

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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March 12, 2023 Contemporary 11:05 AM

Third 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			Tomas Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon

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

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection

feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

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 We believe that the Bible contains instruction for us as followers of Jesus Christ to do what he asked of us. He taught the first disciples to help others to confess their sins and to proclaim to them the promise of forgiveness afterwards. So let us take a few brief moments in silence to open our hearts and minds to Jesus, to confess the things that weigh heavy on our hearts and the things we need help with so we might be more in line with what Jesus commands.

(Silence for private confession.)

P If you are truly sorry and asking God for help, here is the promise he commanded the leaders in his church to proclaim, "You are forgiven." May this forgiveness free you and help you to live; to live in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

GOSPEL SONG: FILL MY CUP, LORD

**Like the woman at the well I was seeking
For things that could not satisfy.
And then I heard my Savior speaking,
"Draw from my well that never shall run dry."**

CHORUS:

**Fill my cup, Lord. I lift it up, Lord.
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
Bread of Heaven, feed me 'til I want... no... more...
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.**

GOSPEL: John 4:5-42

Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.

A The holy gospel according to St. John, chapter 4, verses 5-42.

⁵[Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the

well. It was about noon. ⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." ¹¹The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹²Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" ¹³Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." ¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." ¹⁷The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" ¹⁹The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." ²⁶Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." ²⁷Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" ²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹"Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" ³⁰They left the city and were on their way to him. ³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." ³²But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ³³So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" ³⁴Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. ³⁶The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." ³⁹Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word. ⁴²They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

GOSPEL SONG: FILL MY CUP, LORD
There are millions in this world who are craving
The pleasure earthly things afford.
But none can match the wond'rous treasure
That I find in Jesus Christ my Lord.

CHORUS:
Fill my cup, Lord. I lift it up, Lord.
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
Bread of Heaven, feed me 'til I want... no... more...
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.

So my friends, if the things this world gave you
Leave hungers that won't pass away,
My blessed Lord will come and save you,
If you kneel to Him and humbly pray. CHORUS

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CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*** SERMON SONG: COME TO THE TABLE**
We all start on the outside... the outside looking in. This is where grace begins.
We were hungry, we were thirsty... with nothing left to give.
Oh, the shape that we were in!
Just when all hope seemed lost, love opened the door for us.

CHORUS:
He said, "Come to the table! Come join the sinners who have been redeemed.
Take your place beside the Savior. Sit down and be set free. Come to the table."

Come meet this motley crew of misfits... these liars and these thieves.
There's no one unwelcome here. That sin and shame that you've brought with you,
You can leave it at the door... and let mercy draw you near! CHORUS

BRIDGE:

**To the thief and to the doubter, to the hero and the coward.
To the pris'ner and the soldier, to the young and to the older.
All who hunger, all who thirst, all the last and all the first.
All the paupers and the princes, all who've failed, You've been forgiven!
All who dream and all who suffer, all who've loved and lost another.
All the chained and all the free, all who follow, all who lead.
Anyone who's been let down, all the lost, you have been found!
All who've been labeled right or wrong, To everyone who hears this song...**

LAST CHORUS:

**Come to the table! Come join the sinners who have been redeemed.
Take your place beside the Savior. Sit down and be set free. Sit down and be set free!
Come to the table. Come to the table.
Just sit down and rest a while. Just sit down and rest a while.
Come to the table!**

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*** 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

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

A brief silence.

A We pray for your church. Bless partnerships with other Christians and inter-religious dialogue. Guide the daily work of denominational and congregational leaders. Strengthen our combined witness for the sake of the gospel, that all experience your life-giving love.

A brief silence.

A We pray for the universe. All creation teems with life, from the depths of the earth and seas to the skies above. Fill us with awe and reverence for the diversity and preservation of life.

A brief silence.

A We pray for those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit. Be present with all who are lonely, and give courage to all who are afraid. Comfort those who live with chronic illness or other sickness. Give them your living water always.

A brief silence.

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.

A brief silence.

A We pray for the friends and families of Melissa Ritchie and Frances Truchard who passed away this past week. Be with them and comfort them during this difficult time.

A brief silence.

A We pray for Clint Barrett and Anela Carter who were united in marriage this weekend. Bless them as they begin a new life together as husband and wife.

