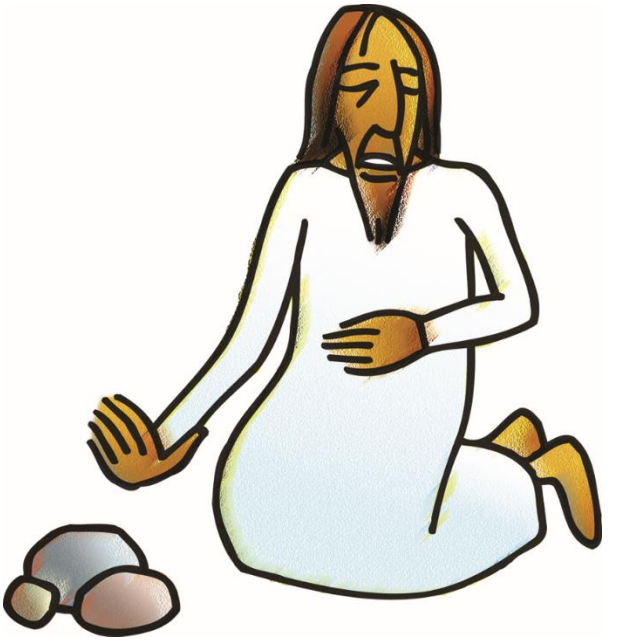
ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



First Sunday of Lent

March 9, 2025

Whenever you see an asterisk (*), you are invited to stand as you are able.
You are invited to speak sans serif **Bolded type** with the congregation.

Introduction to the Day

These forty days called Lent are like no other. It is our opportune time to return to the God who rescues, to receive the gifts of God's grace, to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the wonder of God's love in Jesus, and to resist temptation at every turn. This is no small pilgrimage on which we have just embarked. It is a struggle Jesus knew. It is a struggle Jesus shares. The nearness of the Lord, in bread and wine, water and word, will uphold and sustain us.

Prelude – *Out of consideration for our musicians, please refrain from talking during the prelude.*

Gathering

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ☩Son, and of the Holy Spirit. A: Amen.

P: Let us pray: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **A: Amen.**

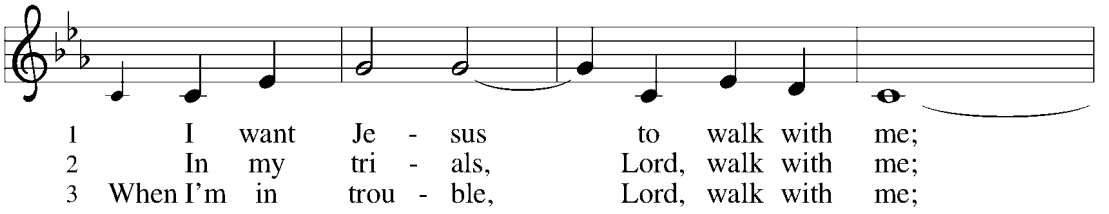
P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

