

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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November 5, 2023 Contemporary 11:05 AM

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost / All Saints

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
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 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

All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. As November heralds the dying of the landscape in many northern regions, the readings and liturgy call us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptism is complete. At the Lord's table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.

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: THAT'S WHY WE PRAISE HIM

**He came to live, live a perfect life;
He came to be the Living Word, our Light.
He came to die, so we'd be reconciled.
He came to rise, to show His pow'r and might.**

CHORUS:

***That's why we praise Him, that's why we sing.
That's why we offer Him our everything.
That's why we bow down and worship this King.
'Cuz He gave His everything. 'Cuz He gave His everything.***

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12

In the Beatitudes, Jesus provides a unique description of those who are blessed with God's favor. His teaching is surprising and shocking to those who seek wealth, fame, and control over others.

A The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 5, verses 1-12.

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: ³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶"Blessed are those who

hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. ⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

GOSPEL SONG: THAT’S WHY WE PRAISE HIM

He came to live, live again in us;
He came to be our conquering King and friend.
He came to heal, and show the lost ones His love;
He came to go prepare a place for us.

CHORUS:

*That’s why we praise Him, that’s why we sing.
That’s why we offer Him our everything.
That’s why we bow down and worship this King.
‘Cuz He gave His everything. ‘Cuz He gave His everything.*

BRIDGE:

Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah!
Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah!
Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah!
Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah! Hal-le – hal-le-lu-jah!

LAST CHORUS:

*That’s why we praise Him, that’s why we sing.
That’s why we offer Him our everything.
That’s why we bow down and worship this King.
‘Cuz He gave His everything. ‘Cuz He gave His every...*

*That’s why we praise Him, that’s why we sing.
That’s why we offer Him our everything.
That’s why we bow down and worship this King.
‘Cuz He gave His everything. ‘Cuz He gave His everything.*

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CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*** SERMON SONG: HOME**

**This world is not what it was meant to be; all this pain, all this suffering.
There’s a better place waiting for me in heaven.
Ev’ry tear will be wiped away. Ev’ry sorrow and sin erased.
We’ll dance on seas of amazing grace in heaven . . . in heaven. . .**

CHORUS *I’m goin’ home. . . where the streets are golden. Ev’ry chain is broken.
Oh, I wanna go, oh I wanna go home. . . where ev’ry fear is gone,
I’m in Your open arms – where I be-long. Home.*

Lay down my burdens, I lay down my past. I run to Jesus, no turning back.
Thank God Almighty, I’ll be free at last in heaven. . . in heaven. . .

CHORUS *I’m goin’ home. . . where the streets are golden. Ev’ry chain is broken.
Oh, I wanna go, oh I wanna go home. . . where ev’ry fear is gone,
I’m in Your open arms – where I be-long. Home.*

Blinded eyes will finally see. The dead will rise on the shores of eternity.
The trump will sound, the angels will sing, “Hallelujah! Hallelujah!”

LAST CHORUS *I am going home. . . where the streets are golden. Ev’ry chain is broken.
Oh, I wanna go, oh I wanna go home. . . where ev’ry fear is gone,
I’m in Your open arms – where I be-long. Where I belong!
I’m goin’ home. I’m goin’ home. I’m on my way home. I’m goin’ home.*

CCLI Song #7070287 Words and Music by Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, and Scott Cash
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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.)

ALL SAINTS REMEMBRANCE

P On this weekend of All Saints, we worship and glorify God.
C **The earth is the Lord’s. Let us rejoice!**

P Listen now, my people, and come to me. Come to me and you will have life! (Isaiah 55:3a)

C Everything that God has created is good; nothing is to be rejected, but everything is to be received with a prayer of thanks. (1 Timothy 4:4)

P I will make a lasting covenant with you and give you the blessings I promise to David. (Isaiah 55:3b)

C Those who know you, Lord, will trust you; you do not abandon anyone who comes to you. (Psalm 9:10)

The white candles are placed in memory of the following members who have died since last All Saints Sunday. As each name is read, a candle is extinguished.

