



ST PAUL PINE GROVE MILLS

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Whenever you see an asterisk (*), you are invited to stand as you are able.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.

PRELUDE: "What Wondrous Love is This"

(Jean Middleswarth)

GATHERING

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: In the name if the Father, and of the ✠Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **A: Amen.**

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

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **A: Amen.**

*GATHERING HYMN: "O Word of God Incarnate"

(ELW 514)



1 O Word of God in - car - nate, O Wis - dom from on high,
2 The church from you, dear Mas - ter, re - ceived the gift di - vine;
3 Oh, make your church, dear Sav - ior, a lamp of bur - nished gold



O Truth un - changed, un - chang - ing, O Light of our dark sky:
and still that light is lift - ed o'er all the earth to shine.
to bear be - fore the na - tions your true light, as of old;



we praise you for the ra - diance that from the hal - lowed page,
It is the chart and com - pass that, all life's voy - age through,
oh, teach your wand - 'ring pil - grims by this their path to trace,



a lan - tern to our foot - steps, shines on from age to age.
mid mists and rocks and quick - sands still guides, O Christ, to you.
till, clouds and dark - ness end - ed, they see you face to face.

Text: William W. How, 1823–1897, alt.

Music: MUNICH, *Neuvermehrtes Gesangbuch*, Meiningen, 1693

*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



In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us
 pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,
 and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,
 let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

A - men.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you. **A: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray, O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of 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 17:1-7, 15-16

The first readings for Lent this year focus on the succession of covenants God has made. This week's is that with Abraham, Sarah and their descendants. While this promise is made several times in Genesis, this story accompanies it with name changes. For Israel and its neighbors (and many other cultures) a person's name and that person's very being are intimately connected; to change the name indicates a fundamental change in the person – one of the reasons baptism is seen as (among many other things) a naming ceremony.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

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

PSALM 22:23-31

(Sung to the tune Consolation ELW 260)

Almost every week the psalm is chosen to serve as a response to the first reading. This week's particularly echoes Sarah's situation: childless and wandering, she is promised not only descendants but descendants who would be royalty.

All you who fear the LORD, praise Him; re- vere and gl- ory tell;

All Ja- cob's chil- dren, hon- or Him off-spring of Is- ra- el.

For He did not despise nor scorn th'afflicted's suffering;
Nor hid His face from him, but heard the cry which he did bring.

Within the congregation great, my praise shall be of Thee;
Before all those who fear You, I'll fulfill my vows to Thee.

The poor shall eat, and shall be filled; those seeking God will give
praise to the LORD; all you who seek—may your hearts ever live!

And all the ends of earth shall turn, remembering the LORD;
All fam'lies of the nations will bow down and praise accord.

For all dominion far and near belongs to Him alone.
The LORD rules over nations all, from His almighty throne.

The rich of earth will worship Him, all who to dust descend;
And all shall kneel—none of them can their soul from death defend.

Descendants, then, will all serve Him—the children yet to be;
They will be told about the Lord, future posterity.

For they shall come, and shall declare His truth and righteousness
unto a people yet unborn, for He has done all this.

SECOND READING: ROMANS 4:13-25

The second reading is Paul's interpretation of the first reading. Aware that Gentile Christians were tempted to see themselves as less securely in the household of God than Jews, Paul assures them that their faith makes them legitimate descendants of Abraham and Sarah and inheritors of God's promise to them.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave

glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

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

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Let your stead - fast love come to us, O Lord.



Save us as you prom - ised; we will trust your word.



Save us as you prom - ised; we will trust your word.

*GOSPEL READING: MARK 8:31-38

As Lent points us toward Holy Week, the Gospel readings this year collect Jesus' predictions of his own suffering and death. Today's reading immediately follows Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Peter's conception of what a Messiah is and does is one of earthly power and glory.

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

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Humanity must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Humanity will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

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

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY: "In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness"

(ACS 1093)



1 In a deep, un - bound - ed dark - ness, long be - fore the
2 Though our world is ev - er - chang - ing, you are con - stant,
3 Joy trans - forms our lips to boast - ing on - ly in your
4 God of Ha - gar, God of Sa - rah, God of no - mad



first light shone, you, O God, be - yond all mer - it
firm, and sure, faith - ful to your cov - 'nant prom - ise.
match - less grace, send - ing Christ to dwell a - mong us,
A - bra - ham; God of Mir - iam, God of Mo - ses,



worked a won - der faith makes known: in your mer - cy,
Trust - ing you, we live, se - cure: sing - ing prais - es,
Word made flesh in time and space: Friend and Sav - ior,
Fi - 'ry Pil - lar, great I AM: lead us home - ward,



in your mer - cy, you em - braced us
sing - ing prais - es, long as heart and
Friend and Sav - ior, in whose life we
lead us home - ward, to the love - feast



as your own,
breath en - dure, ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
glimpse your face,
of the Lamb,

Text: Anonymous, China; tr. Francis P. Jones, 1890–1975; adapt. Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, Plainsong mode V, 13th cent.

