

## 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)

March 16 & 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday in Lent

\*\*\*\*\*

|  |  |                             |                             |
|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Senior Pastor                                | Alan Kethan  | <u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060 | <u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200 |
| Youth & Family Specialist                    |  |                             | Stephanie Polasek           |
| Congregational Chair                         |  |                             | Kevin Page                  |
| St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director |  |                             | Briana Bedford              |
| Secretary                                    |  |                             | Elena Holub                 |
| Custodian                                    |  |                             | Tomas Rosales               |
| Lighthouse Coordinator                       | <a href="mailto:lighthouse.splc@gmail.com">lighthouse.splc@gmail.com</a> |                             | Elizabeth Smith             |
| 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

*God promises Jeremiah that a “new covenant” will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God’s heart through Christ and draws God’s love and truth into our hearts. We join together in*

*worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God’s love with all the world.*

### 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 writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus.

C Amen.

P Held in God’s mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another, first privately then together publicly.

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

P Holy God,

C **we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.**

P Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through ☩ Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

\* HYMN ELW - #328 “Restore in Us, O God”

1. **Restore in us, O God, the splendor of your love;  
renew our image in our hearts, and all our sins remove.**

2. **O Spirit, wake in us the wonder of your pow’r;  
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives like springtime bud and flow’r.**

3. **Bring us, O Christ, to share the fullness of your joy;  
baptize us in the risen life that death cannot destroy.**

4. **Three-personed God, fulfill the promise of your grace,  
that we, when all our searching ends, may see you face to face.**  
CCLI Song #5442225 Text: Carl P. Daw, Jr Music: Hal H. Hopson  
Text ©1989 Hope Publishing Company Music ©1985 Hope Publishing Company CCLI License #1729377

\* **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.

Musical notation for the response 'Lord, have mercy.' in G-clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F#4. The lyrics 'Lord, have mercy.' are written below the staff.

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

Musical notation for the response 'Lord, have mercy.' in G-clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F#4. The lyrics 'Lord, have mercy.' are written below the staff.

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.

Musical notation for the response 'Lord, have mercy.' in G-clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F#4. The lyrics 'Lord, have mercy.' are written below the staff.

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

Musical notation for the response 'Lord, have mercy.' in G-clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F#4. The lyrics 'Lord, have mercy.' are written below the staff.

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

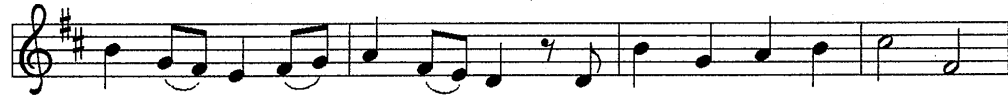
Musical notation for the response 'Amen' in G-clef, 4/4 time. The melody consists of a half note G4, a half note A4, a half note B4, a half note A4, a half note G4, and a half note F#4. The lyrics 'Amen' are written below the staff.

\* **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



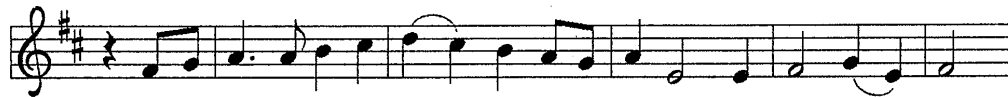
wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



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 O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in 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:** Jeremiah 31:31-34

A Our first reading is from Jeremiah, chapter 31, verses 31-34.

*The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.*

The reading begins:

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt — a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM:** Psalm 51:1-12

A The Psalm today is from Psalm 51, verses 1-12. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

<sup>2</sup>**Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup>For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup>**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.

