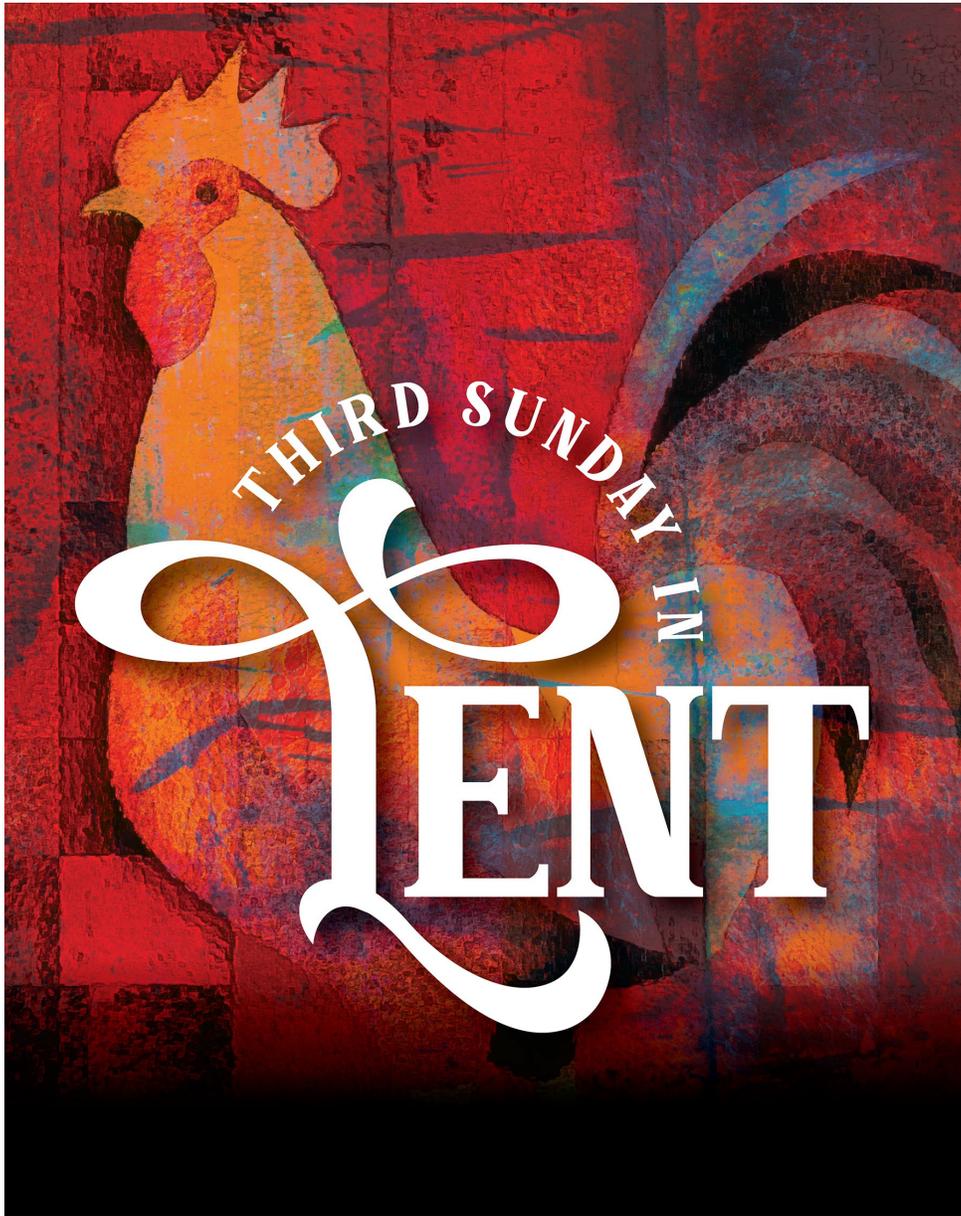


Third Sunday in Lent

Sunday, March 8, 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

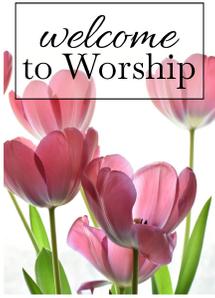
Pastor Rachel Laughlin

Church phone: 269/343-3453 ♦ fax: 269/343-2025

Website: popportage.org

Prayer-mail: 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 Prayground 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

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

Worshippers responses in bold.

Music for the Beginning of Worship "O Bread of Life from Heaven" arr. Johannes Brahms

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 disdaining 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

"Come to the Water of Life"

ACS No. 955



1 All who are thirst - y for mer - cy, all who are thirst - y for
2 All who are thirst - y for heal - ing, all who are thirst - y for
3 All who are thirst - y for beau - ty, all who are thirst - y for
4 All who are thirst - y for jus - tice, all who are thirst - y for



love; all who are thirst - y for love, for mer - cy,
touch; all who are thirst - y for touch, for heal - ing,
truth; all who are thirst - y for truth, for beau - ty,
peace; all who are thirst - y for peace, for jus - tice,



come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.

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: **Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through 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

Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 95

Reader: Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

All: **Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to the Lord with psalms. For you, Lord, are a great God, and a great ruler above all gods.**

High: *In your hand are the caverns of the earth; the heights of the hills are also yours.*

Low: The sea is yours, for you made it, and your hands have molded the dry land.

All: **Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For the Lord is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.**

Reader: Oh, that today you would hear God's voice! "Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert. There your ancestors tested me, they put me to the test, though they had seen my works. Forty years I loathed that generation, saying, 'The heart of this people goes astray; they do not know my ways.' Indeed I swore in my anger, 'They shall never come to my rest.' "

Second Reading

Romans 5:1-11

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Lis - ten to the word which God has spo - ken;
lis - ten to the One who is close at hand;
lis - ten to the voice be - hind cre - a - tion;
lis - ten e - ven if you don't un - der - stand.

Stand

Gospel Reading

John 4:5-42

The Holy Gospel according to John the 4th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Please sit and listen to the Gospel

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon

Pastor Rachel Laughlin

Stand

Hymn of the Day

“I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say”

No. 611

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.

Stand at last verse

Offering Response

“Open Now the Gates of Beauty”
vs. 1, 2 - High, vs. 3 - Low, 4 - All & stand

No. 533

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

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

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.

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 only Son, to us show mercy,
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.

Communion Hymns

“O Bread of Life from Heaven”

No. 611

“O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts”

No. 658

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

“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”

No. 618

Dismissal

Asst: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Music for the Close of Worship

“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”

arr. Paul Manz

**God
demonstrates
his own
love for us...**

ROMANS 5:8



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Today's Servers
March 8, 2026

Next Week's Servers
March 15, 2026

Worship Asst.: Steve Pendziszewski
Reader: Melissa Ottesen
Ushers:
Technology: Paul Swodzinski, Mike Whately
Prayer Station: Laurie Brown
Sacristy Asst.: Laila Poisson
Communion Assts.: Annika Eklov, MacKenzie Hart,
Altar Guild: Dorothy Tisland
Fellowship Host:
Fellowship Treats:
Church Lockup: Jeremy Zimmerman

Worship Asst.: Noel Sederstrom
Reader: Karen Adams
Ushers: Greg Guthrie
Technology: Mark Clyne, Paul Guthrie, Mike Whately
Prayer Station: Randi Martin
Sacristy Asst.: Kathy Eklov
Communion Assts.: Cam Hart, Beth Whately
Altar Guild: Sandy Bennett
Fellowship Host:
Fellowship Treats:
Church Lockup: Noel Sederstrom

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