**ALTAR WALL FLOWERS** are placed by Sandy and Randy Neuendorff in honor and celebration of their daughter Terri as she celebrates her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday on February 27.

**THANK YOU!!** Thank you to all who made a contribution during the **Souper Bowl of Caring**. The 4th-6th grade BLAST class collected **\$802.06** for the Columbus Food Pantry! These kiddos spent the last two weeks learning about hunger in our world, what food costs and how they can help. They also learned that our local food pantry serves around 250 households a month, and 270 of those individuals are students in our community. Students were educated on the cost of food and that the Columbus Food Pantry can purchase food at \$0.19 per pound, so a donor's dollar goes a lot farther. Lastly, they learned how to count money and roll coins to be taken to the bank.

**Thank you!!** Special thanks to everyone who supported the **Valentine's Dinner Fundraiser!** The students raised **\$3,747** toward their trip to **Sky Ranch Camp** in Colorado this summer! We would also like to thank our parents for their support and for providing the meal and decorating along with Fay & marv Ulbricht for preparing the chicken marsala.

**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. 18 & 19, 2023 – 170

**Power of One:** Feb. 18 & 19, 2023 – \$46.00

**Contributions:** Feb. 18 & 19 – \$7,336.01

**Building Fund:** Feb. 18 & 19 – \$598.23

**Attendance:** Wed., Feb. 22, 2023 – 180

**Power of One:** Wed., Feb. 22, 2023 – \$21.00

**Contributions:** Wed., Feb. 22 – \$2500.00

**Building Fund:** Wed., Feb. 22 – \$30.00

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

**Wednesday Night Attendance:** – Wed., Feb. 22 – **88 Total**

**BLAST/Confirmation:** 69

**Adult Bible Study:** 2

**Support Staff:** 17

**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.*

**KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS: Those Battling Cancer:** Barbara Farley; Laura Harris; Todd Foster; Mary Gail Flake; Cher Marino; Cindy Tanner; Joe Reck; Melinda Rodiek; Melda Coleman; Donna



Culton; Nancy Hartmann; Lydia Rojas; Catherine Poppe; 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; Brenda Baker.

**Expectant Mothers:** Magen Schindler Altieri; Katie Pagel Walcik; Kelsey Kethan McNeely; Montana Appelt; Dina Anton de Espinoza.

**Those in Care Facilities and Homebound:** Joey Denby; Carolyn Renz; 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. **Homebound:** Curtis Berger; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmner; Donna Dehmer; Chris Thraen.

**Those 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. **Fire Fighters, First Responders, Healthcare Workers and 9-1-1 Dispatchers:** 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. **Active Duty Military Personnel:** 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; Kevin Gonzalez.

► **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.

\*\* **OYSTER/FISH FRY TICKETS!!** 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. *The oyster/fish combo ticket is \$35 at the door.* (If you want only oysters, you need to purchase the combo ticket.) Fish only tickets are \$25.00 at the door. \*\*

**God's Gals:** God's Gals will meet **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. +

**Peru Team Drive-Thru Fundraiser!!** Our Peru Mission Trip Team is having a drive-thru dinner fundraiser on **Tuesday, March 21, 2023** at The Lighthouse from **5:00-7:00 PM**. The menu will be: Chicken Fried Steak; Twice Baked Potatoes; Broccoli Salad; Grilled Vegetables (green beans, carrots, yellow & zucchini squash); Dinner Roll; and Pineapple Upside Down Cake. Tickets are \$13 each and are **pre-sale only**. They are available from any Peru Team member or at the church office. **Deadline to purchase tickets is Wednesday, March 15, 2023.**

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. 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:**

**Today, Feb. 26 –** 11:00 AM-1:00 PM – CVFD Oyster/Fish Fry (Columbus Hall)  
6:00 PM – God's Gals to Joe's Italian Restaurant (Columbus)

**Mon., Feb. 27 –** 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting  
6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (Hackfeld Family Room)

**Tues., Feb. 28 –** 9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)  
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)  
6:00 PM – CLA Board

**Wed., March 1 –** 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel  
12:00 PM – Ministerial Alliance  
1:30-3:00 PM – Continuing Education (Lighthouse)  
4:30 PM – Lenten Worship  
4:30 PM – Confirmation (2<sup>nd</sup> year)  
5:00-6:30 PM – Soup & Sandwich Meal  
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation (1<sup>st</sup> yr.), Adult Class & HS Youth  
Stephanie to Youth Ministry Network

**Thurs., March 2 –** 5:30 PM – Youth & Education Team (library)  
6:00 PM – Property Team (choir room)

**Fri., March 3 –** 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)

**Sat., March 4 –** 7:00 AM – Men In Mission (Lighthouse)  
7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship

**Next Sun., March 5 –** 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship  
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation  
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship  
12:00 PM – Evangelism Team New Member Lunch

#### **UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS**

**Wednesday, March 1, 2023** **George Herbert, hymnwriter, died 1633**

An excellent scholar, Herbert served briefly in the English parliament, then became a parish priest. He was known for devoted care of his parishioners, as well as for writing poetry and hymns, including "Come, my way, my truth, my life." He died at age 40.

