ST PAUL
PINE GROVE MILLS

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Second Sunday of Lent

March 16, 2025

Whenever you see an asterisk (*), you are invited to stand as you are able.
"The congregation is invited to speak the words in **bold type**."

Introduction to the Day

Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek God's face again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

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.

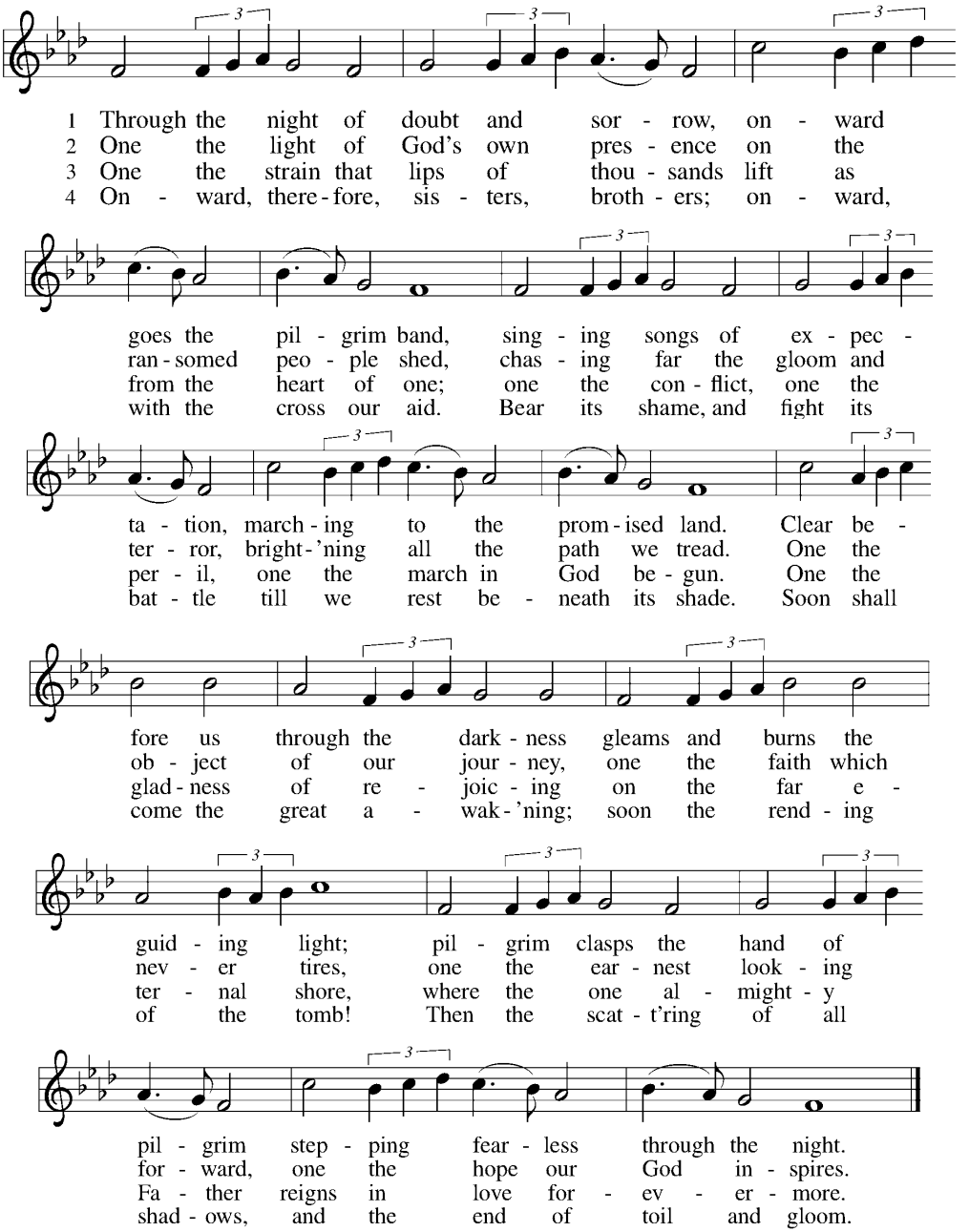
P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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. 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 *"Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow"* *(ELW 327)*