P We remember those saints who finished their course of faith on earth over this last year:

Don H. Morrison	11-25-22	Trent Lee Hagen	7-27-23
Jason Christopher Wright	12-31-22	Rodney Leeland "Whitey" Robb	8-11-23
Robert A. "Bobby" Zajicek	3-23-23	Patricia Ann Vollintine	8-14-23
Delores Fehrenkamp Purcell	4-8-23	Juanita Garling Luedecke	8-17-23
Linda Munos Rodgers	5-3-23	Darrell David Rau, Jr.	8-28-23
Robert Ray Eaton II	5-15-23	Ronnie Mac Rogers	9-20-23
Curtis Gene Berger	6-18-23		

The additional candle is for others close to our hearts who have passed away over the past year.

The blue candle is in honor of those who were baptized into the church of Jesus Christ since last All Saints Sunday.

P New saints accepted by God in baptism:

John Robert Zajicek	1-15-23	Samuel Michael Cox	4-9-23
Bennett Ross Gorman	1-21-23	Erich Michael Cox	4-9-23

The red candle is in honor of those young people who made public profession of their faith in confirmation since last All Saints Sunday:

P Those saints who affirmed their baptism in confirmation:

Erich Michael Cox	5-28-23	Devin Brian Oppermann	5-28-23
Leira Maciel Gonzalez	5-28-23	Alexander Joseph Rester	5-28-23
Nathaniel Glenn Muir	5-28-23		

PRAYERS

A Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A Holy God, the church triumphant gathers around your throne to praise you. We join them in worship and remember your sustaining grace in every generation. Heal our divisions; show us unity in your presence.

A brief silence.

A Holy creator, we marvel at your creation revealed in the cycle of seasons, changing landscapes, and the rise and fall of ocean tides. Turn us from selfish consumption and open us to gentle healing of the earth so all creation thrives.

A brief silence.

A Holy comforter, we pray for this congregation, that the promise of your new life may be shared and experienced. We pray for the funeral ministry of this congregation, that families and friends seeking your love find it here.

A brief silence.

A Holy God, we pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine, Sudan, Niger and Israel. Bring an end to wars and the destruction of lives and your creation.

A brief silence.

A Holy One, we pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Bob Berger; Ashley Roberts; Siegfried Keierleber; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you.

A brief silence.

A Holy God, we pray for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)*
Traci Edman; Robert Hudec; Michael Yancey; Cindi Tanner; Amanda Aramijo; Zachary Schulke; Herbie Kollatschny; Darrell Pagel; Sylvia McLelland Teykl; Tom Russell, Jr.; Melda Coleman; Al Gene Canik; Larry Bookout; Mike Wostarek; Elizabeth Frisby; Virginia Fritsch; Kristina Acevedo; George Krenek; Anne Dimas; Carl Geisler; Laura Walla; Randy Wendt; Heather Deviney; Paul Casinger; Dr. Tom Hancher; Leonard Kahlden; and Bob Loy.

A Holy One, we pray for all expectant mothers and especially for:
Nancy Gorman; Camille Stancik; Kyndall Beettner; Jamee Albert; Kristen O'Leary Bridges; and Abegail Gatzke that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace.

A brief silence.

A Holy God, we pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound that they receive your caring and compassion. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)*
Marian Schonenberg; 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; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; Cherie Moore; Lauren Lamb; and Lydia Rojas.

A Holy One, 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.)*

Law Enforcement Officers: Charles Jobb; Joseph Smith; Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Kyle Burriss; Dylan Walcik; Travis Neuendorff; Nathan Bookout; Brenda Henkes; Jan Willette; and Terri Neunendorff, 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; and Nelson Beettner.

A Holy God, 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 their Pastor Armando Capcha and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad and their leaders Pastors Gumer and Naomi Anton 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 offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

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.)

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 all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.

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 There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table.

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 Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way.

C Amen.

* **BLESSING**

P May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, Sovereign, ☩ Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always.

C **Amen**

* **CLOSING SONG: ALL THE PEOPLE SAID, "AMEN!"**

You are not alone if you are lonely.

