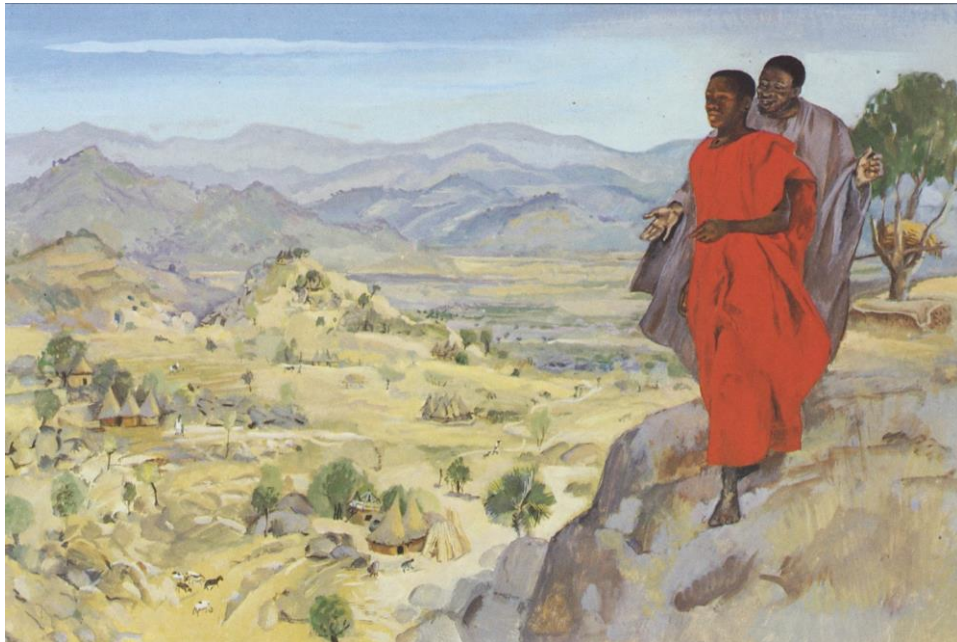


# **FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT**

**8:15am and 10:30am.**



**February 22, 2026**

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

# Welcome to ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are happy you have joined us for worship today. Wherever you are on your journey with or toward God, you are welcome here—you are a blessing to this assembly. We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status.

We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that in, with, and under the bread and wine in Holy Communion we receive the true Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation. All who are drawn in faith are welcome to join in this confession and receive the Sacrament.

We invite and encourage your full participation in our worship this morning. With this service bulletin you can follow and participate in this morning's liturgy.

**New to St. Paul?** If you have questions or want more information, please fill out a newcomer form with the QR code at the right. Questions about transferring membership from another Lutheran church, or for beginning the process for baptism, confirmation, membership, or transferring from one of the other Christian traditions, may be directed to the Church Office at 781-646-7773 or [parishadmin@stpaularlington.org](mailto:parishadmin@stpaularlington.org).



## SUNDAY SERVICE

8:15am | Holy Communion

9:00am | Choir Practice

9:30am | Education Hour with Sunday School, Adult Forum, Confirmation

10:30am | Holy Communion & livestreamed

11:30am | Coffee Hour in Goodman Fellowship Hall

## LIVESTREAMING

Worship is streamed on the St. Paul Lutheran Arlington Facebook page. A Facebook account is not necessary to stream, however, without a Facebook account the stream works on a computer browser only and not on a phone.

## SERVING THE COMMUNITY TODAY:

Marie Breitenbach, Lydia Zuehsow

& Kim Fechtel, *Altar Guild*

Adelaide and Mikayla N., *Acolytes*

Marie Breitenbach, *Lector*

Peter Schmidt, *Cantor*

Taryn Walsh, *Deacon*

Andy Airasian and Dan Ries, *Ushers*

Hollie Schmidt & Mat Carter, *Livestream Broadcast Team*

Peter and Hollie Schmidt & Lisa Chiulli Lay, *Coffee Guild*

**Today's Cover Art - JESUS MAFA** is a response to the New Testament readings from the Lectionary by a Christian community in Cameroon, Africa. Each of the readings was selected and adapted to dramatic interpretation by the community members. Photographs of their interpretations were made, and these were then transcribed to paintings.