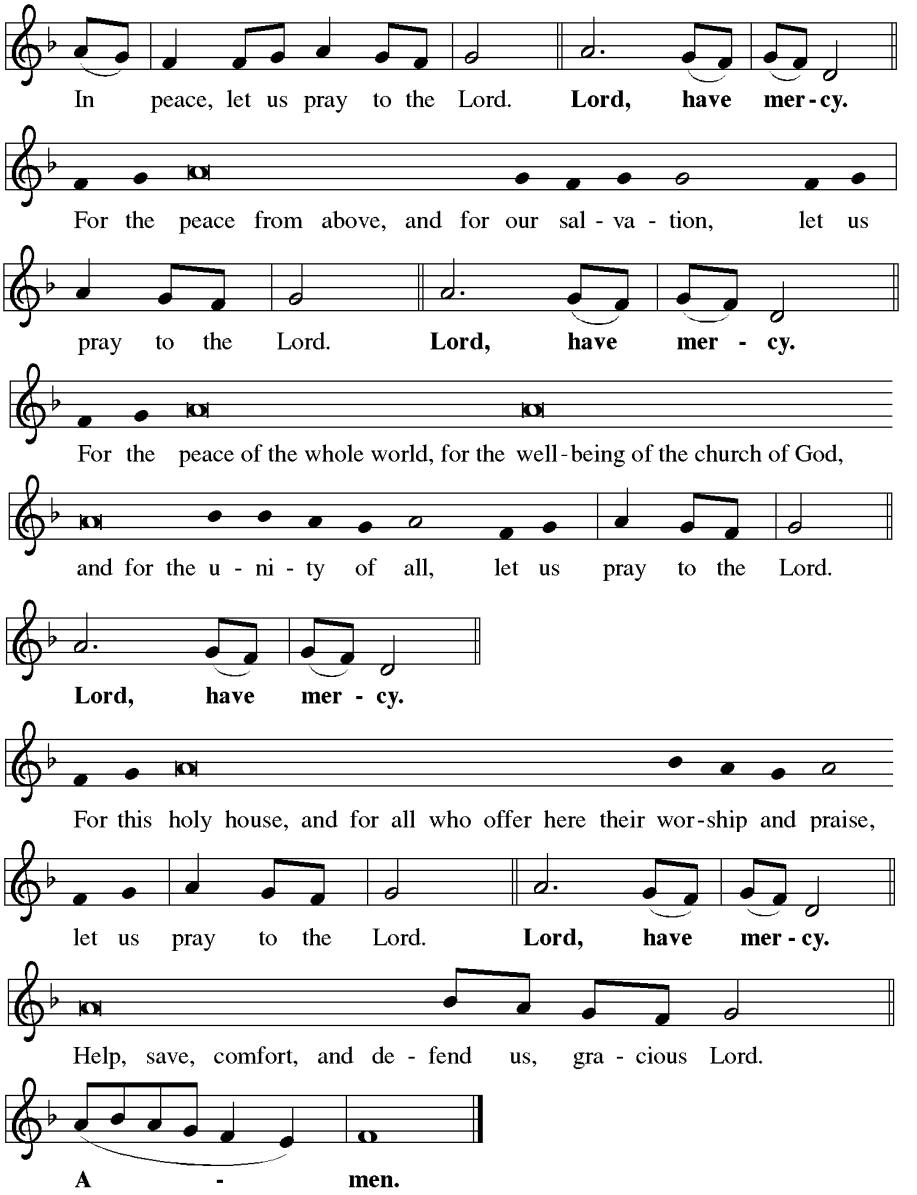


Text: Bernhardt S. Ingemann, 1789–1862; tr. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924, alt.
Music: EBENEZER, Thomas J. Williams, 1869–1944

*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. God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **A: Amen.**

Word

First Reading: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

In the story so far, God had promised Abram that he would have many descendants and that they would have a homeland in which they would be secure. These promises were not being fulfilled, however (and in fact Abram and Sarai would not have children until they were a century old!). During the strange sacrifices which end this lesson, God promises to be torn apart like the animals if the promises are not kept.