When you feel afraid you're not the only.

We are all the same in need of mercy...

To be forgiven and be free.

It's all you got to lean on but thank God it's all you need!

CHORUS:

And all the people said Amen! Whoa – oh – oh;

And all the people said Amen!

Give thanks to the Lord for His love never ends.

And all the people said Amen!

If you're rich or poor it doesn't matter.

Weak or strong you know love's what we're after.

We're all broken but we're all in this together...

God knows we stumble and fall.

And He so loved the world, He sent His Son to save us all.

CHORUS:

And all the people said Amen! Whoa – oh – oh;

And all the people said Amen!

Give thanks to the Lord for His love never ends.

And all the people said Amen!

BRIDGE:

Blessed are the poor in spirit who are torn apart.

Blessed are the persecuted and the pure in heart.

Blessed are the people hungry for another start.

For theirs is the kingdom, the kingdom of God.

CHORUS TWICE

TAG END: And all the people said, "Amen!"

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* **DISMISSAL**

P Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

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

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USHERS: Gary & Donna Schindler; Cindy Kahlden

LAY READER: Wendy Page

STREAMING: Chase Brasher

SOUND: Sydney Eaton and Todd Jacobs

ACOLYTE: McKayla Kahlden

POWER POINT: Kay Wesson

ALTAR GUILD: Amanda Oppermann

WELCOME: "Let [us] give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds" (Psalm 107:8, NIV). Welcome to worship.

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Susan Baumgart in loving memory of her parents Ernest and Elrose Baumgart.

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: October 28 & 29, 2023 – 193

Contributions: Oct. 28 & 29 – \$7,807.01

Power of One: October 28 & 29, 2023 – \$34.00

Building Fund: Oct. 28 & 29 – \$303.23

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

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., Nov. 1 – **99 Total**

BLAST/Confirmation: 80

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.*

► **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! ☺



Communion Instruction Class: Youth in the 5th grade are invited to attend the next milestone in their Christian education. Communion instruction is a formal teaching on the Sacraments of the Altar and will begin the process of getting students ready for confirmation ministry. Students will meet on **today from 12:30-2:30 PM in the Lighthouse**. Lunch will be served. Whether you are already taking communion or have waited for this class, all 5th graders are encouraged to attend. Parents are invited to attend with their child as well so they may continue the conversations at home.

► **Peru Team:** Our next Peru Team meeting will be **Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 6:30 PM** in the church library. Join us to hear what is going on with our sister congregations in Peru and get in on the planning stages of our 2024 trip. Questions? Contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127.

MEALS TO HEAL: Meals to Heal will have a **cook session on Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 1:00 PM** in the Lighthouse kitchen. We will be making two main dish casseroles, bagging vegetables, and assembling meals to go in the freezer. Join us if you can! If you have any questions, please contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127.



High School Ski Trip Fundraiser: The youth will be hosting a **drive-thru Pulled Pork Baked Potato fundraiser on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 from 4:30-6:30 PM** at the Lighthouse. **Tickets are \$10 each** and can be purchased from a youth before or after worship or from the church office. Deadline to purchase tickets is Sunday, November 12, 2023. The youth will be going skiing December 27-31, 2023. Thank you for your support!

♦ **Senior Explorers to Alpaca Farm!** Senior Explorers are going to an Aplaca Ranch in advance of next summer's trip to Peru. On **Thursday, November 16, 2023** we will **depart** St. Paul Lutheran Church **at 9:30 AM**. We will arrive at the Peeka Alpaca Ranch near Burton, Texas for a full tour, petting and shopping. We will stop for lunch on our way home and should make it **back by 2:00 PM**. Please sign up by Sunday, November 12, 2023 in the narthex. Call Kevin Page at 979-732-0845 with any questions.