In this painting, Jesus has been taken to the top of a mountain in the final temptation described in Matthew 4:1-11 where the devil whispers in his ear the promise of all the kingdoms of the world. Jesus is confronted with the temptation to seize power—to live by the rule(s) of the world. We know from this one gospel story that he refuses every temptation, but we know from the remaining narrative that the temptation to be the messiah people expected must have haunted him to his death on the cross. Jesus instead is a new kind of messiah, one who exemplifies non-violent resistance, trusting in the love he embodies.

JESUS MAFA. Jesus is tempted - Matthew 4:1-11, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

*When the instruction for standing \* appears, please stand as you are able and as seems comfortable.*

*At the ✠, you may make the sign of the cross, which reminds us of our baptism.*

*The congregational responses are printed in **bold**.*

## GATHERING

### PRELUDE

Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit

J.S. Bach (BWV 792)

*Chris Porter, guest musician*

### WELCOME

### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

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

*The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.*

To you, O God,

**all hearts are open, to you all desires known. We come to you, confessing our sins. Forgive us in your mercy, and remember us in your love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

*The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness with these or similar words.*

By water and the Holy Spirit God gives you a new birth, and through the death and resurrection of ✠ Jesus Christ, God forgives you all your sins. The God of mercy and might strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life.

**Amen.**

### \*GATHERING HYMN

"Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church"

ELW 321

1 E - ter - nal Lord of love, be - hold your church  
2 So dai - ly dy - ing to the way of self,  
3 If dead in you, so in you we a - rise,



walk - ing once more the pil - grim way of Lent,  
so dai - ly liv - ing in your way of love,  
you the first - born of all the faith - ful dead;

led by your cloud by day, by night your fire,  
we walk the road, Lord Je - sus, that you trod,  
and as through ston - y ground the green shoots break,

moved by your love and toward your pres - ence bent:  
know - ing our - selves bap - tized in - to your death:  
glo - rious in spring - time dress of leaf and flow'r,

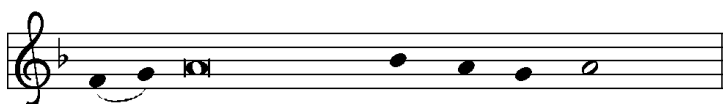
far off yet here— the goal of all de - sire.  
so we are dead and live with you in God.  
so in - to life and glo - ry shall we wake.

Text: Thomas H. Cain, 1931–2003  
Music: OLD 124TH, *Trente quatre pseumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

# \*GREETING

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

\*KYRIE (10:30 only)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, 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 unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



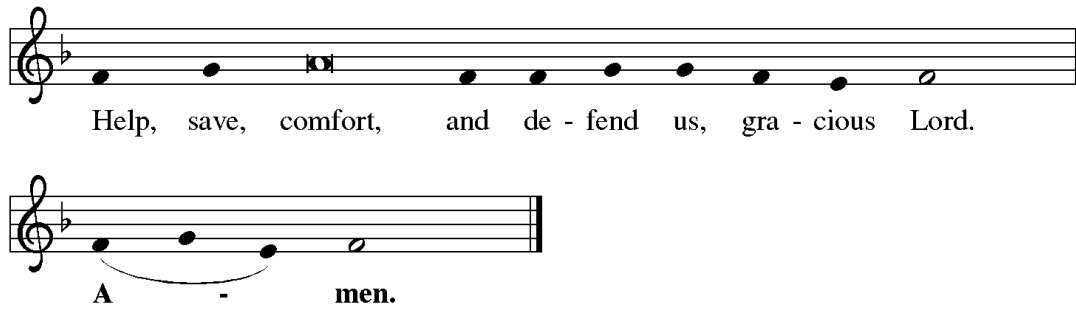
For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

## WORD

### FIRST READING

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

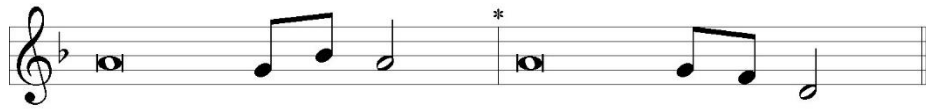
A reading from the book of Genesis, the second chapter.

