

March 27, 2022  
Fourth Sunday in Lent  
Worship Order  
9:30 AM

+ GATHERING +

WELCOME

PRELUDE                    Third Kyrie (from *Mass for the Parishes*) – François Couperin

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Siblings in Christ:

long ago, God laid the foundation of this place  
in shale and sandstone, boulders and ringing rocks;  
with the flowing water of the Perkiomen, Unami and Ridge Valley creeks.

The formation of this land  
would later attract its people:  
it fixed richness in the soil,  
hornfels in Perkiomenville,  
and nurtured wildlife with its forested tracts.  
God gathers us in a place shaped by nature.

**We are here.**

In this place,  
the Lenape people found plenty,  
planting corn and hunting white-tailed deer,  
until white settlers forced them to leave or disappear.

The Lenape shaped this place.  
Broken treaties and erasure have too.  
God gathers us in a place shaped by history.

**We are here.**

In this place, a Lutheran congregation,  
that was once part of a union church,  
purchased land for \$1 from Earl Henuber,  
allowing for a new house of worship to be built.  
Tied together by hope, by a sense of community and mission,  
and by one baptism in Jesus Christ,  
they broke ground for this church in 1957.

God gathers us in a place shaped by God's desire.

**We are here.**

In this place,  
God has gathered us:  
to marvel at God's power over creation;

to lament humanity's abuse of the earth and one another;  
to remember our past;  
to hope for our future.  
This hope will not disappoint us,  
because God is here.

**God is here!**

OPENING HYMN ELW 324 In the Cross of Christ I Glory

In the cross of Christ I glory,  
tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story  
gathers round its head sublime.

When the sun of bliss is beaming  
light and love upon my way,  
from the cross the radiance streaming  
adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,  
by the cross are sanctified;  
peace is there that knows no measure,  
joys that through all time abide.

Text: John Bowring, 1792-1872  
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THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Beloved, as we gather in this place to worship,  
we acknowledge that we are part of a complicated history.

**How can we bear the paradox of this place  
as both a source of pride and a record of mistakes?**

Friends, here is the font.

**In the waters of baptism,  
God cleansed us and claimed us.**

God binds God's word  
to this abundant element  
precisely to tell us  
that there is no place  
where we are apart from God's grace.

This reminder is everywhere:

It is in the waters of the  
reservoir at Green Lane Park and the Macoby Creek.

It sprays from our showers.

It makes tea kettles whistle.

It is in our very cells.

So I invite you to make the sign of the cross,  
on your brow or on your body.

As you do,  
you proclaim what is true  
everywhere and always:  
God is here!  
**God is here! Amen!**

BAPTISMAL HYMN OF PRAISE ACS 959 God of Promise, Let These Signs of Grace

*Refrain*

God of prom - ise, let these signs of grace  
kin - dle in our hearts a song of praise.  
1 Life - giv - ing wa - ter soak - ing our dry - ness,  
drown - ing our sin each day, mak - ing us new—  
mer - cy come stream - ing from you.

Text: Paul Damico-Carper, b. 1981  
Music: STELLAN, Paul Damico-Carper  
Text and music © 2017 Paul Damico-Carper, admin. Augsburg Fortress

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God, you are the life of the party!  
You have planned a feast for all people,  
where food is sumptuous,  
music brings joy,  
and love overflows.  
Remind us that you've already done  
all that needs doing.  
Prepare us to party on,  
especially when the world around us  
resists the celebration.  
**Amen.**

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Joshua 5:9-12

*By celebrating the Passover and eating the produce of the promised land instead of the miraculous manna that had sustained them in the desert, the Israelites symbolically bring their forty years of wilderness wandering to an end at Gilgal.*

<sup>9</sup>The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

<sup>10</sup>While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. <sup>11</sup>On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. <sup>12</sup>The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ELW 517 Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word

Lord, keep us steadfast in your word;  
curb those who by deceit or sword  
would wrest the kingdom from your Son  
and bring to naught all he has done.

Text: Martin Luther, tr. Catherine Winkworth

Music: 1543

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GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

*Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.*

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

<sup>3</sup>So he told them this parable: <sup>11b</sup>“There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my

father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup>"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY ACS 1062 Build A Longer Table



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,  
2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;  
3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.  
4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.  
where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.  
Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.  
Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,  
For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,  
When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,  
So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.  
Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.  
Christ tears down our fenc - es: all are wel - come here.  
None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

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**LENTEN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We believe in God, our Creator;  
who gives us steadfast love, and shares with us our joy,  
Our God sustains us in our weakness, and  
empowers us with strength.  
We trust God.**

**We follow Jesus Christ, God's Son.  
His death is our victory, his resurrection is our hope;  
in him the Word became flesh; in him we find forgiveness,  
renewal from failure, reconciliation from brokenness,  
and release from despair.  
We are saved through Jesus.**

