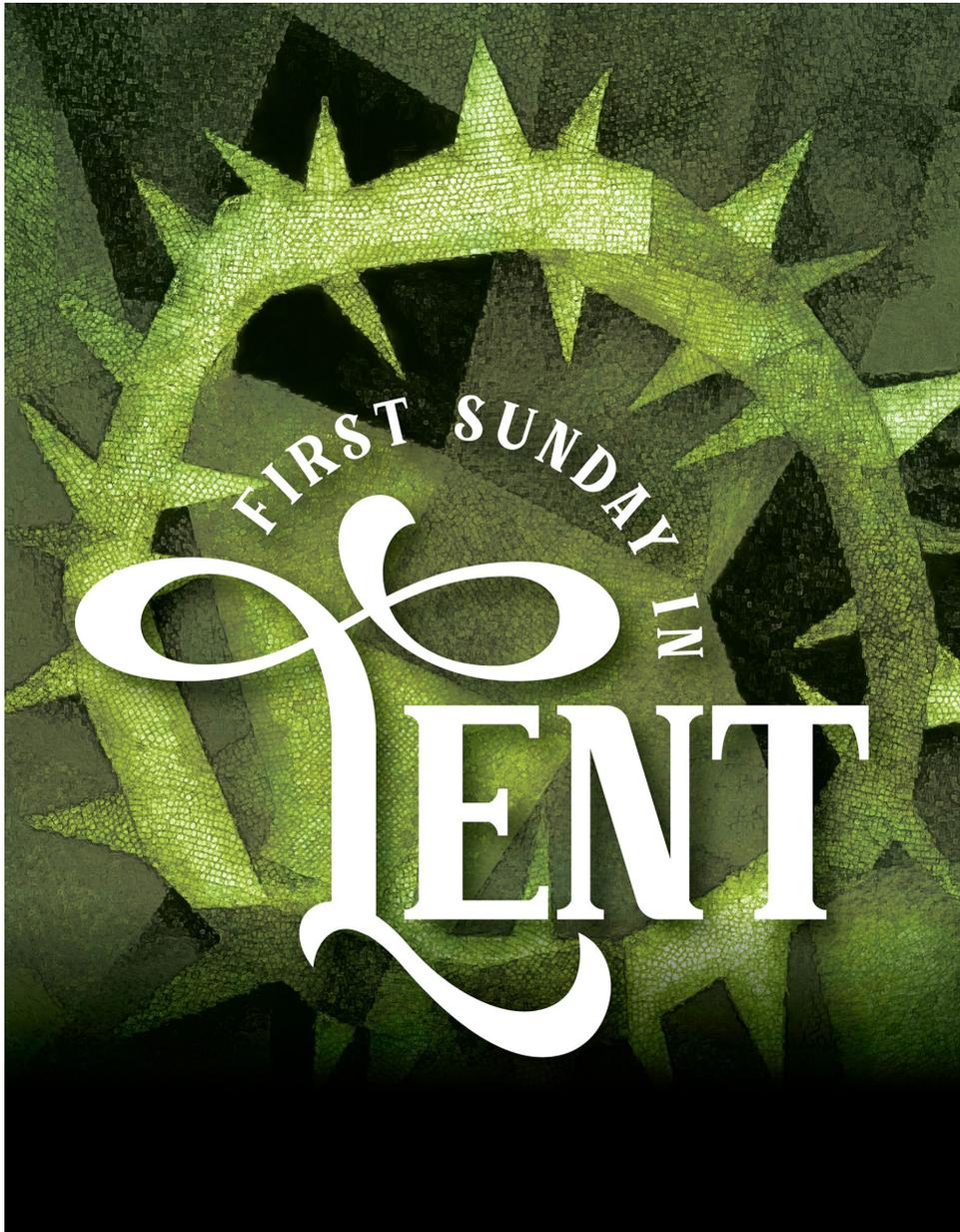
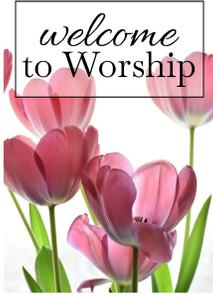


**First Sunday in Lent**  
Sunday, February 22, 2026



*"Touched by the Gospel, we see to be instruments of God's Peace,  
for the sake of the World."*