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."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



Happy are they whose transgressions <sup>1</sup> are forgiven,  
and whose sin is <sup>1</sup> put away!

**Happy are they to whom the Lord im- <sup>1</sup> putes no guilt,  
and in whose spirit there <sup>1</sup> is no guile!**

While I held my tongue, my bones with- <sup>1</sup> ered away,  
because of my groaning <sup>1</sup> all day long.

**For your hand was heavy upon me <sup>1</sup> day and night;  
my moisture was dried up as in the <sup>1</sup> heat of summer.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- <sup>1</sup> ceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then you forgave me the guilt <sup>1</sup> of my sin.

**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in <sup>1</sup> time of trouble;  
when the great waters overflow, they <sup>1</sup> shall not reach them.**

You are my hiding-place; you preserve <sup>1</sup> me from trouble;  
you surround me with shouts <sup>1</sup> of deliverance.

**"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that <sup>1</sup> you should go;  
I will guide you <sup>1</sup> with my eye.**

Do not be like horse or mule, which have no <sup>1</sup> understanding;  
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will <sup>1</sup> not stay near you."

**Great are the tribulations <sup>1</sup> of the wicked;  
but mercy embraces those who trust <sup>1</sup> in the Lord.**

Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice <sup>1</sup> in the Lord;  
shout for joy, all who are <sup>1</sup> true of heart.

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

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.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

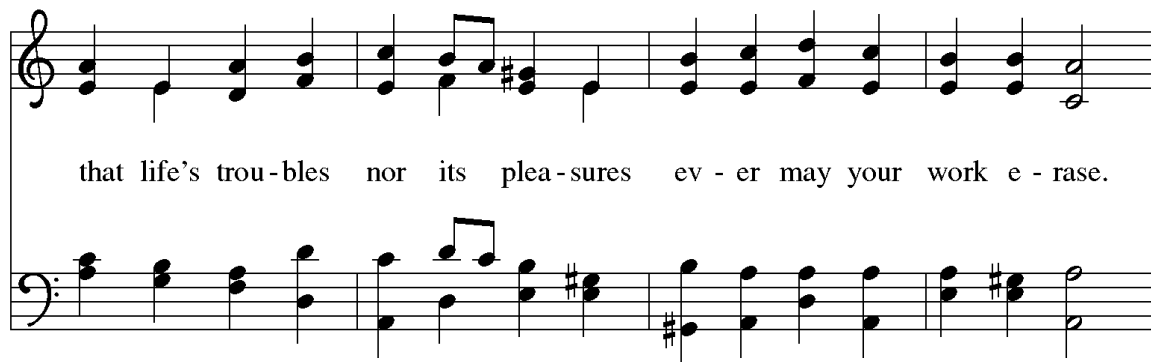
\* GRADUAL HYMN

"On My Heart Imprint Your Image"