1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid,
Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." 2 But Abram said, "O Lord GOD,
what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of
Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my
house is to be my heir." 4 But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be
your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." 5 He brought him outside
and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then
he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 And he believed the LORD, and
the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

7 Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to
give you this land to possess." 8 But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall
possess it?" 9 He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three
years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 He brought him all
these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other, but he did not cut the
birds in two. 11 And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them
away.

12 As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying
darkness descended upon him.

17 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming
torch passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with

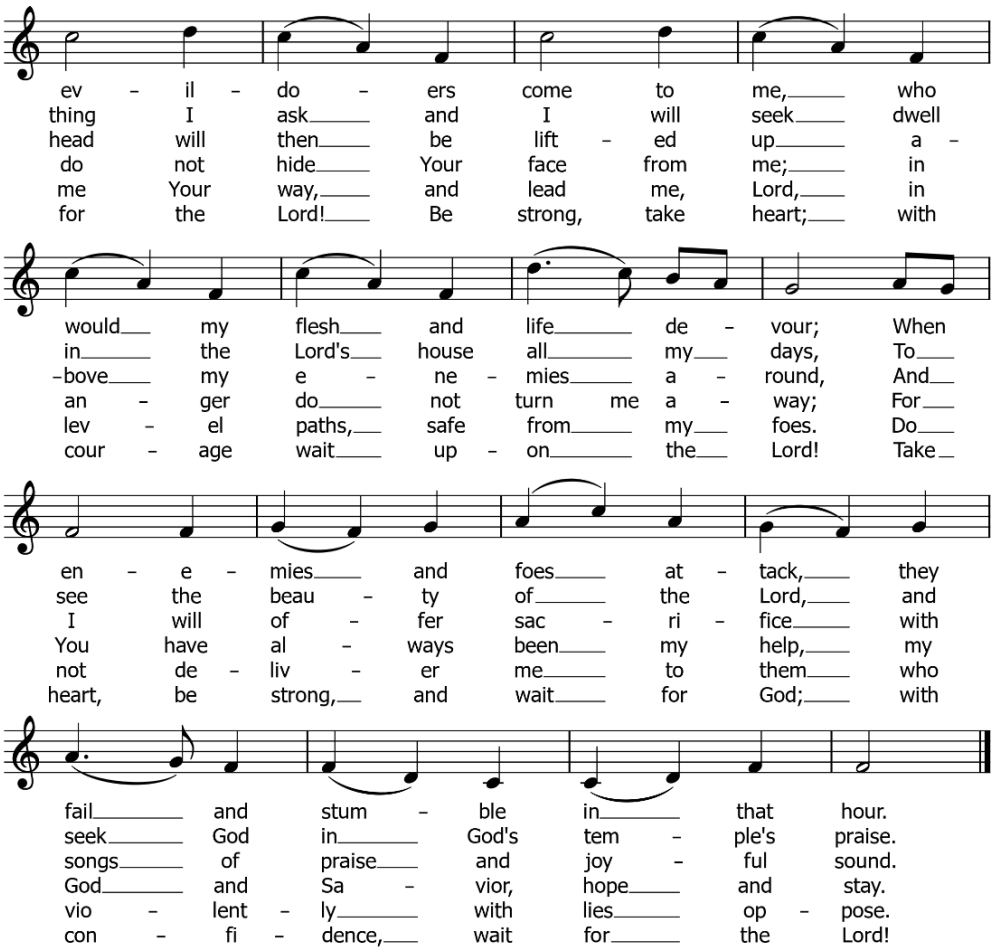
Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates."

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

Psalm: 27

(sung to the tune Candler ACS 1028)

This psalm, affirming the steadfast promise-keeping of God, could have been that of Abram, his descendants, or anyone whose circumstances seem to belie God's faithfulness.