A brief silence.

A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Noah Henicke; Wayne Rester; Carl Geisler; Robert Eaton; Rita Noska; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you.

A brief silence.

A We pray for those battling cancer, all expectant mothers, those who reside in care facilities and the homebound, all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel.

{See all those we pray for on pages 10 & 11.}

A brief silence.

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.

A brief silence.

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

C Amen.

* **PEACE**

P As Jesus shared peace, let us also share His peace with one another. (*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 – Evangelism Team

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

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

* **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.

* **REMEMBERING JESUS' WORDS, PROMISES, AND COMMANDS**

* **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 from Jesus living water.

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.}*

* **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.

* **CLOSING SONG: SOUL ON FIRE**

SING TWICE:

**God, I'm running for Your heart, I'm running for Your heart,
'til I am a soul on fire. Lord, I'm longing for Your ways,
I'm waiting for the day when I am a soul on fire. "Til I am a soul on fire!**

BRIDGE 1

**Lord, restore the joy I had. I have wandered, bring me back.
In this darkness, lead me thru; until all I see is You, yeah!**

**God, I'm running for Your heart, I'm running for Your heart,
'til I am a soul on fire. Lord, I'm longing for Your ways,
I'm waiting for the day when I am a soul on fire. 'Til I am a soul on fire!**

BRIDGE 2

**Lord, let me burn for You again. Let me return to You again.
And Lord, let me burn for You again. Let me return to You again!**

**God, I'm running for Your heart, I'm running for Your heart,
'til I am a soul on fire. Lord, I'm longing for Your ways,
I'm waiting for the day when I am a soul on fire.
God, I'm running for Your heart, I'm running for Your heart,
'til I am a soul on fire. 'Til I am a soul on fire! 'Til I am a soul on fire!**

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*** DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace and bring others to Christ

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

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USHERS: Kevin & Wendy Page; John, Terri & Chase Brasher

LAY READER: Terri Brasher

STREAMING: Chase Brasher

SOUND: Robert & Sydney Eaton

ACOLYTE:

POWER POINT: Peggy Geisler

ALTAR GUILD: Marilyn Yearwood

WELCOME: We gather at the well of worship, where Jesus, our Living Water, quenches our thirst for love, life, hope, peace. Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran.

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Elsie Kahlden in celebration of her family's March birthdays: granddaughter Amber Smith on March 12; daughter Suzanne Conway on March 13; and daughter Beth Herchek on March 14. Flowers are also placed in memory of Elsie's father Arthur Otto for the anniversary of his birth on March 16.

We extend our Christian sympathy to George "Tiger" Bergfeld, Jr. and family for the loss of his father-in-law Frances Truchard who passed away this past week. May God comfort them during their time of loss.

Congratulations and best wishes to Clint Barrett and Anela Carter who were united in Holy Matrimony Saturday, March 11, 2023. May God bless them as they begin a new life together as husband and wife!

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

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

Attendance: March 4 & 5, 2023 – 185

Power of One: March 4 & 5, 2023 – \$50.00

Contributions: March 4 & 5 – \$9,418.56

Building Fund: March 4 & 5 – \$563.23

Attendance: Wed., March 8, 2023 – 51

Power of One: Wed., March 8, 2023 – \$9.00

Contributions: Wed., March 8 – \$1,665.00

Building Fund: Wed., March 8 – \$125.00

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

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., March 8 – **81 Total**

BLAST/Confirmation: 60

Adult Bible Study: 2

Support Staff: 19

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: 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; 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: Helen Hammack; 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. **Homebound:** Curtis Berger; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmner; Donna Dehmer; Carolyn Renz.

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! ☺

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.

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.

• **Habitat for Humanity Homeowner Application Workshop** – The next Habitat for Humanity Homeowner Application Workshop will be held on **Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 6:00 PM** and again on **Saturday, March 25, 2023 at 9:00 AM**. Both of these meetings will be held at First United Methodist Church Family Life Center, 419 Washington St., Columbus, Texas. **Attendance needed at ONE session to receive an application for a Habitat home.** If you have any questions, please contact Colorado County Habitat for Humanity at 979-732-5677 or at chfh96@gmail.com.