**We are guided by the Holy Spirit, God's presence in the world.  
That same Spirit calls us to be the Church,  
to celebrate love, to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen.  
We are empowered by that Spirit.**

**We are disciples, pilgrim people.  
We joyfully covenant to walk together in love.  
God is with us, in this place and wherever we go.  
Amen**

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

#### MUSICAL OFFERING

Father welcomes – Robin Mann  
Reagan McGinley, alto

c. Kevin Mayhew, Ltd.  
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#### SHARING OF OUR OFFERINGS

*As we receive our musical offering, we invite you to share your offering in one of the baskets located throughout the sanctuary. May these gifts offered up in thanksgiving to God help spread the love of God into our community and world.*

#### OFFERING PRAYER

God, there's nowhere we can go  
where you aren't already waiting:  
in the vineyard, in the grainfield,  
in the places where we live and work,  
and most especially at this table,  
where your Son has promised to meet us;  
where he is both Host and Meal.  
Reveal yourself to us now.  
**Amen.**

+ MEAL +

#### COMMUNION LITURGY

The Lord is here.  
**God's Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

God of celebration, you are here...Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering this table, the cross, the empty grave,  
we await his coming in glory  
and proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Send your Spirit upon these gifts.  
Holy Wisdom, pervade every corner of this place  
and every crevice of our hearts.

**Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

Bring us at last with all the saints  
to the banquet table of your new creation,  
where we may meet your glory face to face.

To you, O God, Divine Host, Long-Awaited Guest, Rejoicing Spirit,  
be all worship and praise, now and forever. **Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

## SHARING OF COMMUNION

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, in this meal, you are present. Go with us into the world that this meal might unite us  
to your work and your presence all around us. May we go with faith that you go alongside us.  
In your Holy name we pray. **Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SENDING

Go with the blessing of God.  
Remember that this blessing follows you,  
no matter the places  
to which you are called.  
Remember that this blessing waits for you,  
even where you least expect to find it.  
Be blessed in the name of God,  
who inspires, inhabits, and ignites us,  
today and every day.

**Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN ELW 606 Our Father, We Have Wandered

Our Father, we have wandered  
and hidden from your face;  
in foolishness have squandered  
your legacy of grace.  
But now, in exile dwelling,

we rise with fear and shame,  
as, distant but compelling,  
we hear you call our name.

And now at length discerning  
the evil that we do,  
behold us, Lord, returning  
with hope and trust to you.  
In haste you come to meet us  
and home rejoicing bring,  
in gladness there to greet us  
with calf and robe and ring.

O Lord of all the living,  
both banished and restored,  
compassionate, forgiving,  
and ever-caring Lord,  
grant now that our transgressing,  
our faithlessness may cease.  
Stretch out your hand in blessing,  
in pardon, and in peace.

Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929-2006

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## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, to see Christ in all the places you go.

**Thanks be to God.**

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## PRAYER LIST

Please continue to keep the following people connected to our congregation in your prayers: Bob Moran, Brian Allebach, Charles Krupp, Ann Brown Hager, David Mounts, Melissa Snyder, Sandy Umstead, David and Linda Kratzer, Leah Crater, Leanne Kratzer, Steve Keyser, Sydney Crossin, Kathy Reese, Paige Seasock, Peyton Seasock, Tal Umstead, Heidi Slook, Dorothy Rudolph, Mary Clayton, Michelle Baxter, Ruthie Jadick, Donna Derstine, Brian Derstine, Andrew Robison, Jeff Hart, Margaret Simon, Hailey Mientus, the Mientus family, Jeff Jadick, Loretta Diehl, Judy Ockenlaender, Heidi Guess, Ed Brown, Bruce Aldinger, Judith Hercek and Kassondra Sowden.

## Mark your Calendar

TODAY	4-6PM YPO Hang Out Time
Monday, Mar 28	7:30pm Exec Meeting
Tuesday, Mar 29	7pm Lenten Small Group Experience
Wednesday, Mar 30	7pm Mid Week Worship @ Pennsburg UCC
Saturday, April 2	Heavenly Helpers Return
Sunday, April 3	8:45am Faith Formation (age 3– grade 5) Connections (gr. 6-8) High School Youth (gr. 9-12) 9:30am Worship (and zoom) 10:45sm Personal Care Kit Assembly Party

**YPO Hang Out Time**—Sunday, March 27th 4-6pm Join us for walking tacos and wrapping care packages for college students.