Second Reading: Philippians 3:17—4:1

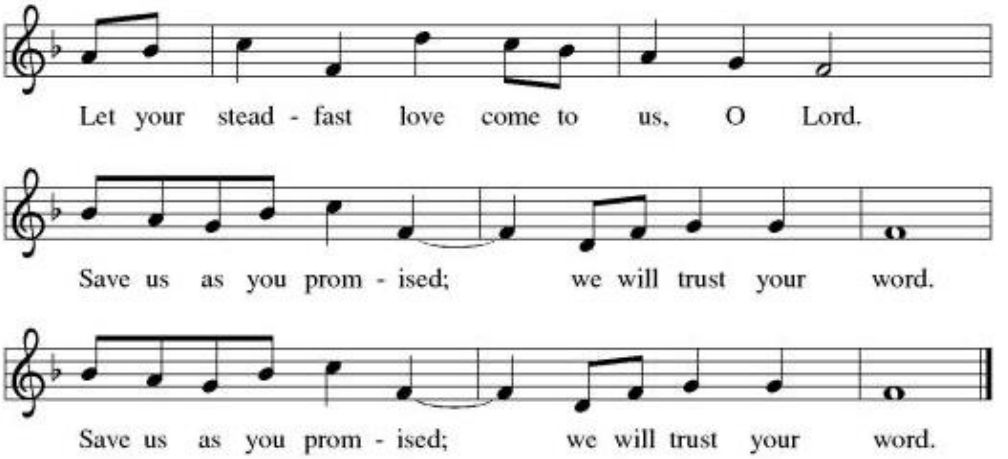
The church in Philippi was one of many founded by Paul. Unlike those in Corinth and Galatia, the Philippians were faithful to his preaching and warm toward him. However, even they were troubled by rival prophets who promised freedom from suffering and an end to service.

17 Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the
example you have in us. 18 For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often
told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. 19 Their end is destruction, their god
is the belly, and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. 20 But
our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord
Jesus Christ. 21 He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to
the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to

himself. [4:1] Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

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

*Gospel Acclamation



*Gospel Reading: Luke 13:31-35

As Jesus's earthly ministry is drawing to its close, he starts traveling to Jerusalem, teaching as he travels. Here, as elsewhere in Luke's Gospel, Pharisees are not his sly persecutors, but his respected and respectable opponents. While they argue with him, they also warn him of the danger he is putting himself in.

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

[31] At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus], "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." [32] He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. [33] Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' [34] Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! [35] See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."

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

Sermon

*HYMN OF THE DAY: *"Thy Holy Wings"* (ELW 613)

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903, sts. 1, 3; Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, st. 2; tr. composite
Music: BRED DINA VIDA VINGAR, Swedish folk tune
Text © 1983 Gracia Grindal, admin. Selah Publishing Co., Inc., agent.

*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: Holy God, you long to gather your church under your wings. Bless the churches of Jerusalem, and all persecuted churches, that your people may take heart and stand firm as they witness and minister in your name. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Holy God, you give shelter to living things as numerous as the stars. Strengthen the voice of prophets who call humanity to faithful care for the planet, that they would not be silenced but heeded as your messengers. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Holy God, you raised up leaders like Abram, Sarai, and Paul to show your people what it means to rely on your promises. Guide today's leaders to work for justice and safeguard the world for future generations. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Holy God, you are the stronghold of our life. Care tenderly for those who are ill in body or mind, and for people living in fear or need (*especially*). May all know they are not alone. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

L: Holy God, you offer us citizenship in heaven. Unite communities of faith who are divided over earthly things, that following the way of your Son, they may set aside grudges and serve their neighbors with generosity and love. God, in your mercy,
A: receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Holy God, you are our light and our salvation. We give thanks for the saints who have gone before us especially Ada Mayes and Edna Harpster. Help us to trust in you as they did and to live according to 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.**