• **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 **2nd and 4th Mondays** of the month we meet in the **high school room (old choir room) for Bible Study**. We are currently reading The Story. 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.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Today (Nov. 5) – 12:30-2:30 PM – Communion Instruction (Lighthouse)
Mon., Nov. 6 – 9:00 AM – Staff Meeting
 1:00 PM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to TLC
 6:00 PM – Evangelism Team (library)
 6:00 PM – Women of JOY Cook for BLAST (Lighthouse)
Tues., Nov. 7 – 9:00 AM – Pastor Alan to Deanery
 12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
 5:30 PM – Prayer Team (library)
Wed., Nov. 8 – 8:30 AM-12:00 PM – Columbus Garden Club (Lighthouse)
 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
 10:00 AM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to Columbus Oaks
 2:00 PM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to The Oaks
 5:00 PM – Meal
 5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation and HS Youth
Thurs., Nov. 9 – 10:00-11:30 AM – Manna for Moms (Lighthouse)
 5:00 PM – Worship Team (library)
 6:30 PM – Peru Team Meeting (library)
Fri., Nov. 10 – **Office Closed! (Veterans' Day Observance)**
Sat., Nov. 11 – 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship
Next Sun., Nov. 12 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
 10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
 11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship
 1:00 PM – Meals to Heal Cook Session (Lighthouse)
 6:00-8:00 PM – The Gathering

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Tuesday, November 7, 2023 **John Christian Frederick Heyer, died 1873; Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, died 1719; Ludwig Nommensen, died 1918; missionaries**

Heyer was the first missionary sent out by American Lutherans. After teaching at Gettysburg College and Seminary he was assigned to the Andhra region of India. A worker among the Tamil people on the southeast coast of India, Ziegenbalg was opposed both by local Hindus and by Danish authorities who favored a different missionary style. He was known for caring about the welfare of the whole person. Nommensen was born in northern Germany and was sent to Sumatra as a Lutheran missionary. Working among the Batak people, he translated the scriptures into their language, and honored their native culture.

Saturday, November 11, 2023 **Martin, Bishop of Tours, died 397**

Martin's pagan father enlisted him in the Roman army. Approached by a beggar, Martin cut his cloak in half and gave part to the man, whom he later understood as representing Christ. He

asked to leave the army, but was jailed instead. After his release, he became a preacher, and later a bishop.

Saturday, November 11, 2023 Søren Aabye Kierkegaard, teacher, died 1855

Kierkegaard was a Danish theologian whose writings also gave rise to the modern philosophy of existentialism. He frequently attacked the complacency of the state church of his day, as well as its desire to be accepted by polite society rather than be a stumbling block.

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OTHER READINGS: Revelation 7:9-17

The book of Revelation is written to seven churches in western Asia Minor during a time of great oppression. Today's reading is a response to the question asked in 6:17: "Who is able to stand?" The writer gives the faithful the assurance of God's protection and a vision of victory.

The reading begins:

⁹After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." ¹³Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" ¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. ¹⁶They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

PSALM: Psalm 34:1-10, 22

¹I will bless the LORD at all times; the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth. ²I will glory in the LORD; let the lowly hear and rejoice. ³Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD; let us exalt God's name together. ⁴I sought the LORD, who answered me and delivered me from all my terrors. ⁵Look upon the LORD and be radiant, and let not your faces be ashamed. ⁶I called in my affliction, and the LORD heard me and saved me from all my troubles. ⁷The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear the LORD and delivers them. ⁸Taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are they who take refuge in God! ⁹Fear the LORD, you saints of the LORD, for those who fear the LORD lack nothing. ¹⁰The lions are in want and suffer hunger, but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good. ²²O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants, and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.

OTHER READINGS: 1 John 3:1-3

A saint is one who has been set apart by God for God's purposes. God, out of divine love, set us apart to be the children of God. Our holy hope is that we shall see God as God really is.