<sup>6</sup>**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

<sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

<sup>8</sup>**Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

<sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

<sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**

<sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
**<sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

**SECOND READING:**    Hebrews 5:5-10

A    Our second reading is from Hebrews, chapter 5, verses 5-10.  
*Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.*

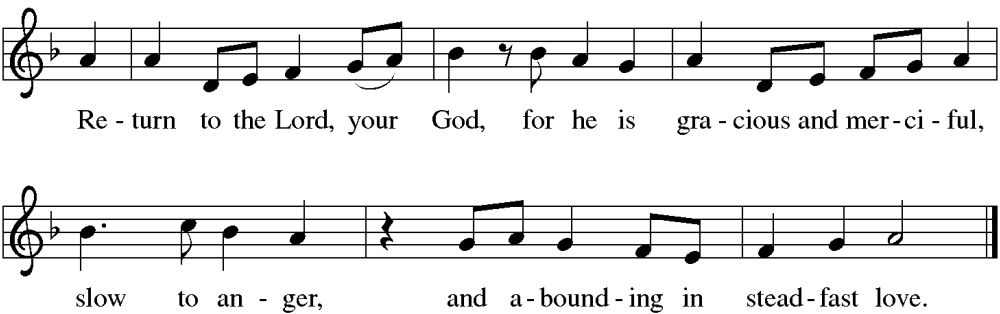
The reading begins:

<sup>5</sup>Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; <sup>6</sup>as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.” <sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, <sup>10</sup>having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

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:**    John 12:20-33  
*Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus’ words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of his death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.*

P    The holy gospel according to St. John, chapter 12, verses 20-33.  
**C    Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>20</sup>Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” <sup>22</sup>Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor. <sup>27</sup>“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say — ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup>Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” <sup>29</sup>The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” <sup>30</sup>Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup>Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

P    The gospel of the Lord. **C    Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**SERMON**

- \*    HYMN    ELW - #550    “On What Has Now Been Sown”**
- 1.    On what has now been sown your blessing Lord, bestow;  
the pow’r is yours alone to make it sprout and grow.  
O Lord, in grace  
the harvest raise, and yours alone shall be the praise!**
  - 2.    To you our wants are known, from you are all our pow'rs;  
accept what is your own and pardon what is ours.  
Our praises, Lord,  
and prayers receive and to your word a blessing give.**
  - 3.    Oh, grant that each of us, now met before you here,  
may meet together thus when you and yours appear,  
and follow you  
to heav'n, our home. E'en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!**

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt.    Music: John Darwall, 1731-1789

**\*    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 Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

- A God of the covenant, through the church you draw us into community. We give thanks for the means of grace around which we gather. Inspire writers, musicians, and volunteers whose creative gifts adorn our worship. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A God of good will, you restore what is broken. We pray for any experiencing estrangement, conflict, or abuse in families and intimate relationships. Protect and comfort all who are vulnerable, especially those living in institutions. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A God of every time and place, you are with us. Support ministries of prayer and presence in this congregation. Move us to reach out to any who are homebound, lonely, grieving, in treatment, or ill. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A We pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine, Sudan, Niger Israel and the Middle East. Bring an end to wars and the destruction of lives and your creation. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:  
Debra Sandell; Beverly Olsen; Troy Scarbough; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A We pray for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength. (*Pause for those we are praying for.*) Hear us, O God.  
Debra Sandell; Noe Vela; Shirley Trahan; Kristen Downing; Ashley Roberts; Michael Yancey; Amanda Aramijo; Zachary Schulke; Herbie Kollatschny; Tom Russell, Jr.; Melda

Coleman; Al Gene Canik; Larry Bookout; Kristina Acevedo; George Krenek; Anne Dimas; Laura Walla; Paul Casinger; Dr. Tom Hancher; Leonard Kahlden; and Bob Loy.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A We pray for all expectant mothers and especially for:  
Jamee Albert; Abegail Gatzke; Chelsea Gilstrap; Calli Guthmann; Dhara Comans; Rosalinda Rosales; Kelsey Page Bakken; Hailey Johnson; Holly Fristch; and Whitney Werland that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:  
Madelyn Braden; Nelda Moore; Clemons Venghaus; Joey Denby; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Coy Dell Schindler; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Walter Glaeser, Jr.; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Donna Dehmer; Cherie Moore; Lauren Lamb; and Lydia Rojas that they receive your caring and compassion. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- 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.*) Hear us, O God.