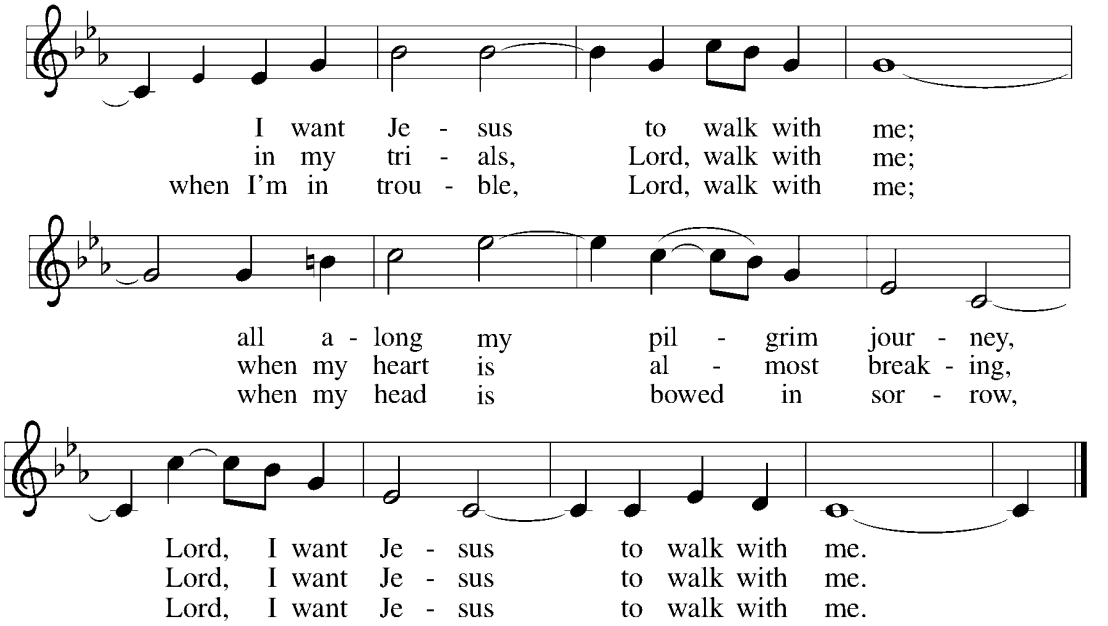
P: Let us confess our sin, in the presence of God and of one another.

P Compassionate One, **you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. A. Amen.**

P: Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In ☩ Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever. **A: Amen.**

*Gathering Hymn *"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"* *(ELW 325)*



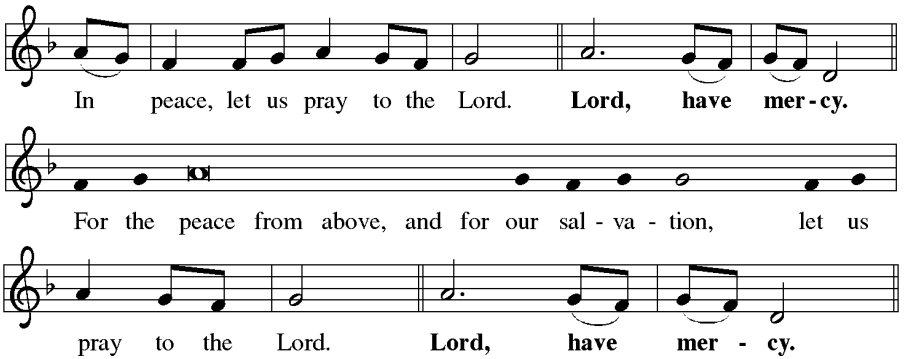


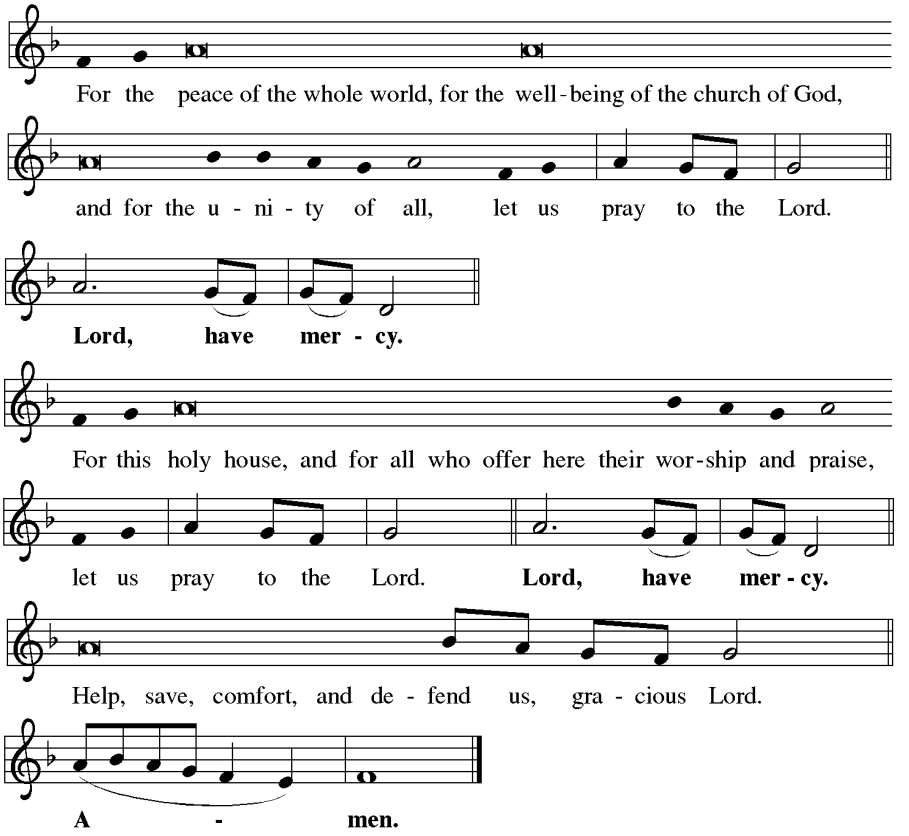
Text: African American spiritual
Music: SOJOURNER, African American spiritual

*GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **A: And also, with you.**

KYRIE





*Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also, with you.**
P: Let us pray. O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Anthem: *"Return to the Lord"*

Word

First Reading: Deuteronomy 26:1-11

One of the concerns of Deuteronomy is the continued faithfulness of Israel once it entered the Promised Land. While, in other places, it urges Israel not to despair of God's promises in hard times; here it focuses on the dangers of forgetting God in good times. As Jesus asserts in today's Gospel, all good gifts come from God.

1 "When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance
to possess and you possess it and settle in it, 2 you shall take some of the first of all the fruit
of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you
shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling
for his name. 3 You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'Today I
declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our
ancestors to give us.' 4 When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down
before the altar of the LORD your God, 5 you shall make this response before the LORD your
God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an
alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. 6 When the
Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, 7 we cried to
the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil,
and our oppression. 8 The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an
outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; 9 and he
brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10 So
now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me.' You shall set
it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. 11 Then you,
together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the
bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house."

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God**.

Psalm: 91

(sung to the tune Beach Spring ELW 628)

This psalm, quoted by the tempter in the Gospel reading, affirms God's care, but also encourages us to trust only in God.

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2

In this part of his correspondence with the church at Corinth, Paul is comparing the law, given through Moses, with the gospel of the crucified and resurrected Christ. He sees the law as temporary and always condemning our insufficient righteousness, while the Gospel is permanent and makes us righteous. This is the hope which he proclaims, sometimes in language too frank, open, and honest for the Corinthians' taste.

[8b] "The word is near you,
in your mouth and in your heart"
(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), [9] because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [10] For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. [11] The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." [12] For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all

and is generous to all who call on him. [13] For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

L: The word of the Lord. **A: Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation

*Gospel Reading: Luke 4:1-13

Each year on the First Sunday of Lent we hear the temptation of Christ in the wilderness from that year's Gospel. Matthew's and Luke's telling of this story are remarkably similar, although in Luke power is the second temptation and miraculous preservation is the third (Matthew reverses these).

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the fourth chapter. **A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[1] Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, [2] where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over he was famished. [3] The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." [4] Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.' "

[5] Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. [6] And the devil said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. [7] If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." [8] Jesus answered him, "It is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.' "

[9] Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, [10] for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,

to protect you,'
11 and
'On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "
12 Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' " 13 When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

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

Sermon

*Hymn of the Day: *"Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church"* (ELW 321)

Text: Thomas H. Cain, 1931–2003
Music: OLD 124TH, *Trente quatre pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551
Text © Thomas H. Cain. Used by permission of estate.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

*Invitation to Baptism

*Apostles Creed

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.