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**  
1747 W. Milham Avenue ♦ Portage, MI 49024  
Pastor Rachel Laughlin  
Church phone: 269/343-3453 ♦ fax: 269/343-2025  
Website: [popportage.org](http://popportage.org)  
Prayer-mail: [prayer@popportage.org](mailto:prayer@popportage.org)  
Find us on Facebook: *Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA*



### Entering Worship

- ▶ Fully accessible restrooms (men's, women's, gender-neutral) are located behind you as you face the altar. The women's room and nursery have changing tables.
- ▶ People of all ages and stages are encouraged to worship together. A staffed nursery is available 9 AM – Noon.
- ▶ Many people enjoy prayerful quiet in the Sanctuary before worship begins to help center themselves. By keeping conversation in the Gathering Space before worship, you are giving the gift of this peace to your neighbors.
- ▶ All are welcome to share Christ's communion regardless of age or faith tradition. The bread is gluten, nut, and dairy free. Wine and grape juice are available.

### Embodying Praise

- ▶ Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; please engage in them only as you are comfortable or able.
- ▶ Some brains need a quiet activity to help them learn. Feel free to borrow a worship bag or a fidget toy to help your brain and body stay engaged. Ask an usher for assistance.
- ▶ If your body would benefit from extra motion during worship, you are welcome to get up and move about during the service. The Playground in the Gathering Space is equipped with activities and soft toys for anyone to use. The service is still audible there.
- ▶ Hearing assistance devices direct clearer sound directly to your ears. They are available from the ushers. If you use Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids, see the back of the bulletin for instructions on connecting to the assistive listening system in our sanctuary.

### Engaging in Community

- ▶ Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to be an open, welcoming place for all people. Please join us in the Gathering Space after worship for snacks, coffee, and fellowship.
- ▶ This bulletin may be recycled in the basket on the floor near the glass door to the front parking lot. We invite you to take home the Peace Proclamations page with announcements and upcoming events.
- ▶ If you'd like to learn more about our community you can: greet Pastor Rachel at the door by the baptismal font after worship, visit the welcome table to pick up informational brochures or staff business cards, or visit our website: [www.poppottage.org](http://www.poppottage.org)

### WE GATHER TO WORSHIP *Worshippers responses in bold.*

### Music for the Beginning of Worship

#### Welcome

*Stand*

#### Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**All: Amen.**

Pastor: Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Pastor: Gracious God,

**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,  
**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdainning the living water Christ offers:  
 Gracious God,  
**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,  
**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:  
 Gracious God,  
**All: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

Pastor: God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.  
**All: Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn** "O Lord, throughout These Forty Days" No. 319

**Greeting and Prayer of the Day**

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

Pastor: Let us pray,  
**All: Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*Sit*  
**The Children's Sermon**

**WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD**

**First Reading** Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Word of God. Word of Life.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Reader: Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

**All:** **Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile! While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long. For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.**

High: Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

Low: *You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.*

Reader: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye. Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."

High: Great are the tribulations of the wicked;

**All:** **but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.**

Low: *Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord;*

**All:** **shout for joy, all who are true of heart.**

## Second Reading

Romans 5:12-19

Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

Stand

### Gospel Acclamation

Lis - ten to the word which God has spo - ken;

3  
lis - ten to the One who is close at hand;

5  
lis - ten to the voice be - hind cre - a - tion;

7  
lis - ten e - ven if you don't un - der - stand.

### Gospel Reading

Matthew 4:1-11

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' " Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' "

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ**

Sit

**Sermon**

Intern Kathleen Robinson



1 When we are test - ed and wres - tle a - lone,  
2 When in the des - ert we cry for re - lief,  
3 When we are tempt - ed to bar - ter our souls,  
4 When we have strug - gled and searched through the night,  
fam - ished for bread when the world of - fers stone,  
plead - ing for paths marked by cer - tain be - lief,  
trad - ing the truth for the pow'r to con - trol,  
sort - ing and sift - ing the wrong from the right,  
nour - ish us, God, by your word and your way,  
lift us to love you be - yond sign and test,  
teach us to wor - ship and praise on - ly you,  
Sav - ior, sur - round us with cir - cles of care,  
food that sus - tains us by night and by day.  
trust - ing your pres - ence, our on - ly true rest.  
seek - ing your will in the work that we do.  
an - gels of heal - ing, of hope, and of prayer.