Law Enforcement Officers: Charles Jobb; Joseph Smith; Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abbigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; Terri Neunendorff; 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.; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Travis Neuendorff; Nathan Bookout; Brenda Henkes; and Jan Willette; as well as those active duty military members including Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Dalton Kapel; Kevin Gonzalez; Evelyn Rojas; Nelson Beettner; and Hugh & Katie Hajdik.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A We thank you for the privilege of walking alongside our brothers and sisters in Peru and the Central African Republic. Bless their leaders and congregations as they serve on Jesus' behalf. Bless our Missionary Dina and her family. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

- A God of promise, we give thanks for the saints whose faith inspires us. Grant us faith to trust in your everlasting love. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

P Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C **Amen.**

\* **PEACE**

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

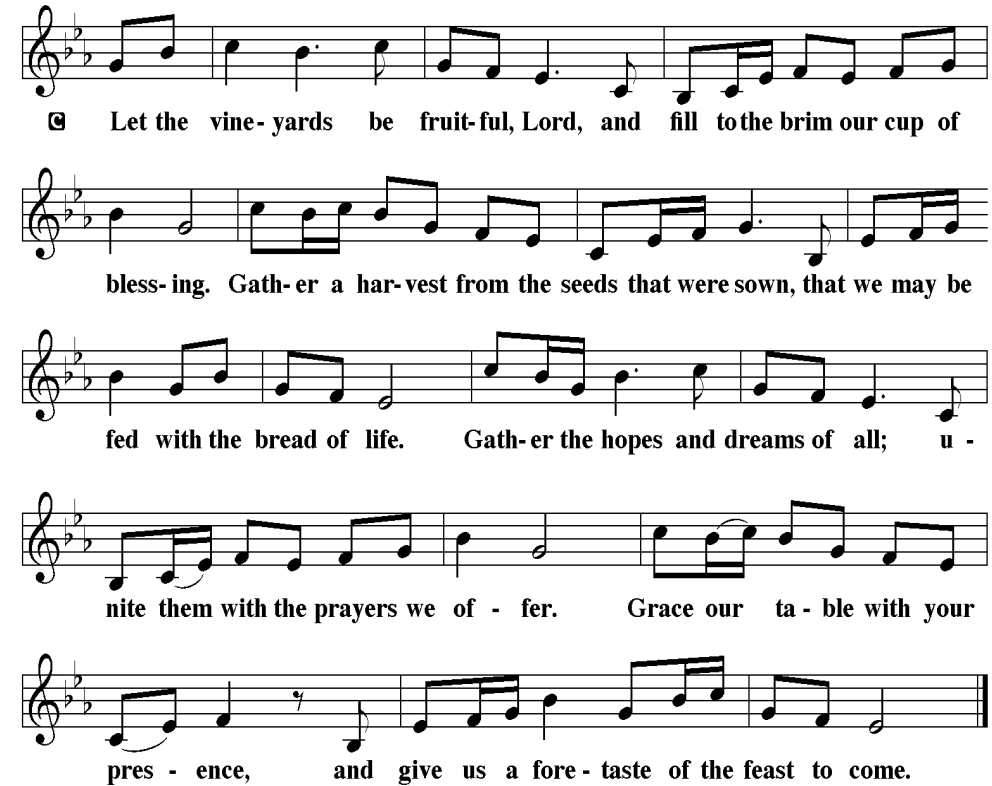
C **And also with you.** *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

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

**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 Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these offerings that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name.

C **Amen.**

\* **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 the resurrected Christ.