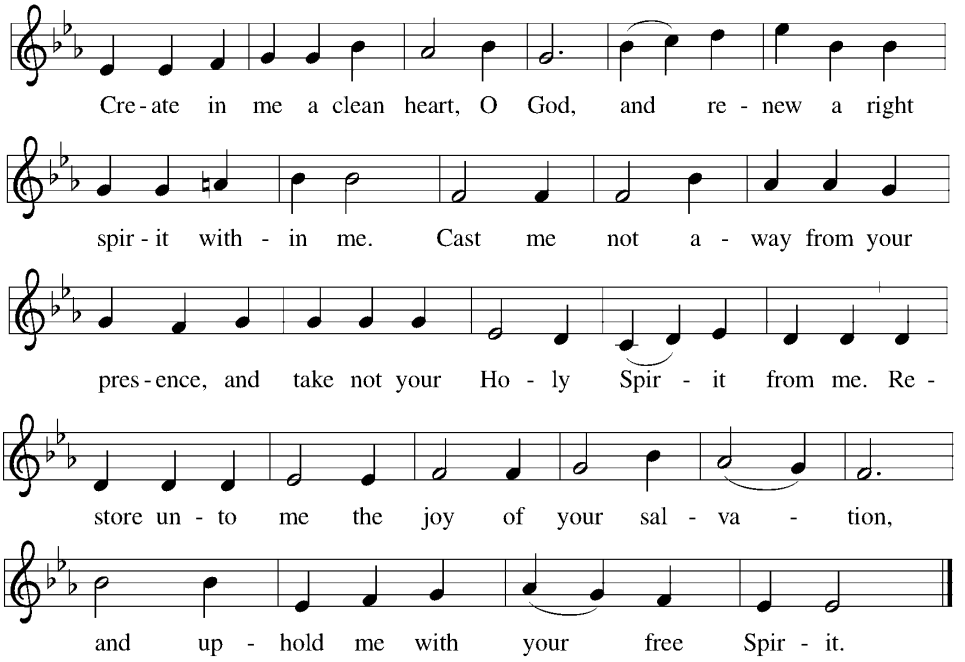
Meal

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)*



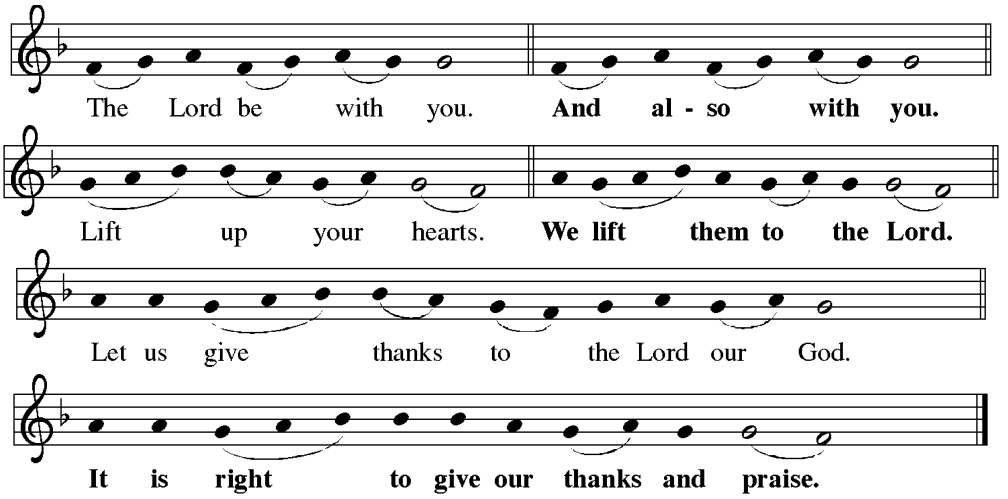
Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670–1739