**Nicene Creed**

Asst: Joining with the saints of every time and place, we confess our faith:

All: **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## Prayers of the Church

Lay me low, \_\_\_\_\_ where the Lord can find me. \_\_\_\_\_ Lay me  
low, \_\_\_\_\_ where the Lord can hold me. \_\_\_\_\_ Lay me low, where the Lord can bless  
me. \_\_\_\_\_ Lay me low, \_\_\_\_\_ Lord, lay me low.

After "Generous God," worshipers respond "**Pour out your Love.**"  
Repeat "**Lay Me Low**" after the completion of the intercessory prayers.

### WE SHARE IN HIS MEAL

#### Sharing the Peace

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: **And also with you.**

*Worshipers share a sign of God's peace with one another,  
greeting each other with words like "Peace be with you. . .and also with you"*

Sit

#### Offering

Please **date** and complete the fellowship registration pad

*For members of the Prince of Peace community, an offering is our expression of gratitude to God and a way we share  
God's love with the world. If you are visiting with us today, your presence is already a great gift.*

#### Anthem

"Ah, Holy Jesus"  
Handbell Choir & Laurel Hopper, flute

arr. H. Wagner

Stand

#### Offering Response

"Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"  
vs. 1 and general

No. 334

#### Liturgical Hand Washing

*I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,  
and telling all your wondrous deeds. - Psalm 26:6-7*

#### Offering Prayer

Asst: O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine  
to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the  
death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: **Amen.**

Stand

## Great Thanksgiving - Grace Before the Meal

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Pastor: . . . and join in their unending hymn.

## Holy, Holy, Holy

5

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord. God of pow-er and might, God's  
glo - ry fills all heav'n and earth, God of pow-er and might.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. A small number '5' is written above the first staff. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Cantor: Long, long ago in Jerusalem, as the scriptures do record. Isaiah to the temple came to see the holy Lord.

**Refrain sung by All**

High on a throne sat the mighty Lord, robes flowing through the hall, while six-winged angels flew above. Isaiah heard the call.

**Refrain sung by All**

Oh, what a sight it was to see and oh, what a sound to hear! The temple doorposts shook and quaked, and smoke was in the air.

**Refrain sung by All**

## Eucharistic Prayer

Pastor: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on us and given your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for the priceless grace you have bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ, who died upon the tree of Calvary and rose again to make us living branches, drawing our life from him and bearing fruit in all the world. Send your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth and power, to renew our faith as we receive our crucified and risen Lord who comes to us in his body and blood.

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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.

## The Lord's Prayer

Pastor: With the confidence of the children of God, we are bold to pray:

All: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## Invitation to the Meal

Pastor: If you desire to receive what God offers, come to this Table. Come with your faith and your doubt. Come with your questions and your hopes. Come with your grief and your love. Come taste the Lord's goodness. There is room for you here because this is Christ's table. You are welcome.

Sit

## Holy Communion - the Lord's Supper

All are welcome at Christ's table regardless of age or membership status. All communion servers will have sanitized their hands before handling the communion elements. Ushers will direct you to come forward. The pastor and assisting minister will distribute the bread (gluten-free) and the other servers will distribute the wine (red) or grape juice (white). Individually packaged gluten free wafers and sets of completely sealed elements (wheat wafer and grape juice) are available on the stands near the bread distributors. You may pick one of those up yourself, if you prefer. You may place your empty cup in the baskets on the tables as you return to your seat.

If you would prefer not to receive communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest to indicate your preference to the servers.

## Lamb of God

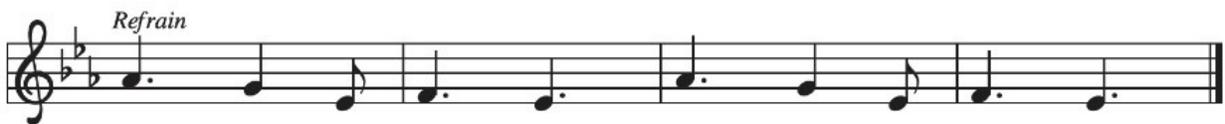
1) O Lamb of God, to earth you came to save us all from  
2) O Lamb of God, the on - ly Son, to us show mer - cy,  
grief and shame. Shorn of your life, up - on the tree you  
Ho - ly One. You save the world from all its sin. Lord,  
hung in deep hu - mil - i - ty.  
give to us your peace. A - men.