**C Amen.**

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Kneeling at Rail)

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

(Sung)

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

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

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

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

*(Please be seated.)*

**\* BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

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

**C Amen.**

**\* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

**C Amen.**

**\* BLESSING**

P Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and give you peace. ✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

\* HYMN ELW - #545 "Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"

1. Lord, dismiss us with your blessing, fill our hearts with joy and peace;  
let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.  
Oh, refresh us; oh, refresh us, trav'ling through this wilderness.
2. Thanks we give and adoration for your gospel's joyful sound.  
May the fruits of your salvation in our hearts and lives abound.  
Ever faithful, ever faithful to your truth may we be found.
3. Savior, when your love shall call us from our struggling pilgrim way,  
let no fear of death appall us, glad your summons to obey.  
May we ever, may we ever reign with you in endless day.

CCLI Song #146712 Words: attr. John Fawcett, sts. 1-2, alt.; Godfrey Thring, st. 3, alt.  
 Music: Sicilian, 18<sup>th</sup> century © Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

**\* DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace, servant of Christ.

**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.

**USHERS: SAT:** Kenny & JoAnn Venghaus; Janeen Venghaus; Emily Frank  
**SUN:** David Johnson; Byron Marburger; Debbie Yancey  
**LAY READERS: SAT:** Rhanda Lattimore  
**ACOLYTES: SAT:** Gracelynn Gorman  
**STREAMING:**  
**SOUND:**  
**ALTAR GUILD:** Dyana Booker, JoAnn Venghaus and Emily Brod

**WELCOME:** Dear ones, welcome to worship as we gather in Jesus’ name as one family in God’s embrace. Amen.

**ALTAR WALL FLOWERS** are placed by Bradley & Stephanie Polasek in celebration of their 15<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on March 21.

**Congratulations!** Carl and Donna Hillmer are pleased to announce the birth of their grandson **Deacon Cade Tesch**. Deacon Cade was born to Zach and Kari (Hillmer) Tesch Friday, March 8, 2024. He weighed 8 lbs. 7 oz. and was 21½ inches long. Welcoming him home was big brother Zander.

**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:** \$9,300.00

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Attendance:</b> Wed., March 6, 2024 – 51        | <b>Contributions:</b> Wed., Mar, 6 – \$2,101.00 |
| <b>Power of One:</b> Wed., March 6, 2024 – \$8.00  | <b>Building Fund:</b> Wed., Mar. 6 – \$30.00    |
| <b>Attendance:</b> March 9 & 10, 2024 – 159        | <b>Contributions:</b> March 9 & 10 – \$5,709.80 |
| <b>Power of One:</b> March 9 & 10, 2024 – \$41.00  | <b>Building Fund:</b> March 9 & 10 – \$323.23   |
| <b>Attendance:</b> Wed., March 13, 2024 – 40       | <b>Contributions:</b> Wed., Mar. 13 – \$730.00  |
| <b>Power of One:</b> Wed., March 13, 2024 – \$7.00 | <b>Building Fund:</b> Wed., Mar. 13 – \$140.00  |


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

**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! ☺

+ **Lenten Devotional:** For Lent this year, we encourage you to pick up a Lenten Devotional written by one of our own members, Elizabeth Smith. You can buy it in the church office. If we run out, there will be a sign-up sheet in the office as well. The cost is \$5 or you can go directly to Amazon and buy one for \$6.99 under the title “Greatest Love: A Lenten Bible Study Journal” by Elizabeth Smith.



**Each Midweek Lenten service** we will be looking more in depth at some of the disciples and how the things that challenged them may be what challenges us and how Jesus addresses them. So, make plans to come and learn more about Peter, James & John, Nathaniel, Thomas and Simon the Zealot. Services are at **4:30 PM** with soup and sandwiches in the Lighthouse afterwards. 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.

► The **Boys and Girls Clubs of Champion Valley** (Columbus, Schulenburg and Weimar) are holding a **BINGO fundraiser on Sunday, March 17, 2024** at The Oaks at High Hill, Schulenburg, Texas. Doors open at 2:00 PM; Bingo from 3:00-7:00 PM. **Presale tickets are \$25** for one Bingo card – additional cards can be purchased fro \$5 each at the event. Day of event tickets ar \$30. Questions or want to purchase tickets, please contact Tina Robinson at 254-715-6206 or Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127. Thank you!!