*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

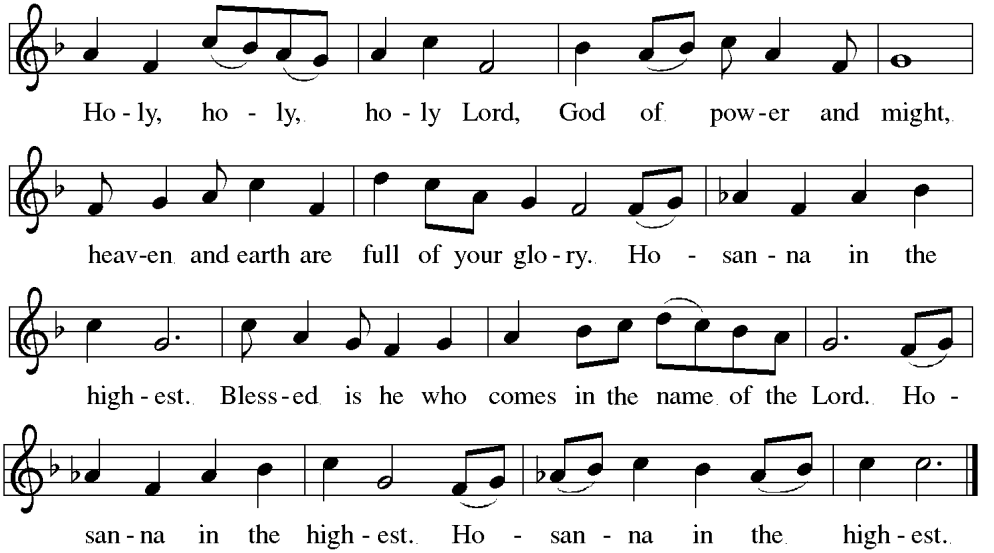
* DIALOGUE



*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

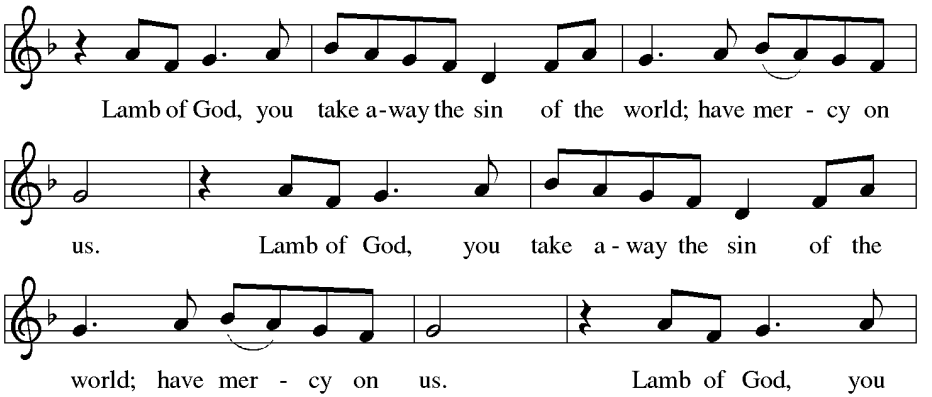
P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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

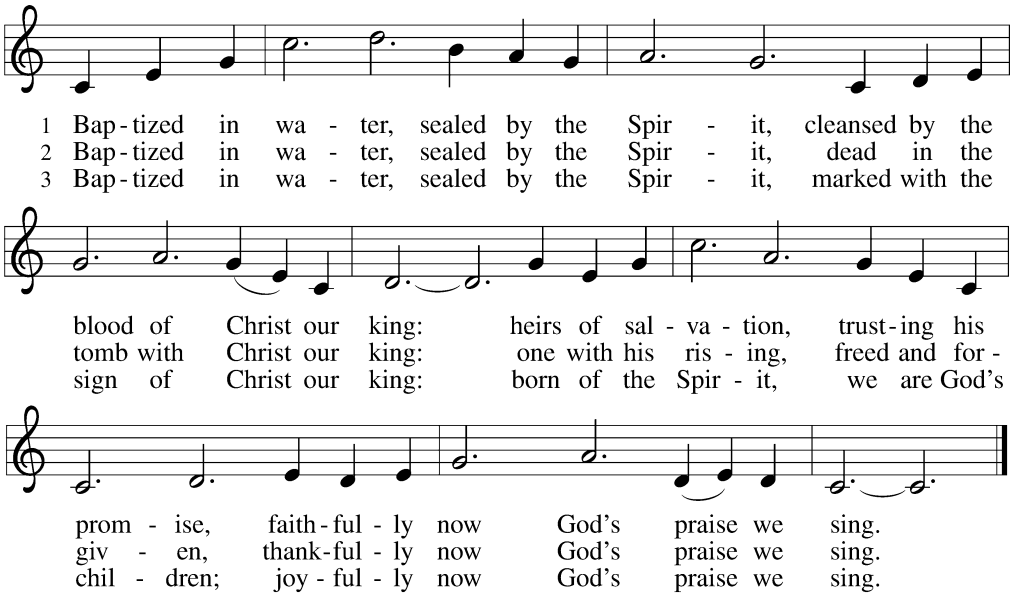
To topple barriers that prevent participation in worship, we want to make it possible for individuals with Celiac Disease or gluten intolerant to be able to eat the Body of our Lord. Our default wafers are made by Parish Crossroads and are known as "Low Gluten Wafers" because they contain trace amounts 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: *"Baptized in Water"* *(ELW 456)*