ELW 811



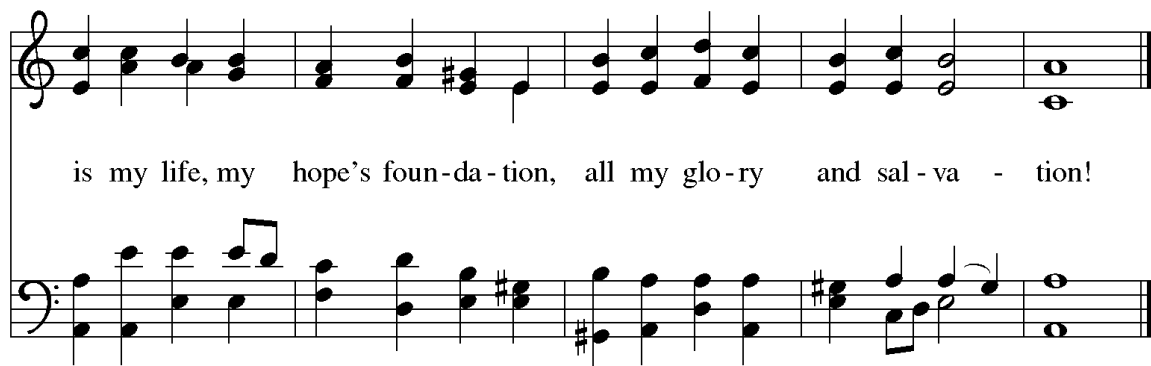




that life's trou- bles nor its plea- sures ev - er may your work e - rase.



Let the clear in - scrip - tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,



is my life, my hope's foun-da - tion, all my glo-ry and sal - va - tion!

Text: Thomas H. Kingo, 1634–1703; tr. Peer O. Strömme, 1856–1921, alt.  
Music: DER AM KREUZ, Johann B. König, 1691–1758

\* GOSPEL

Matthew 4:1-11

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the 4th 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.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE AND SERMON

Pastor Don Larsen

\* HYMN OF THE DAY

“When We Are Tested”

ACS 922

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.

**\*APOSTLE'S CREED**

In trust and hope, let us confess the faith of the church:

**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 into hell. 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**

*As is our custom, please face one another across the center aisle. The deacon invites us to prayer and offers the first intercession. As you are moved to pray, you are invited to pray any of the following intercessions aloud.*

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

*A brief silence.*

God of all grace, grant faith to your church. Give to all the baptized the will to resist temptation and to worship and serve you alone. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all creation, tend this earth. When human greed and disobedience threaten this planet and the life it contains, lead us by your Spirit into ways of reverence, awe, and gentleness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all nations, preserve us from trouble. Surround all living in places of violence with your steadfast love and give resilience to all who work for peace. Grant courage to those who challenge, especially around issues of racism and systemic oppression. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all healing, mend our wounds. Bring wholeness to all who are sick, give peace to all who groan in grief, and send companions to all who are lonely or isolated. We especially pray for Bobby, Dan, Diane, George, Jim, Lynn, Meredith, Naomi, Paul, Roberta, and Susan. Bring food to those who hunger, and give housing to all without shelter. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all people, provide for our community. For any among us who hunger for bread, bring nourishment. For any among us who hunger for truth, speak your life-giving word. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of all life, bring us to you. We thank you for your free and abounding grace, and for those who, by that same grace, now rest eternally in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

**Amen.**

**\*PEACE**

*Keep your hands close together or make the peace sign if you'd rather not pass the peace with touch.*

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**OFFERING**

*You may give an offering through the Givelify app by scanning this QR code.*

*You may also make an offering by placing a gift in the offering plate, which is in the narthex.*



**\*OFFERTORY SONG**

A musical score for a three-part setting of the Offertory Song. It consists of three systems of music, each with a soprano, alto, and bass line. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "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 -".

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 -

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,  
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