**Easter Lilies:** If you are interested in either placing Easter lilies in church for Easter Sunday services or donating money for the flowers for the Easter cross, please fill out a form! Forms can be found in the church office. **Turn in your completed form to the church office no later than Monday, March 18, 2024!! If you purchase your own lily, please bring it to the church Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024 by 4:00 PM.** Please pick up your lily after all Easter services on Easter Sunday.

**PERU TEAM FUNDRAISER:** The Peru Team is having their drive-thru fundraiser **Tuesday, March 19, 2024 from 5:00-7:00 PM** at the Lighthouse. Don't forget to pick up your plates!!

**Habitat for Humanity:** *Calling on People Who Care to Help!* It's fun to paint and very rewarding to help out! Anyone or any group can help the creation of the 30<sup>th</sup> Habitat House here. We are looking for **painting help** on upcoming **Fridays and Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM or 2:00 PM**. The following dates are needing help: March 22 & 23; April 5; April 12 & 13; April 19 & 20; and April 26 & 27. For more details or if you have questions, please contact Charmaine Katz (the contact person for Habitat) at 979-732-5677.

● **Elementary Explore Retreat at Lutherhill:** Calling all happy campers! **Students in grades 1-6** are invited to come out to the Hill to explore all that camp has to offer – from the giant swing to slingshot, arts & crafts to campfire worship. This retreat will be **March 22-24, 2024** at Lutherhill in La Grange, Texas. This is a great opportunity for anyone that is anxious to get to Lutherhill, wants to do a trial run before summer, or to simply have an adventure outside of their regular weekend routine. Seasoned and new campers alike will explore all that camp has to offer. It's always a fun weekend! Stephanie Polasek will transport our group to Lutherhill on Friday, March 22 and stay the weekend with the students. Please register your child at [Lutherhill.org/explore](http://Lutherhill.org/explore). **Cost is \$95 per camper.** Let Stephanie know once your student is registered. For more info, visit [Lutherhill.org/explore](http://Lutherhill.org/explore) or contact Stephanie.

◆ **SR. Explorers:** *We will be seeking bluebonnets and Blue Bell Ice Cream on our March Senior Explorers trip!* On **Thursday, March 28, 2024** we will **depart from St. Paul at 10:00 AM** and travel down part of the Texas Bluebonnet Trail to Chappel Hill, where we will enjoy lunch at Bevers Kitchen. We will then head to Brenham for dessert at the Blue Bell Creamery. Our goal is to **return to St. Paul around 3:00 PM.** Please sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex by Sunday, March 24, 2024. If you have any questions, please call Kevin Page at 979-732-0845.

♪♪ **Columbus Community Choir:** Come join the Columbus Community Choir **Sunday, March 24, 2024** for their performance of “Jesus! The Resurrection of the Messiah”. The Easter cantata will be presented at **5:00 PM** at the **Columbus High School auditorium**. Support our local talented singers and musicians as they prepare us for Easter.

☀ **EASTER BREAKFAST!** Easter Sunday, **March 31, 2024** the **Men In Mission** will be serving their **delicious breakfast** of pancakes, fruit, etc. in the St. Paul Lutheran Lighthouse after the 7:00 AM Sunrise Service. **Please sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex if you plan to attend.** If you have any questions, please contact Danny Kautz at 979-732-7897.

\*\* **God's Gals:** Due to Palm Sunday and Easter, God's Gals will not meet in March. Our next get-together will be Sunday, April 28, 2024 at 6:00 PM at Schobel's Restaurant. Questions? Please contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127. \*\*

**Children Activity Bags:** Our St. Paul Activity Bag Team could use some volunteer reinforcements! While Mary, Elizabeth and I get it done, we would love to have more back-up. It is easy and can be done any time the church office is open Monday-Friday. If you are willing, give me a call at 281-797-7152 for details. Thank you! – *Patsy Kopecky*

♪♪♪ **Musicians Wanted for Praise Band!!** The St. Paul Praise Band is in need of a keyboard player. They would also like to add at least one guitarist, a bass guitarist and singers. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Tracy Baker at 713-516-8017. ♪♪♪

● **Women of JOY Bible Study:** The Women of JOY Bible Study group meets on Mondays to cook and have interesting Bible study and discussions. The **first Monday** of the month we **meet in the Lighthouse to cook** for BLAST. The **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays** of the month we meet in the **high school room (old choir room) for Bible Study**. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Gerri Hackfeld at 979-732-4711.