Text: Michael Saward, b. 1932
Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune
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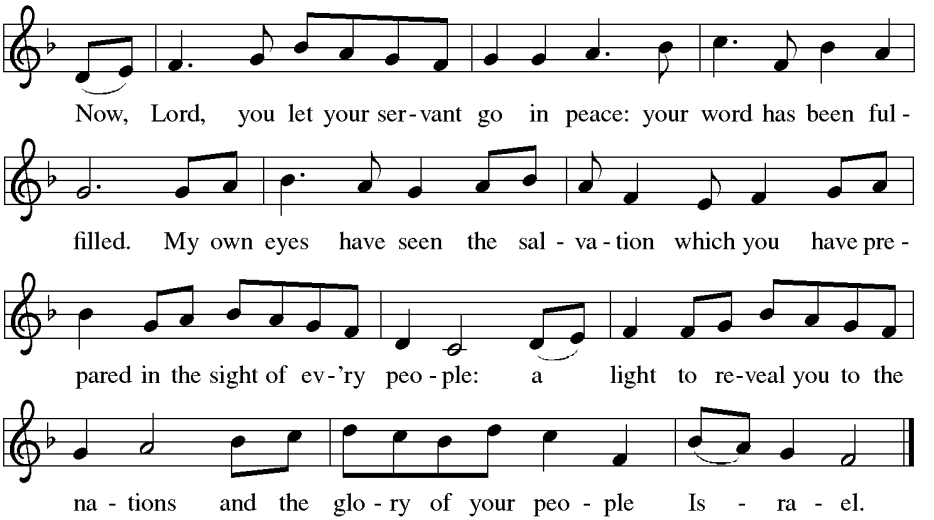
*Post-Communion Blessing

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: *"Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand"* *(ACS 1024)*

Text: Kenyan hymn; adapt. Greg Scheer, b. 1966
Music: KWAKE YESU NASIMAMA, Kenyan melody; adapt. Greg Scheer
Text © 2007 East African Annual Conference, admin. General Board of Global Ministries, GBGMusik
English adapt. and arr. © 2007 Greg Scheer, admin. General Board of Global Ministries, GBGMusik

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*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 16
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
Psalm 27 (5)
Philippians 3:17—4:1
Luke 13:31-35

Monday, March 17
Exodus 33:1-6
Romans 4:1-12
Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42

Tuesday, March 18
Numbers 14:10b-24
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42

Wednesday, March 19
2 Chronicles 20:1-22
Luke 13:22-31
Psalm 105:1-15 [16-41] 42

Thursday, March 20
Daniel 3:19-30
Revelation 2:8-11
Psalm 63:1-8

Friday, March 21
Daniel 12:1-4
Revelation 3:1-6
Psalm 63:1-8

Saturday, March 22
Isaiah 5:1-7
Luke 6:43-45
Psalm 63:1-8

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

Serving Today

Worship Leader.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister.....Linda Govere
Pianist..... Michelle McMullen
Sacristan.....Delorse Homan
Reader.....Joy Kling

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.

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