*Prayers of Intercession

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

L: Gracious God, speak your word anew among your church. Strengthen it to withstand the temptation to turn inward in fear or complacency. Embolden church institutions to turn from self-preservation toward the self-giving love of Jesus. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Mothering God, speak the word of life into wilderness places and fertile fields. Grant wisdom to your people, that we may quell the urge to strip lands of their resources and instead preserve first fruits for future generations. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Almighty God, speak a word of wisdom to people in positions of power: mayors, councils, and tribal leaders, legislators, judges and juries, presidents, and monarchs. Help them discern your voice and follow your guidance, resisting the temptations of the evil one. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Steadfast God, speak words of courage to your people in the wilderness. Protect migrants and refugees on perilous journeys, that they find safe refuge and a portion in the bounty you have given humanity to share. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Loving God, speak gently to all who are alone. Bless lay ministers, home communion teams, and others who attend to those who are overlooked, vulnerable, or lonely, that all find belonging in your love. We pray for all who are ill (*especially*). God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Living God, we give thanks for all the faithful who have crossed the threshold from death to life especially Jack Nordberg and Nelson Wheeler. Guide us who are living to learn from their wisdom and follow their example. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.
A: Amen.

*Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **A: And also with you.**

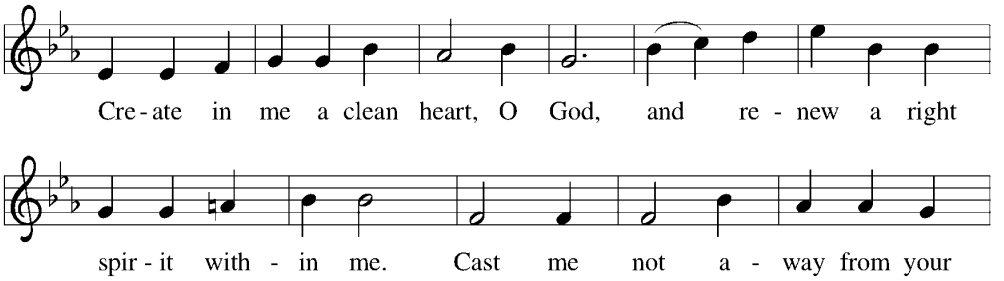
Meal

Offering

*Offerings can be made online at **stpaulpgm.org/give**, mailed to St. Paul Lutheran Church, PO Box 200, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868, placed in the mail slot (outside door to Pastor Paul's office), or in the offering plate located in the lobby/narthex near the entrance of the sanctuary.*

Musical Offering

*Offertory: *"Create in Me a Clean Heart"* *(ELW 188)*



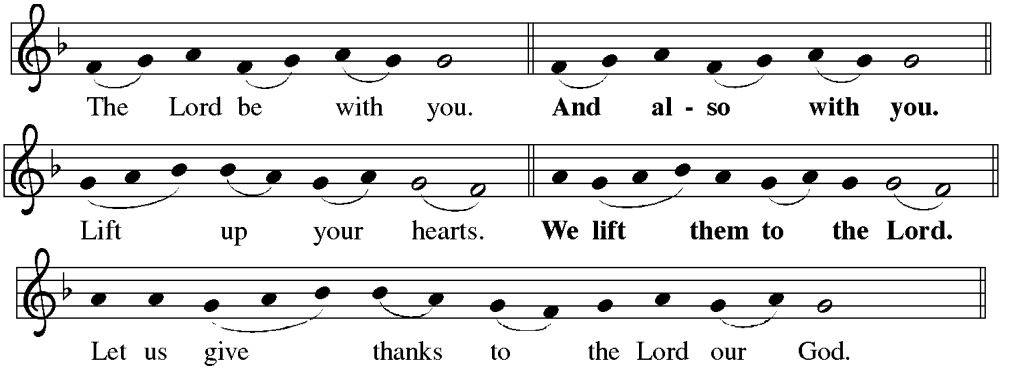
Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670–1739

*Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray: Gracious Provider,
you set your immense treasures among us,
opening your heart to the world.
As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,
deepen our commitment to sharing those
treasures with others,
through our Savior, Jesus Christ. **A: Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