♣ **Explore Retreat at Lutherhill!!** Whether your **1st-6th grader** is anxious to get back to Lutherhill, wants to do a trial run before summer, or you simply want them to adventure outside of their regular weekend routine, the Explore Retreat is the PERFECT opportunity! **March 24-26, 2023** seasoned and new campers alike will explore all that camp has to offer. Register at www.lutherhill.org/explore. **Cost is \$95 per camper.** Andy & Danielle Jones will serve as chaperones for this event and will drive the bus to Lutherhill on Friday, March 24. Once you have registered your child online, please contact Stephanie to let her know. Also, please contact Stephanie if you have any questions.



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. If you have any questions about the choir, please contact Robert Eaton at 281-881-4497. ♪♪♪

♦ **Lutherhill Serve Day:** The annual Lutherhill Serve Day will be **Saturday, April 22, 2023** from 8:00 AM-2:00 PM. Time will be spent clearing brush and limbs around the camp. Lunch will be served. Interested in helping? Sign the **sign-up** sheet in the narthex **by Friday, April 21, 2023.** If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858.



SUMMER CRAFTING CAMP: This summer we will be having a Summer Crafting Camp the first week of June. **We are in need of the following items:** 1) *Cardboard tubes from paper towels*; 2) *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!



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., March 13 – 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:45 PM – Stewardship Team (library)
6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (Hackfeld Family Room)

Tues., March 14 – 9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)
10:30 AM – Pastor to TLC
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)

Wed., March 15 – **Deadline to purchase Peru dinner tickets!!**
9:00 AM – Morning Circle (library)
1:00 PM – Neighbor-to-Neighbor Quarterly Meeting/Craft Day
4:30 PM – Lenten Worship
5:00-6:30 PM – Soup & Sandwich Meal

Thurs., March 16 – 5:30 PM – Grief Support Group (library)

Fri., March 17 – 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)

Sat., March 18 – 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship

Next Sun., March 19 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Sunday, March 12, 2023 Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, died 604
Born into wealth and power, Gregory was for a time the chief administrator of the city of Rome. Giving this up for a life in the church, he was elected pope in 590. He influenced public worship through the establishment of a lectionary and prayers to correlate with the readings. Gregorian chant is named in his honor.

Friday, March 17, 2023 Patrick, bishop, missionary to Ireland, died 461

A native of Britain, Patrick was kidnapped by pirates at age sixteen and sold into slavery in Ireland. After a few years, he escaped, returned home, and entered the ministry. Returning to Ireland, he successfully served as a bishop and missionary there.

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OTHER READINGS: Exodus 17:1-7

Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question — “Is the LORD among us or not?” — received a very positive answer.

The reading begins:

¹From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people quarreled with Moses, and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” ³But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” ⁴So Moses cried out to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” ⁵The LORD said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

PSALM: Psalm 95

¹Come, let us sing to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation. ²Let us come before God’s presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms. ³For you, LORD, are a great God, and a great ruler above all gods. ⁴In your hand are the caverns of the earth; the heights of the hills are also yours. ⁵The sea is yours, for you made it, and your hands have molded the dry land. ⁶Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our maker. ⁷For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God’s pasture and the sheep of God’s hand. Oh, that today you would hear God’s voice! ⁸“Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert. ⁹There your ancestors tested me, they put me to the test, though they had seen my works. ¹⁰Forty years I loathed that generation, saying, ‘The heart of this people goes astray; they do not know my ways.’ ¹¹Indeed I swore in my anger, ‘They shall never come to my rest.’”

OTHER READINGS: Romans 5:1-11

Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus’ death God helps utterly helpless sinners. Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation.