**Thursday, March 2, 2023 John Wesley, died 1791; Charles Wesley, died 1788; renewers of the church**

These brothers led a revival originally intended to remain within the Church of England, one that involved frequent communion and advocacy for the poor. Except for a brief time in America, they worked in England. Charles was also a prolific hymn writer. After their deaths, their work led to the formation of the Methodist Church.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.

**SERVICE OVERVIEW:**

This Lent we are called to expunge the fantastical images of the devil from our minds and think seriously about the real presence of evil in our world. We know firsthand about the sin that caused, causes, and will cause suffering to us, our loved ones, our neighbors, our global communities, and creation itself. Sin is real; suffering is real; evil is real; indeed, the devil is real. This oppressive, tangible reality is as real as the air we breathe - felt but not always seen. Greed, envy, rage, hatred, war, discrimination, and apathy are just some of the ways the devil's forces wreak havoc upon us. These forces have one goal and one goal only: to turn us away from the will of God.

Matthew's gospel reorients us to the truth of the devil's power, and calls us to name Satan's presence in the world. In the wilderness Jesus encounters an evil as real as its opposite, resurrection. The great tempter seeks to undermine Jesus' mission before he even begins; testimony that evil has much to fear of our Jesus! Nonetheless, Jesus will not be dissuaded. "Away with you, Satan!" proclaims the redeemer of the cosmos. Thus, the Lenten journey begins. It is a journey that takes us to the cross, where the devil is named and crushed underfoot.

**THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:**

The first week in Lent tells the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Jesus was truly human, suffering from temptations no less than we, so he can stand by us when we are tempted. We too conquer evil with the power of God's word: and that word for us is embodied in Christ. Welcome to worship! Hear the Word. Eat the food of God. Receive the Spirit's strength to live in light of your baptism.

Jesus, upon his baptism, departed for forty days in the wilderness where he was tempted by Satan. This is the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Instead of impatience about what he has been called to do, he devotes a measure of time to prayer and deprivation in a space removed from the general population. Satan urges Jesus to forget his own identity and lineage. Perhaps what looks impossible to us – a starving Jesus refusing to turn stones into bread, is something that Jesus was able to do because he was able to recognize the foundation that grounded him against temptation.

All of us face temptation. Advice to simply avoid it may not help. What will help, though, is to reflect on our responsibilities as people of faith. Allow a scripturally faithful response to ground

you and grant you the foundation you need. The familiar rhythms of scripture continue to point us to what trust and obedience look like through Jesus' example.

In place of marking Lent by giving up tangible items like caffeine or sweets, what might happen if you try to try to surrender constructs such as weakness and fear? Instead of limiting your television or computer time or following a healthier diet, why not give up impatience, criticism, or being motivated by others' judgment?

**KID STUDY:**

Our culture markets and sells stuff by making you think you are not enough. If you think you are lacking something, surely that product they are selling will make you more likable or more popular. Those messages tell a lie. Every person, including you, is a beloved of God and, thereby, is enough. Jesus reminds you and every person (including grown ups) who they are in Christ - children of God! Don't be tempted to think you aren't enough. Lent is a time when we ask questions about and study what it means to be God's beloved as we hear the story of Jesus' journey to the cross.

**INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:**

*The Lord formed these words in my soul: "Therewith is the fiend overcome." When he said these words, our Lord was referring to his blessed passion. On account of this, I laughed loud and long, which made those who were around me laugh too, and their laughter was a pleasure to me. I understood that we may laugh, comforting ourselves and rejoicing in God that the devil has been overcome. - Julian of Norwich [Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love, ed. M.L. de Mastro (Garden City, NY: Image, 1977), 105-106.]*

+++++

**Next Week's Theme (March 4 & 5):** Born again

**Next Week's Scriptures (March 4 & 5):**

**First Reading:** Genesis 12:1-4a  
*"The blessing of God upon Abram."*

**Psalm:** Psalm 121  
*"I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the LORD." (Ps. 121:1,2)*

**Second Reading:** Romans 4:1-5,13-17  
*"The promise to those who share Abraham's faith."*

**Gospel:** John 3:1-17  
*"The mission of Christ: to save the world."*