♥ **Grief Support Group:** The Grief Support Group is for anyone who has lost a loved one, either recently or a few years ago. We share and support each other. Come join us and get support from others walking this journey. We meet at **5:30 PM** in the youth room (formerly the choir room) the **third Thursday of the month.** **NOTE:** You do not have to share or talk until you are ready! If you have questions, please contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

◆ **LIGHTHOUSE COORDINATOR:** **Elizabeth Smith** is our coordinator for the Lighthouse! If you wish to rent the Lighthouse for an event, you will need to contact her. You can email her at [lighthouse.splc@gmail.com](mailto:lighthouse.splc@gmail.com) or call or text her at (713)-799-3484. Also, **if you are interested in opening and closing the Lighthouse whenever the Lighthouse is rented out for various events, please contact Liz.**

**SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Mon., March 18 –</b>      | 10:00 AM-12:00 PM – Meals to Heal Cook Session (Lighthouse)<br>1:00 PM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to TLC<br>6:00 PM – Church Council   |
| <b>Tues., March 19 –</b>     | 10:00 AM – Pastor Alan to Columbus Oaks<br>12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)<br>5:00-7:00 PM – Peru Team Drive-thru Fundraiser (Lighthouse)<br>5:30 PM – Prayer Team (library)   |
| <b>Wed., March 20 –</b>      | 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel<br>9:00 AM – Morning Circle (library)<br>10:00 AM-1:00 PM – Seniors Together (Lighthouse)<br>4:30 PM – Lenten Worship Service<br>5:00 PM – Soup & Sandwiches (Lighthouse)<br>5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation & HS Youth |
| <b>Thurs., March 21 –</b>    | 5:00 PM – Worship Team (library)<br>5:30 PM – Grief Support Group (old choir room)   |
| <b>March 22-24 –</b>         | Elementary Explore Retreat, Lutherhill (La Grange)   |
| <b>Sat., March 23 –</b>      | 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship   |
| <b>Next Sun., March 24 –</b> | 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship<br>10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation<br>11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship<br>6:00-8:00 PM – The Gathering  |

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Sunday, March 17, 2024 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.

Tuesday, March 19, 2024 Joseph, Guardian of Jesus

Though the Bible tells us little about the husband of Jesus' mother Mary, we know that he was a carpenter or builder by trade. He is also shown as being devoted both to God and to Mary and Jesus. It is assumed that he died before Jesus became an adult.

Thursday, March 21, 2024 Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, died 1556

Cranmer's lasting achievement is contributing to and overseeing the creation of the Book of Common Prayer, which remains (in revised form) the worship book of the Anglican Communion. He was burned at the stake under Queen Mary for his support of the Protestant Reformation.

Friday, March 22, 2024 Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, died 1758

A Puritan minister in Connecticut, Edwards is remembered as being a great preacher. Though his most famous sermon talks at length about hell, he was more concerned with God's love. He served both as missionary to the Housatonic people in Massachusetts, and as president of the future Princeton University.

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

SERVICE OVERVIEW: THE ATTRACTION OF THE REPELLENT CROSS

Two themes vie for attention in the readings: divine forgiveness (and human sinfulness that makes it necessary), and the mysterious power of the cross. The connection point for the two themes is intimate service to the other. Jeremiah tells us that God will come closer to us than a husband to a wife - directly into our hearts! Deep within this mystery we will be known, forgiven, and loved. Jesus then promises that through his life in us, we will be drawn into a similar emptying of selves as we enter richly into the lives of others so that they too will know the joy and relief of being known and loved. In this way, confession leads to mission!