The reading begins:

¹See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

SERVICE OVERVIEW: SAINTLY SINNERS, SINFUL SAINTS

All Saints presents themes of stark contrast: death and life, condemnation and redemption, sorrow and joy, suffering and relief, present life and future life. Such is life, too, as baptized children of God. The very nature of our lives is of stark contrast. Today we give thanks for the saints who have gone before us, for the saints still among us, and for the saints of God still to come. We give thanks for the examples of faithful living that the saints have given us as they navigated the stormy waters of life, and also for the faithful acts of service we are empowered by God's Holy Spirit to do in our own seas. We give thanks, too, for the fullness of eternal life in which the saints of God who have gone before us now partake and which we have yet to fully enjoy.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

On All Saints Day, we thank God for all the baptized: the famous and the forgotten, those who lived in the past and those around us today. Can the day to commemorate the dead be called a day of thanksgiving? Welcome to worship! Gather at Jesus' feet to receive words of blessing.

By virtue of our baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus, we are made saints while we are still sinners. Every day in this juxtaposed life we navigate through sin, evil, pain, heartache, addiction, abuse, hunger, disease, and war. But our way is always set, not by the North Star but by the Daystar, who has been the heading for the faithful of every generation. With the scriptures as our compass and the confessions our map, we sail as a part of the great flotilla of saints on the waters of baptism, with the wind of the Spirit at our backs, always pointed in the direction of our guiding Daystar.

All Saints Day is when the universal church - past, present, and future - gathers to rejoice in the one body of Christ. Think of all the people in that group! How do we help others recognize their sainthood as well as their part in the salvation story? How do we recognize that in ourselves? Sainthood through baptism is the great equalizer. In holy communion we are in the presence of Christ and of all the saints of every time and place

The Beatitudes are appointed for All Saints because they describe a surprising grouping of persons who find their wholeness in blessings from God, rather than in the values of this world.

True happiness comes from life with God. The Beatitudes proclaim trust that God will bring about salvation, despite appearances. In true biblical fashion, God is on the side of the underdog.

KID STUDY:

The word "Saint" is used to describe people like St. Paul and St. Patrick, but "Saint" also means every baptized person! Saints are those who are still alive *and* those who have died. We are all saints in Christ Jesus. Have you experienced the loss of a neighbor, friend, or family member? Today, as we celebrate All Saints, we honor their journeys – and our own journeys - through life and death. Whether we are here on earth or in heaven, we are always connected to each other through our baptisms. On All Saints weekend, we remember loved ones who have died with candles and special prayers, but every time we receive communion, we share in Christ's love with *all* the saints.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

Then John saw the river, and the multitude was there. And a sweetness filled John as he heard the sound of singing: the singing was for him. No power could hold this army back, no water disperse them, no fire consume them. They wandered in the valley forever; and they smote the rock, forever; and the waters sprang, perpetually, in the perpetual desert. They cried unto the Lord forever, they were cast down forever, and lifted up their eyes forever. No, the fire could not hurt them, and yes, the lions' jaws were stopped; the serpent was not their master, the grave was not their resting-place, the earth was not their home. Job bore them witness, and Abraham was their father, Moses had elected to suffer with them rather than glory in sin for a season. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had gone before them into the fire, their grief had been sung by David, and Jeremiah had wept for them. Ezekiel had prophesied upon them, these scattered bones, these slain, and, in the fullness of time, the prophet, John, had come out of the wilderness, crying that the promise was for them. They were encompassed with a very cloud of witnesses: Judas, who had betrayed the Lord; Thomas, who had doubted Him; Peter, who had trembled at the crowing of a cock; Stephen, who had been stoned; Paul, who had been bound; the blind man crying in the dusty road, the dead man rising from the grave. And they looked unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of their faith, running with patience the race He had set before them; they endured the cross, and they despised the shame, and waited to join Him, one day, in glory, at the right hand of the Father. - James Baldwin [James Baldwin, Go Tell It on the Mountain (New York: Dell, 1953), 204-05.]

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Next Week's Theme (Nov. 11 & 12): Prepare for Jesus' return

Next Week's Scriptures (Nov. 11 & 12):

First Reading: Amos 5:18-24
"Let justice roll down like waters."

Psalm: Psalm 70
"You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry." (Ps. 70:5)

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
"The promise of the resurrection."

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13
"The story of the wise and foolish bridesmaids."