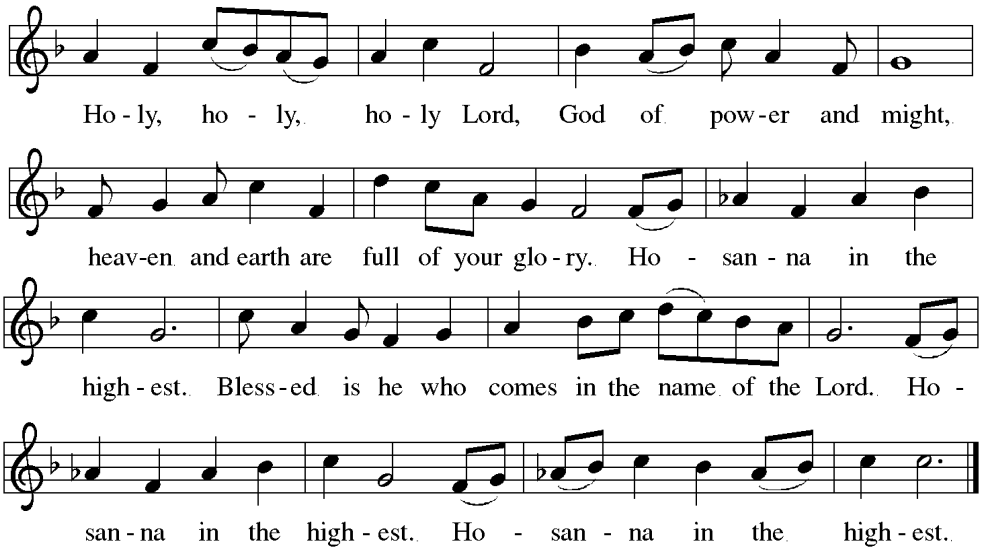
* DIALOGUE



*PREFACE

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*SANCTUS



*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide,
together with rivers and seas, wells and springs
we bless and magnify you.
You led your people Israel through the desert,
and provided them water from the rock.
We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,
who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.
In the night in which he was handed over,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Together we proclaim the mystery of our faith:
A: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.
Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, and resurrection,
we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.
A: Amen, come Lord Jesus.
Pour out your Spirit on this holy food
and on all the baptized gathered for this feast:
wash away our sin,
that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.
A: Amen, come Holy Spirit.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, both now and forever.
A: Amen

*Lord's Prayer

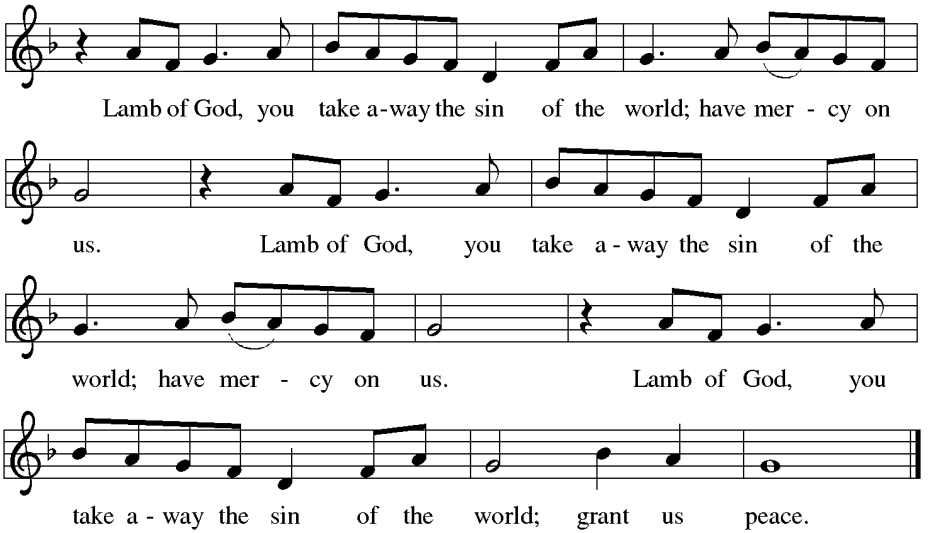
P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