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*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**

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

A brief silence.

L: We turn to you for meaning, holy God. Nurture in your children the gifts of the Spirit poured out in baptism and let the mind of Christ guide the church. Give wisdom and discernment to our bishops, pastors, deacons, teachers, and leaders. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: We turn to you for renewal. Save lives and ecosystems threatened by pollution and a changing climate. Cleanse the earth's waters and restore the soil. Preserve rainforests, deserts, and wildlife, that generations to come may cherish your creation. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: We turn to you for justice. Uphold the worth and dignity of every person, especially any who experience hatred and rejection because of gender, ability, sexual orientation, color, ethnicity, or religion. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: We turn to you for healing. Send compassionate helpers to any who suffer because of war and violence. Shelter unhoused people, befriend those who are lonely, bring hope to any in despair, and console the bereaved (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

L: We turn to you for purpose. Remind us of your faithfulness to this congregation. Increase our trust in your guidance and keep us near the cross. Grant that our acts of service will express Christ's sacrificial love. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: We turn to you for peace. We honor the saints who lived in service to others especially our siblings who have gone before us like Leona Olenik, Anne Harpster, Anne Kline Corl, and Sister Elizabeth Fedde, whom the greater Church commemorates today. Inspire us by their example until you gather us into your kingdom. Hear us, O God.

A: Your mercy is great.

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

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.

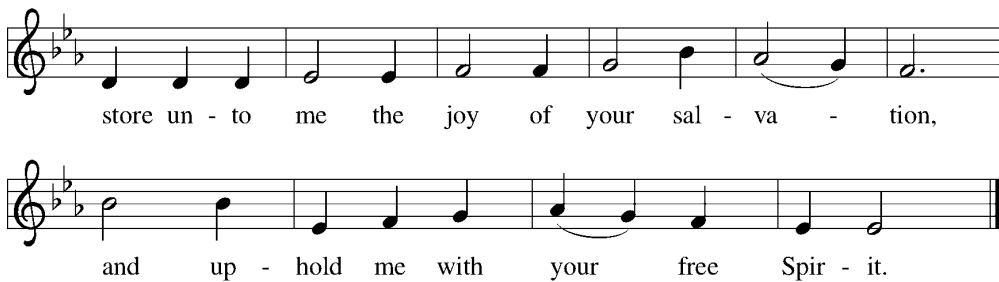
MUSICAL OFFERING: "Ah, Holy Jesus"

(Jean Middleswarth)

***OFFERTORY:** "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

(ELW 188)

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -



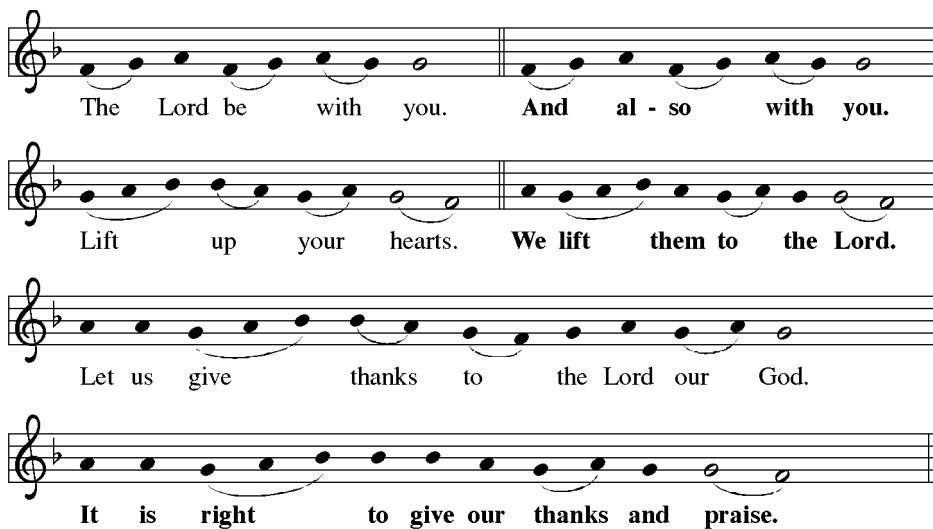
Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670–1739