## PREPARATION OF THE TABLE AND OFFERING

# MEAL

### \* OFFERTORY PRAYER

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.  
**Amen.**

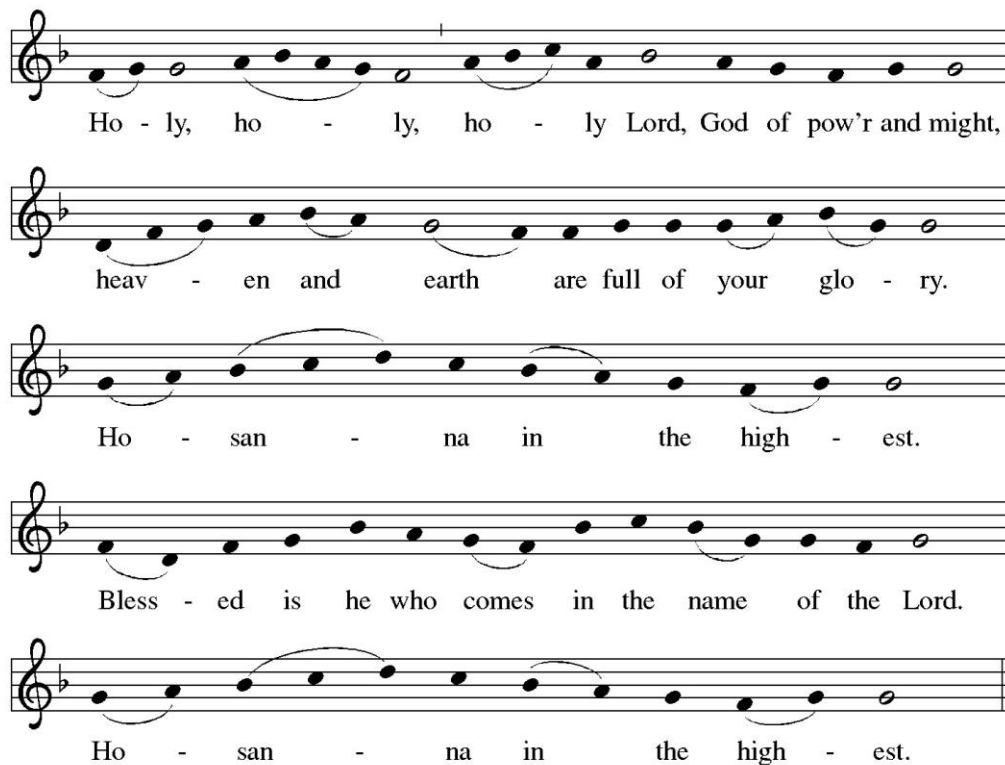
### \* GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



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.

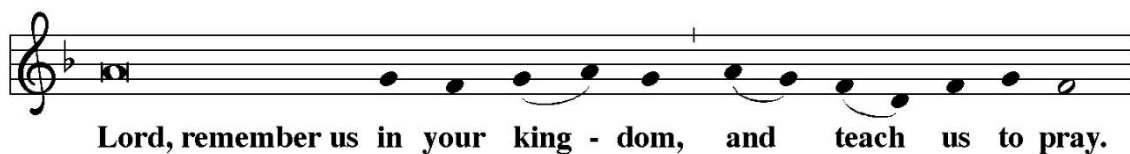
You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace.  
And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