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Today Jesus likens himself to a grain of wheat: once it is buried in the earth it comes alive to bear much fruit. He uses the image of a dead seed coming to life as a metaphor for his own crucifixion and being “lifted up” on our behalf. Welcome to worship! Hear the word and receive the meal as God’s covenant is renewed in you!

The end of Lent is near. Along with the Greeks in today’s gospel reading, we too wish to see Jesus. Greek dress and culture were very different from Jewish people. Now at the turn toward Christ’s passion narrative, it is Greeks (Gentiles or those who are not Jewish) who come to Jesus while the Jewish authorities are plotting his death. His indirect language foreshadowing

his death comes with a promise that he will draw all people to himself. To really see Jesus, though, we must look up. Jesus will be lifted up on the cross in order to draw everyone to God.

Do you avoid attending services during holy week? It is difficult to hear the sad and violent story of Jesus’ crucifixion, but don’t lose sight of the fact that the cross is where we encounter God’s loving, self-giving heart. The story of Christ’s passion is a story of God’s love for us as God turns a symbol of death into one of life, mercy, and love. The symbolic grain of wheat depicts God’s way of bringing life from what seems death. With the Greeks, we too wish to see Jesus. To do so we must look up, for Jesus has been lifted up on the cross in order to draw everyone to God. The “hour” of salvation is imminent and it is Christ’s death.

Understand this theological trajectory. Jesus is preparing his disciples for more than his death. The crucifixion also gives witness to what we know lies beyond - resurrection and ascension. Much more difficult is to imagine the truth of resurrection and the comfort of ascension.

KID STUDY:

Have you ever played with magnets? A magnet has great power and will draw many objects to itself. Today Jesus tells the people that when he is lifted up, he will draw everyone to himself. The drawing power of a magnet can be very strong, but that’s nothing compared to the drawing power of Jesus! When we see his great love, we are drawn to him and want to live our lives as his hands and feet loving and caring for our neighbors. We still don’t get it right and fall short, but Jesus always draws us back to him. There is no power stronger than the love of Jesus.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

*You must have already heard about God’s marvels manifested in the way silk originates. The silkworms come from seeds about the size of little grains of pepper. When the warm weather comes and the leaves begin to appear on the mulberry tree, the seeds start to live, for they are dead until then. The worms nourish themselves on the mulberry leaves until, having grown to full size, they settle on some twigs. There with their little mouths they go about spinning the silk and making some very thick little cocoons in which they enclose themselves. The silkworm, which is fat and ugly, then dies, and a little white butterfly, which is very pretty, comes forth from the cocoon. Once this silkworm is grown, it begins to spin the silk and build the house wherein it will die. I would like to point out that this house is Christ, since he is our dwelling place and we ourselves can build so as to place ourselves in it. Let’s be quick to weave this little cocoon by taking away our self-love and self-will, our attachment to any earthly thing, and by performing deeds of penance, prayer, mortification, and obedience. Let this silkworm die, as it does in completing what it was created to do. And you will see how we see God, as well as ourselves placed inside God’s grandeur, as is this little silkworm within its cocoon. - Teresa of Avila [Teresa of Avila, The Interior Castle, trans. Kieran Kavanagh, O.C.D. and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (New York: Paulist, 1979), 91-93.]*

+++++

**Next Week's Theme (March 23 & 24):** Palm Sunday

**Next Week's Scriptures (March 23 & 24):**

**Proclamation Gospel:** Mark 11:1-11

*“Jesus enters Jerusalem.”*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 50:4-9a

*“The servant of the LORD submits to suffering.”*

**Psalms:** Psalm 31:9-16

“Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit.” (*Ps. 31:5*)

**Second Reading:** Philippians 2:5-11

*“Humbled to the point of death on a cross.”*

**Gospel:** Mark 14:1--15:47

*“The passion of the Lord.”*