*OFFERING PRAYER

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

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

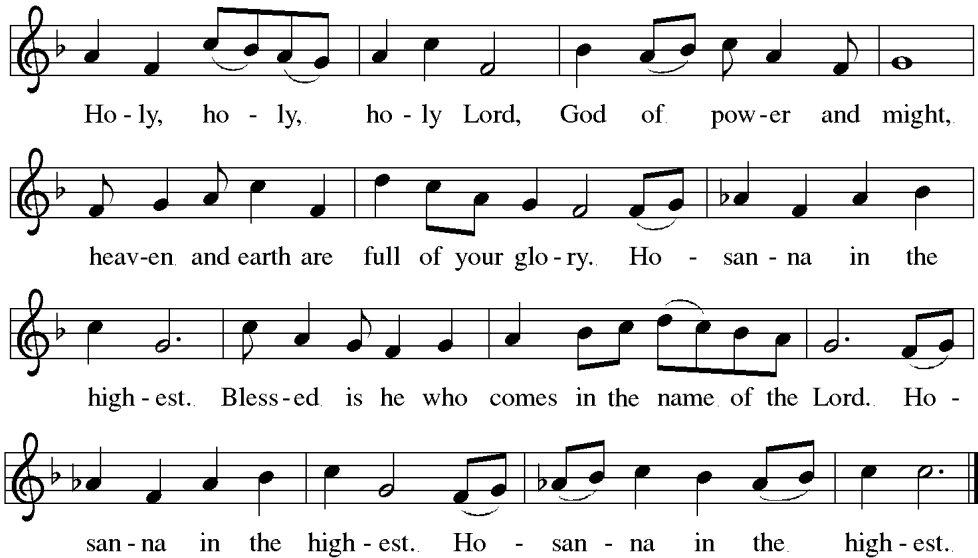
* DIALOGUE



*PREFACE

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.

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 as the body of Christ, we proclaim the mystery of our faith

A: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection, we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.

A: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.

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: Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

***LAMB OF GOD**



The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

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

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

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

COMMUNION

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

COMMUNION HYMN: "How Firm a Foundation"

(ELW 796)

- 1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
- 2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
- 3 "When through fi - 'ry tri - als your path - way shall lie,
- 4 "Through - out all their life - time my peo - ple shall prove

is laid for your faith in Christ Je - sus, the Word!
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be your sup - ply.
my sov - 'reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love;

What more can he say than to you he has said
I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
The flames shall not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign
and then, when gray hairs shall their tem - ples a - dorn,

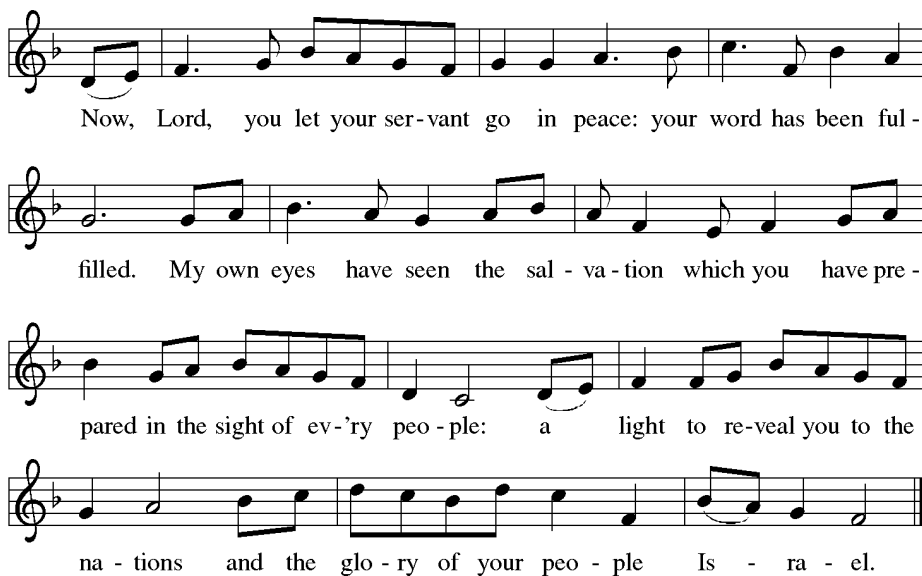


Text: J. Rippon, *A Selection of Hymns*, 1787, alt.
Music: FOUNDATION, Early American

*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strength and keep you, body, mind, and soul, now and unto eternal life. **A: Amen**

*POST COMMUNION CANTICLE



*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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

SENDING

*SENDING OF COMMUNION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

You may be seated.

*CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE

*BLESSING

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: "Faith of Our Fathers"

(ELW 813)



1 Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still in spite of dun - geon,
2 Faith of our moth - ers, dar - ing faith, your work for Christ is
3 Faith of our sis - ters, broth - ers too, who still must bear op -
4 Faith born of God, oh, call us yet, bind us with all who



fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
love re - vealed, spread - ing God's word from pole to pole,
pres - ion's might, rais - ing on high, in pris - ons dark,
fol - low you, shar - ing the strug - gle of your cross



when - e'er we hear that glo - rious word. Faith of our fa - thers,
mak - ing love known and free - dom real. Faith of our moth - ers,
the cross of Christ still burn - ing bright. Faith for to - day, O
un - til the world is made a - new. Faith born of God, O

Refrain



Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, st. 1, alt.; Joseph R. Alfred, b. 1947, sts. 2–4
 Music: ST. CATHERINE, Henri F. Hemy, 1818–1888; James G. Walton, 1821–1905, refrain
 Text sts. 2–4 © Joseph R. Alfred, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Share your bread. **A: Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: *"At the Name of Jesus"*

(Richard Wienhorst)

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES FOR CHURCH!!

Wednesdays February 21-March 13: Holden Evening Prayer 6PM, meal following.

March 24: Palm and Passion Sunday

March 28: Commandment Thursday (Maundy Thursday) 7PM

March 29: God's Friday (Good Friday) 7PM

March 30: The Great Vigil (Easter Eve) 7PM

March 31: Resurrection of our Lord/Pascha (Easter)

Sunrise Service: Jo Hays Vista, 6:30AM?

Regular Service: 10AM

YOU'RE INVITED TO TELL THE ELCA WHAT YOU THINK OF IT

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was officially formed on January 1, 1988. It is now over 36 years since its formation and the world has changed in dramatic ways, but the core of our constitutional structures hasn't.

At the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, the highest governing authority of the ELCA, a memorial was passed to create a commission to explore if we should have a reconstituting convention. From what has been disclosed by committee members, it is highly likely that this will happen and be recommended to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

The commission will be presenting their report, and to help them write it they want to hear from members like yourself. Are there ways the ELCA has confused, frustrated, or perplexed you? Now is the time to make that known!

Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/CRLC-elca-Survey> to give your thoughts and opinions.

RELATEDLY: If you would like to try to go the Phoenix, Arizona in 2025 to be part of the Churchwide Assembly, you can fill out this form to run for the chance: <http://tinyurl.com/8c-2024-Nominations>

A SENTENCE OR TWO ABOUT TODAY'S SAINT

Sister Elizabeth Fedde (pronounced FED-ee) was a Lutheran Deaconess from Norway who, in the 19th century, established the Norwegian-American Lutheran Deaconess community. Mainly serving in New York City and, for a short time, in Pittsburgh, Sister Elizabeth modeled Christ-like service to the poor, the ill, orphans, and immigrants. <http://tinyurl.com/SisterFedde-DeeperDive>



DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, Feb 25

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalms 22:23-31 (27)

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

Thu—Feb. 29

Exodus 19:1-9a

1 Peter 2:4-10

Psalms 19

Mon — Feb. 26

Genesis 21:1-7

Hebrews 1:8-12

Psalms 105:1-11, 37-45

Fri—Mar. 1

Exodus 19:9b-15

Acts 7:30-40

Psalms 19

Tue — Feb. 27

Genesis 22:1-19

Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19

Psalms 105:1-11, 37-45

Sat—Mar. 2

Exodus 19:16-25

Mark 9:2-8

Psalms 19

Wed — Feb. 28

Jeremiah 30:12-22

John 12:36-43

Psalms 105:1-11, 37-45



SERVING TODAY

Worship Leader.....Pastor Paul Tomkiel
Assisting Minister.....Lauren Muthler
Musician..... Jim Rearick
Sacristan.....Karen Magnuson
Reader.....Jeff Muthler

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, 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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