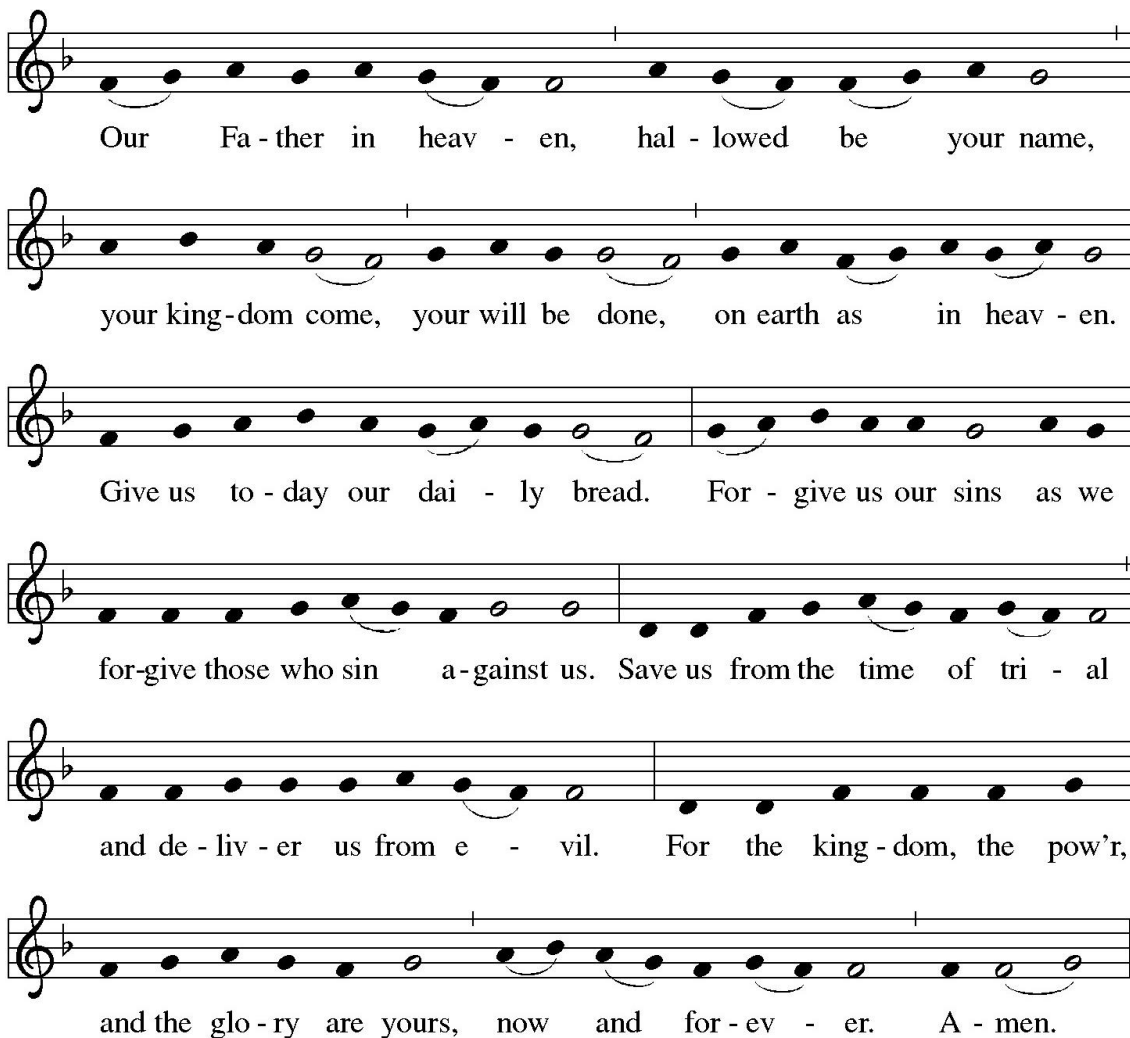
In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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.

*Presiding minister sings:*



*All sing:*



## THE COMMUNION

*All are welcome to receive the bread and the wine. Gluten free wafers are available on request. Both wine and grape juice are available in each tray; the wine is red and the grape juice is white.*

*Come forward in the center aisle starting at the front of the church. The pastors will motion the first people forward.*

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. A - men.

# COMMUNION HYMN

Lord Jesus, Think On Me

ELW 599

1 Lord Je - sus, think on me, and purge a - way my sin;  
 2 Lord Je - sus, think on me, by anx - ious thoughts op - pressed;  
 3 Lord Je - sus, think on me, nor let me go a - stray;  
 4 Lord Je - sus, think on me, that, when the flood is past,  
 from self - ish pas - sions set me free and make me pure with - in.  
 let me your lov - ing ser - vant be and taste your prom - ised rest.  
 through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty point out your cho - sen way.  
 I may the e - ter - nal bright - ness see and share your joy at last.

Text: Synesius of Cyrene, 375–430; tr. Allen W. Chatfield, 1808–1896, alt.  
 Music: SOUTHWELL, W. Daman, *The Psalmes of David*, 1579, alt.