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to  
 2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho-ly, great cloud of wit-ness-  
 3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash-ing of light-ning,  
 4 Walk-ing be-hind to hem my jour-ney, go-ing a-head to  
 5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up-hold me:  
 es en-fold; proph-ets, a-pos-tles, an-gels wit-ness:  
 strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan-et:  
 light my way, and from be-neath, a-bove, and all ways:  
 hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



*Refrain*  
 O Christ, sur-round me; O Christ, sur-round me.

"Lead Me, Guide Me"

No. 768

### Table Blessing

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

Asst: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: Amen.

### Sending of Communion

*Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent.*

Pastor: Eternal God, whose glory is revealed in the crucified and risen Lord, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with our sisters and brothers who are *sick/homebound/imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this communion in the body and blood of your Son, that we may all feast upon your abundant love made known in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

### WE ARE SENT TO OUT TO SERVE

#### Announcements

*Worshipers are invited to share announcements not listed in the weekly Peace Proclamations:*

*blessings: like anniversaries, birthdays, births or new jobs, prayer concerns and answered prayers. So that all present on person and livestreaming can see and hear you, **come up the ramp to the chancel then go to the pulpit to give your announcement.***

Stand

### Final Blessing

Pastor: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always.

All: Amen.

### Sending Hymn

“Cast Out, O Christ”

ACS No. 1016



1 Cast out, O Christ, cast far a - way the  
2 Our rag - ing griefs, our jeal - ous fears are  
3 Once long a - go, from Gal - i - lee, you  
4 Your word breathes life and health and hope that  
5 So come, O Christ, and cast a - way the



de - mons that de - stroy: the haunt - ing dreads that  
Le - gion in their name. Our shack - led hearts im -  
sailed to storm - tossed shores. And still, in pow'r, you  
break through e - vil's thrall. You send us, strength - ened,  
de - mons that de - stroy. Trans - form our lives to



choke our souls, the hates that sti - fle joy.  
plore your grace to loose our bind - ing shame.  
brave new paths to breach our bolt - ed doors.  
home in peace to live your gos - pel call.  
sense your love and spread a - broad your joy.

### Dismissal

Asst: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

All: Thanks be to God.

### Music for the Close of Worship

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*O Lamb of God to Earth You Came*, Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer, Music: *The Suffolk Miracle*. Trad. Appalachian©1990, 2013 Augsburg Fortress.

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Today's Servers  
February 22, 2026

Next Week's Servers  
March 1, 2026

Worship Asst.: Lisa Creed  
Reader: Karen Adams  
Ushers: Kay Kincaid  
Technology: Jackson Seguin, Paul Swodzinski,  
Mike Whately  
Prayer Station: Randi Martin  
Sacristy Asst.: Kathy Eklov  
Communion Assts.: Micki Holder  
Altar Guild: Dorothy Tisland  
Fellowship Host: Claudia Lee  
Fellowship Treats:  
Church Lockup: Don Eklov

Worship Asst.:  
Reader: Bette Stemaly  
Ushers: Greg Guthrie  
Technology: Mike Whately  
Prayer Station: Jan Ellwitz  
Sacristy Asst.: Marilyn Storch  
Communion Assts.: Karen Adams, Cam Hart  
Altar Guild: Gail MacNellis  
Fellowship Host:  
Fellowship Treats:  
Church Lockup: Judson Stemaly

Use this QR code to donate online to  
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
and it's ministries.  
See the Peace Proclamations for more details.



**Hearing Aid Compatible Assistive Listening System**



1. Use this  QR code connect to the "pop\_listen" Wi-fi network.
2. Use this QR  Code to download the *Listen Everywhere* app, either from the Apple Store or the Google Play Store.



3. On your phone go to your settings. Tap on Connections, tap on Wi-fi, look for the "pop\_listen" network and tap on it.
4. Then find your "Listen Everywhere" app, open it and tap on "POP Service"
5. After that you should be receiving audio in your hearing aids. If you need assistance, see an Usher.

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Staff**

Church phone: 269/343-3453

Staff

**Pastor:** Rachel Laughlin ext 11

**Administrative Asst:** Tamara Preston ext 10

**Accountant:** Marilyn Storch ext 14

**Technology Manager:** Mike Whately ext 13

**Engagement Coor:** Em Witteveen ext 12

**Intern:** Kathleen Robinson ext 15

**Music Director:** Janet Hill ext 16

**Custodian:** Steve Haddix ext 20

**Nursery:** Melissa Copeland & Megan Zimmerman ext 17

**Care Team Email:** prayer@popportage.org