The reading begins:

¹Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. ⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. ⁹Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. ¹¹But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

SERVICE OVERVIEW: OUR "OTHER" AT THE WELL

The woman at the well is a familiar text for many people. This image of Jesus standing at a well talking with a Samaritan woman is emblazoned in our visual and theological imaginations, but as with all Bible stories that we *think* we know, we might do well to take another look! Perhaps relegating this text to the simple moralism "be nice to people who are different" causes us to miss how deeply radical and difficult the message really is. We may assume this gospel simply urges us to stand with the marginalized, especially women. Yet while standing with marginalized women is a commendable action it can lead us, after doing so, to congratulate ourselves for being just like Jesus. A more critical and searching look at this text calls us to the reality that Jesus doesn't just stand with the other, Jesus stands with *your* other. Jesus stands with *your church's* other. Your church's "Samaritans" may be homosexuals, evangelicals, urban people, rural people, conservatives, liberals, the poor, the rich, the dying, or single parents. Your church's Samaritans could very well be the key to this text. Because, like it or not, when we draw lines between ourselves and other people, Jesus is always on the *other* side of that line. So communities and individuals who thirst for the living water would do well to look to who our own Samaritans might be. And when we find them we should perhaps not be surprised to also find Jesus; a Jesus we thought was all our own but who, in reality, is the living water who comes to us in the strange and the stranger.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

During Lent we accompany Jesus to his cross and resurrection. Today we stop at a well to receive a drink of water. The water turns out to be Christ himself. Welcome to worship! Pray. Meditate on all the ways Christ breaks through our human-made barriers in order to share the promises of God. Acknowledge your "other," then join all of the thirsty people made alive in Christ.

Last week we heard the story of Nicodemus, who was a highly regarded religious scholar who thirsted for Jesus' explanation of who he was. The woman at the well is the exact opposite of Nicodemus in almost every way: sex, status, wealth, public regard, work. The same way Jesus meets all people exactly where they are, inviting them to experience the living water that sustains and nourishes believers as they continue to embody the spirit and the truth. How might we as the church meet people where they are, regardless of social standing, status, or power? There are thirsty people in desperate need of that message.

Jesus says, "*the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.*" Who are "the true worshipers"? Jesus bridges the divide not only between Jews and Samaritans, but by talking with the woman he is also making it clear that God is for "the whole world." True worshipers will worship God in spirit and truth, meaning they will not seek God on either the mountain or in the temple. Rather, the Savior is present in the flesh, in the here and now! What invisible walls do we put up around ourselves as we attempt to feel safe from others?

The interaction between Jesus and the Samaritan woman gives testimony to Christ outside of orthodox Judaism, at the site of the historically important well of Jacob. Jesus is himself both thirsty and the source of living water, thus both human and divine. Jesus promised to give living water to all who ask and, at the conclusion of the dialogue, claimed for himself the divine name I am. The exchange resulted in these outsiders accepting Jesus as the Savior of the world.

KID STUDY:

Jesus was traveling from Judea to Galilee. On the way, he had to pass through the country of Samaria. When he arrived at Jacob's well near the town of Sychar, he was hot and tired. A Samaritan woman came to the well to get some water. Jesus went to her and asked, "Will you give me a drink?" She was surprised Jesus even spoke to her, because Jews did not like people from Samaria and would have nothing to do with them. Jesus replied, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is asking you for a drink, you would have asked me, and I would give you living water." You see, Jesus wasn't concerned about whether she was a Jew or a Samaritan. He only cared that she knew that he could give her what she needed - eternal life. There is still a lot of people who separate themselves from other people who are different from them. If we follow Jesus' example, we should treat everyone with love and care.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

John's gospel says the Samaritan woman was invited to take all the water she needed. The early centuries of the church, and now we again, have seen in the Samaritan woman an image of us all. We all search in the wrong place for refreshment, lugging home water which gives out or goes bad; we continuously need more water; we are always somewhat thirsty, dirty or raw. We thought to find water there, down at the stream, and were surprised to find it here, directly before us. Turning around (the word is conversion) we find a water source we had not even imagined. Baptism, says the church, is this water source, this fountain of God, this conversation

with Christ, this gift of self-knowledge, this sense of mission, this true religious rite, this conversion of life. - Gail Ramshaw [Gail Ramshaw, Words Around the Font (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994), 56.]

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Next Week's Theme (March 18 & 19): The blind see

Next Week's Scriptures (March 18 & 19):

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

"David is chosen and anointed."

Psalm: Psalm 23

"You anoint my head with oil." (Ps. 23:5)

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

"Awake from sleep, live as children of light."

Gospel: John 9:1-41

"Baptismal image: the man born blind."