Help keep the fellowship going by supporting the coffee bar at St. John's. There are slots to sign up to bring treats and help with making the coffee. Please bring treats to church by 8:30am on Sunday so they can be set out for the enjoyment of all. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040D4EACAD2FAA8-coffee>

### **Lenten Small Group Experience – Tuesdays at 7 PM in the Fellowship Hall**

*Where Your Heart Is: An Illustrated Devotion Experience* will include seven weeks of devotions for all ages with illustrations that are meant to be colored in and many opportunities to doodle and engage in fun and creative ways.

Our theme's inspiration comes from Jesus' teaching about storing treasures in his Sermon on the Mount. This Lent, we invite you to explore the many treasures you have in your life. Some are physical treasures we can touch, hold, store, and give. Some treasures are invisible, yet still greatly matter and guide our lives. By exploring Gospel passages about treasures and matters of the heart, we invite you to wonder more deeply about what kinds of treasure matter, why we store treasures, and the power these treasures have in our lives.

*The small group will conclude on Tuesday, April 12. Crayons, markers and colored pencils will be provided.*

**Ready to Sing??**— The Choir will be singing on Easter. All are welcome!

Rehearsals: Thursday, March 31st @ 7pm  
Wednesday, April 6 following the midweek service  
Wednesday, April 13 @ 7pm

### **Spring Flower Sale**

Flower order forms are due by Easter Sunday, April 17. Orders will be available for pick-up on Saturday, May 7 from 9-11 AM. All proceeds of this flower sale support St. John's youth ministry and summer mission trips.

**Friedens Union Cemetery Association** will be holding its annual board meeting April 23 at 9 AM at WORD FM. If anyone has any questions or concerns before the meeting please contact Hank Clare 610-639-6575 or Evey Koffel 215-264-6099.

**The Frieden's Cemetery Board** regrets to inform you that when the volunteers cleaned off the cemetery on March 21, some of the spring/Easter arrangements were removed from gravesites. We recovered them and they have been placed in front of the fence by the sheds. We are truly sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you and your Family. Friedens Cemetery Assoc.

### **The Easter Eggstravaganza is ON!**

Donations of store-bought, individually wrapped Easter candy that will fit into regular-sized plastic eggs are needed. Donation bins are in the narthex and parlor. Donations will be received thru Sunday, April 3. Thank you for supporting this outreach event!

### **Mid-Week Lenten Worship**

Our mid-week Lenten worship will turn us toward God's abundance by focusing on five divine attributes of faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness and love. Join us for worship on the Wednesdays in Lent at 7PM.

March 30 – Pennsburg UCC

April 6 – St. John's Lutheran

Worship will be held in-person at each of the host churches listed above. Worship will also be accessible virtually using whatever method the host church is currently employing for virtual worship. Out of an abundance of caution, there will be no fellowship time following worship.

### **Congregation-Wide Lenten Service Project**

This Lent, St. John's will rally together to create Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief – **our goal for the Lenten season will be 250 kits.**

Instructions for what goes in a personal care kit and how to put it together can be found here:

<https://lwr.org/kits/personal-care-kits/instructions>

Personal Care Kits can be dropped off in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings. You can also drop them off during Food Collection Drop Off times (Sat. April 2 and 16 from 9-11 AM).

### **Hoagie Sales**

Heavenly Helpers will once again be offering monthly hoagie sales. The profit received from the sale of the hoagies goes directly to the mission work both locally and throughout the United States. We have been very fortunate to earn enough to cover all the work we have done since Heavenly Helpers creation in 2007. And we owe the thanks for that to all of you. Enjoy!!

The first sale will be due by April 17 with pick up Thursday April 21 from 5:30-6:30. Turkey Hoagies are \$8 and Italian are \$7. You can get them with or without onions and peppers. As always, all are invited to help with the building of the hoagies. So, if you are free on this day we meet around 2pm to begin the process.

**There will be a sign-up sheet outside PB's office or you can contact Elaine Keller at [elaineakeller@comcast.net](mailto:elaineakeller@comcast.net) or call 215.262.5366**

## **HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE**

### **Sunday, April 10 – Palm/Passion Sunday – 9:30 AM worship and Zoom**

Worship will begin in the Fellowship Hall where we will receive our palm branches and then process into the sanctuary. The passion story will be shared throughout worship. Readers will be needed – watch the weekly email for a sign up link to participate as a reader.

### **Thursday, April 14 – Maundy Thursday with Communion – 7:30 PM worship and Zoom**

The disciples will strip the altar at the conclusion of worship

### **Friday, April 15 – Good Friday – 7:30 PM worship and Zoom**

Our youth will lead worship this night as we hear the story of the crucifixion and move closer to the darkness of Jesus' death.

### **Sunday, April 17 – Easter Sunday – 9:30 AM worship and Zoom**

A coffee social will be held in the Fellowship Hall from 8:30-9:15 AM