*Lamb of God



A note on Communion Wafers

To topple barriers that prevent participation in worship, we want to make it possible for individuals with Celiac Disease or gluten intolerant to be able to eat the Body of our Lord. Our default wafers are made by Parish Crossroads and are known as "Low Gluten Wafers" because they contain trace amounts of gluten. However, the wafers are tested at least once a year for how much gluten is in them. Since 2020, the wafers have routinely tested to contain 15ppm gluten or less (The US FDA defines most food products with 20ppm or less as "gluten free"). Use the QR Code and look for the link that gives the most recent test results.

If you still have concerns, we have some truly gluten-free wafers available upon request.

Communion

P: The body of Christ, given for you. L: The blood of Christ, shed for you. **A: Amen.**

Communion Hymn: *"When We Are Tested* *(ACS 922)*

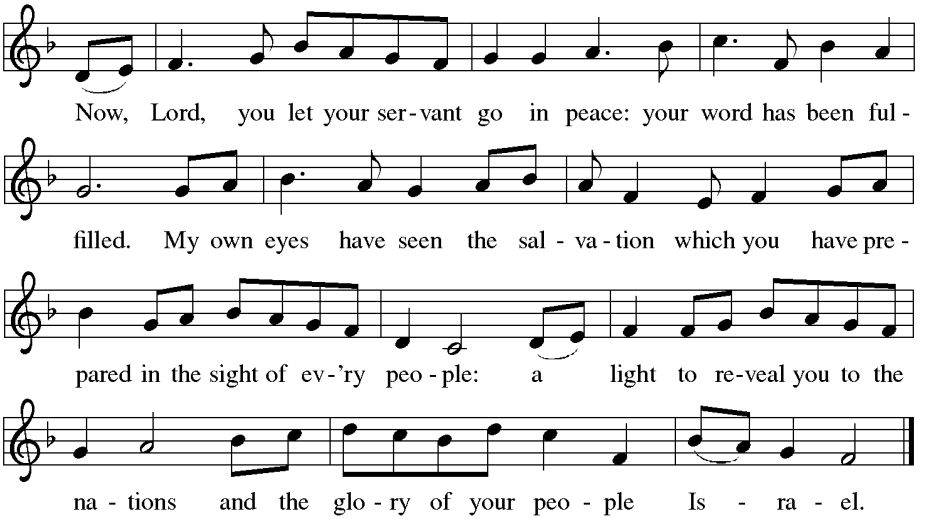
Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
Music: SLANE, Irish traditional
Text © 1996 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

Duplication in any form prohibited without securing permission from copyright administrator or reporting usage under valid license.

*Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in grace.
A: Amen.

*Post-Communion Canticle – *Nunc Dimittis* (*Now, Lord)*



*Post-Communion Prayer

L: Let us pray. Generous Host,
you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities,
that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom,
in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. **A: Amen.**