### \*TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

### \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.  
**Amen.**

## SENDING

### \*BLESSING

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.  
**Amen.**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*SENDING HYMN

"Chief of Sinners, Though I Be"

ELW 609



1 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Je - sus shed his blood for me,  
2 Oh, the height of Je - sus' love! High - er than the heav'ns a - bove,  
3 On - ly Je - sus can im - part balm to heal the wound - ed heart,  
4 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Christ is all in all to me;  
5 O my Sav - ior, help af - ford by your Spir - it and your word!



died that I might live on high, lives that I might nev - er die.  
deep - er than the depths of sea, last - ing as e - ter - ni - ty.  
peace that flows from sin for - giv'n, joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,  
all my wants to him are known, all my sor - rows are his own.  
When my way - ward heart would stray, keep me in the nar - row way;



As the branch is to the vine, I am his, and he is mine.  
Love that found me—won-drous thought—found me when I sought him not.  
faith and hope to walk with God in the way that E - noch trod.  
He sus-tains the hid-den life safe with him from earth-ly strife.  
grace in time of need sup-ply while I live and when I die.

Text: William McComb, 1793–1870

Music: GETHSEMANE, Richard Redhead, 1820–1901

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

Chief of Sinners, Though I Be

Emily Maxson Porter

*Chris Porter, guest musician*

## --- ANNOUNCEMENTS *and* UPCOMING HAPPENINGS at **SAINT PAUL** ---

### **HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER AND SOUP SUPPERS | Wednesdays in Lent**

Beginning on February 25, we gather for midweek Lenten prayer on five successive Wednesdays. At 6PM, we share a simple meal of soup and conversation. We are happy to provide a meal, but this is not a potluck dinner. However, if you wish to contribute something, please remember some people are abstaining from certain things. Things like a small veggie platter, hummus, a jug of cider, or bread would be great.

At 7PM, we sing Holden Evening Prayer in the sanctuary.

During these services, we will consider portions of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and comments on the Sermon by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book *Discipleship*.

### **MUSIC WITH FRIENDS CONCERT | Saturday, March 7, 2026 at 5 pm.**

Featuring a varied program of music by J.S. Bach, Igor Stravinsky, Vaughan Williams, and others performed by Charles Blandy (tenor), Joan Ellersick (viola) and Tom Berryman (piano). This benefit concert is free and open to all. Attendees will be invited to support *Lamplight Women's Literacy*, [www.lamplightliteracy.org](http://www.lamplightliteracy.org), a nonprofit organization that provides educational and workforce development programs to low-income immigrant workers seeking to advance their career goals.

## ARLINGTON EATS | February needs

The first school vacation lunch distribution of the year will occur in February so many of our February requests will support that program. Anything that comes in after this distribution can be used for April school vacation. February Spotlight Items:

- Granola bars (especially MadeGood, Kind Bars)
- Snack packs (especially Goldfish, Pirate's Booty)
- Boxed mac n cheese (Kraft, Goodles)
- Baked beans
- Coconut milk
- Soy sauce
- Dish soap
- Baby wipes

## ST. PAUL BIBLE STUDY | Thursday Evenings, 7-8pm by Zoom

All are invited to join our bible study! We will gather on Thursday evenings on Zoom from 7-8pm. Each week, we will study the upcoming Sunday's lectionary texts, which are the bible readings we hear in worship. To access the readings and Zoom link, please see St. Paul's Weekly Update email. If you are not a subscriber, you can sign up on our website or email Pastor Larsen for the Bible Study Zoom link <stpaularlington.interim.pastor@gmail.com>.

## SPRING POTLUCK EVENTS

The Community meals that we have been sharing have been really lovely, and we want to make sure that everyone can mark their calendars for our upcoming times.

<b>March 7:</b>	5:00-6:00	Musical Performance
	6:00	Community Potluck dinner in Fellowship Hall
<b>April 11:</b>	6:00	Community Potluck
<b>May 2:</b>	6:00	Community Potluck

## THE COMING WEEK and BEYOND AT ST. PAUL

Thursday, February 19	7:30pm	Bible study on zoom
Sunday, February 22	8:15am & 10:30am	Service of Holy Communion
	9:00am	Choir practice
	9:30am	All educational ministries
	11:30am	Coffee Hour
Wednesday, February 25	6:00pm	Communal Soup Supper – Fellowship Hall
	7:00pm	Holden Evening Prayer Sung Service



# SAINT PAUL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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