Sending

*Sending of Communion

Announcements

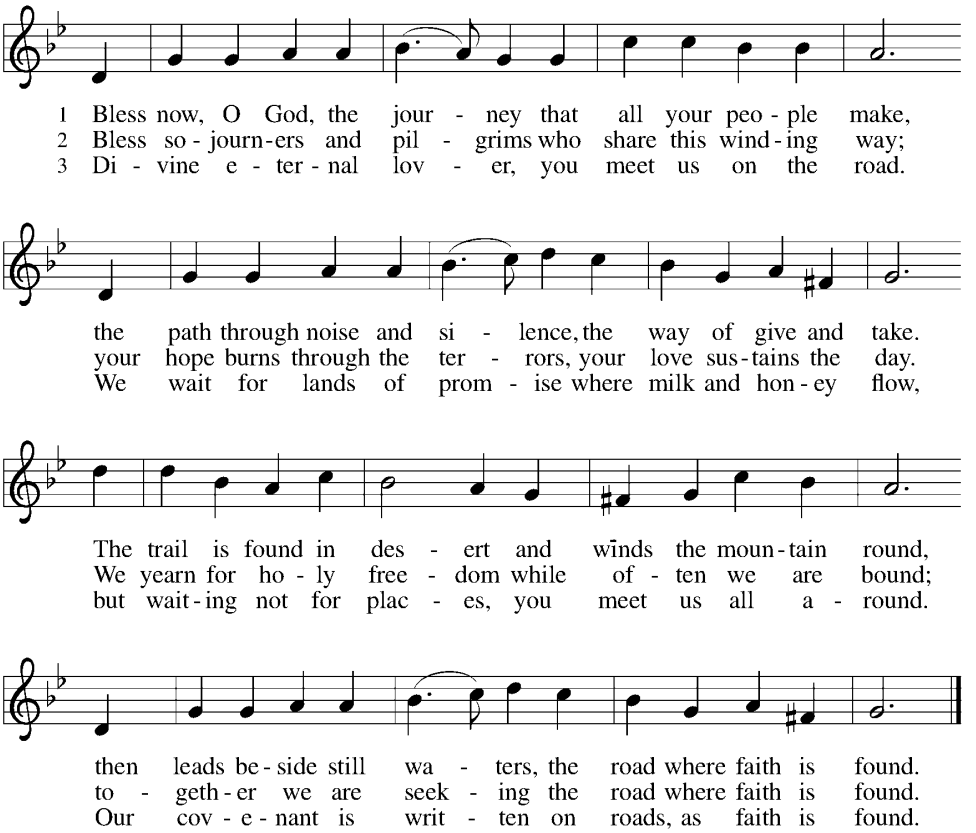
You may be seated.

*Charge to the People

*Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

*Sending Hymn: *"Bless Now, O God, the Journey"* *(ELW 326)*



Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993
Music: LLANGLOFFAN, Welsh tune, 19th cent.
Text © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com
800.442.3358 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you. **A: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Daily Readings for the week

Sunday, March 9
Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 (11)
Romans 10:8b-13
Luke 4:1-13

Monday, March 10
1 Chronicles 21:1-17
1 John 2:1-6
Psalm 17

Tuesday, March 11
Zechariah 3:1-10
2 Peter 2:4-21
Psalm 17

Wednesday, March 12
Job 1:1-22
Luke 21:34—22:6
Psalm 17

Thursday, March 13
Genesis 13:1-7, 14-18
Philippians 3:2-12
Psalm 27

Friday, March 14
Genesis 14:17-24
Philippians 3:17-20
Psalm 27

Saturday, March 15
Psalm 118:26-29
Matthew 23:37-39
Psalm 27

ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS
A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Serving Today

Worship Leader.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister.....Morgen Hummel
Pianist..... Michelle McMullen
Sacristan.....Delorse Homan
Reader.....Eleanor Bird

About St. Paul

Purpose

We are a beacon, boldly sharing the light of Jesus' grace and love.

Mission

Guided by Jesus, we strengthen faith, deepen compassion, extend generosity, and serve community.

Core Values

Faith ❧ Compassion ❧ Generosity ❧ Community

Our Bible Verses

As Paul was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [Jesus said,] 'Paul is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the nations.'– Acts 9:3,15

Land Acknowledgement

St. Paul is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock people, where we gather for worship this morning. We also acknowledge the Seneca, Cayuga, Lenne Lenape, as well as all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place – this land – and call it their home.

Copyright and License Information

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright (c) 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS000528. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright (c) 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. Hymns reprinted and streamed under OneLicense Annual License, A-726322 for Aug 11, 2024 - Aug 10, 2025. The Scriptural Prones (introductions to the pericopes) are written by the Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg and used with permission. Words found in psalm taken from Seedbed.com, written by Tim and Julie Tennent. Permission is granted to use these metrical settings for public worship with acknowledgement of the source. Permission is not granted for commercial use or financial charge.