

st. Paul Lutheran Church

9:30a Service of Worship Pastor ~ Reverend Ashley Nicolls

Fourth Sunday in Lent | March 30, 2025

May God's grace continue to overflow to and through you.



Assisting In Worship

Assisting Minister Irene Felicetti

> **Reader** Rick Barry

Acolyte Kellen Masse

Sound Mike Scherr Rick Barry

Camera Operator Ron Zimmerman

Screen Operator Kendall Riley

> Ushers Jan Kruse & Sue Barry

Greeter Hank Roberts Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church!

We hope you will use this bulletin during the week to have a song to sing, prayers to pray and give comfort, whether you are worshipping in person or from home on your electronic devices.

Although not all of us are physically together to worship, our Lord is still with us. We give thanks for those who attend in-person and the technology that allows us to share the bulletin and the worship service on the website.

St. Paul has a Community Prayer Cross located outside near the road. You are welcome to leave a prayer request there or in the box when you enter, and it will be placed on the cross.

Important community ministries of St. Paul include the Tuesday Community Meal, Saturday Food Pantry, and the Early Childhood Learning Center. Your financial gift makes a difference for Christ and His kingdom and enables St. Paul to be *the community church that cares*. It can be made by online giving, on Sunday morning, mailed to the church, or dropped off during normal office hours - Monday-Friday • 9a-12noon.

May God bless you and give you peace!

welcome and Announcements

Prelude

"Panis Angelicus" – César Franck – Fonda Davies

Confession & Forgiveness

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, \pm one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. *Response:* Amen.

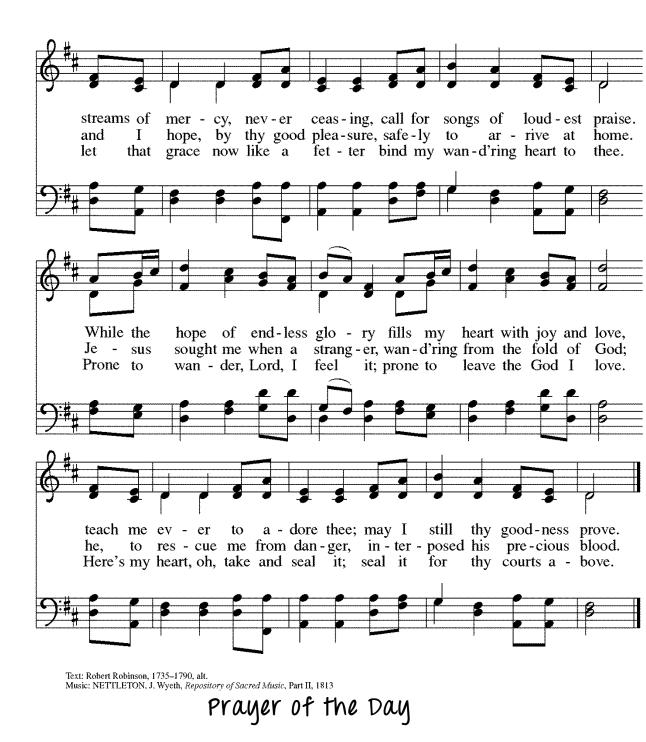
Pastor: Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love. *(pause for self-reflection)*

Pastor: Compassionate One,

Response: you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.

Pastor: Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In + Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever. *Response:* Amen.





Pastor: God of compassion,

Response: you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Ministry in Music

"Amazing Grace/My Chains are Gone" – Newton/Tomlin/Giglio - The St Paul Singers

Children's Message

Scripture ~ Joshua 5:9-12

By celebrating the Passover and eating the produce of the promised land instead of the miraculous manna that had sustained them in the desert, the Israelites symbolically bring their forty years of wilderness wandering to an end at Gilgal.

⁹ The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. ¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

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

Scripture ~ Psalm 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

² Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in

the heat of summer.

⁵ 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.

⁶ Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.

⁹ 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."

¹⁰ Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Scripture ~ 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

One way to describe the gospel is the promise that in Christ everything is transformed into newness. All mistakes, all deliberate sins, all old history is reconciled with Christ's resurrection. This is Paul's strong message to the congregation in the city of Corinth.

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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

GOSPEI ~ Luke 15:1-3; 11b-32

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 15th chapter.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable: ^{11b} "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."'

²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

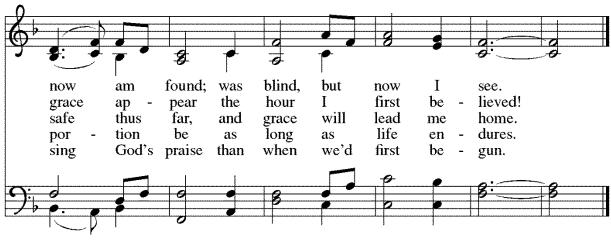
²⁵ "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I

have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' ³¹ Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord. *Response*: Praise to you, O Christ

Hymn of the Day ~ Amazing Grace ing grace! how sweet the sound----that maz 'Twas fear. 2 that taught heart to and grace my toils. 3 Through man dan gers, and snares T v 4 The Lord has prom ised good to me: his bright 5 When we've been there thou sand ten --years, wretch like me! I lost, saved a once was but grace my fears re lieved; how pre cious did that have al 'tis brought me read -У come; grace has shield word my hope se he will my and cures; shin - ing we've the no less days as sun, to

Sermon ~ Rev. Ashley Nicolls



Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt., sts. 1–4; anonymous, st. 5 Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1851–1921, alt.

Apostles' Creed

Assisting Minister: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith with the Apostles' Creed.

Response: 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 the Church

Assisting Minister: Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

(pause for silence)

Assisting Minister: God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ.

Response: As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love.

Assisting Minister: God in your mercy, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth.

Response: Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life.

Assisting Minister: God in your mercy, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family.

Response: Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all.

Assisting Minister: God in your mercy, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of boundless love, receive with open arms any in need of compassion.

Response: Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness.

Assisting Minister: Be especially with those we name now aloud or in our hearts. (pause) Assisting Minister: God in your mercy, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded.

Response: Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all.

Assisting Minister: God in your mercy, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died.

Response: We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found.

Assisting Minister: God in your mercy, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. *Response:* Amen.

The Peace

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always. *Response:* And also with you.

offering

(The collection plates will be brought forward at this time. Offering plates can still be found at the back of the sanctuary if you did not place your offering in the plates when you entered. Online giving at <u>www.stpaulsarasota.org</u> is also available.)

Offering Prayer

Assisting Minister: Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. *Response:* Amen.

spiritual Communion Prayer

Pastor: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in this most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Holy Communion

Pastor: Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

(Those who want to partake of Christ's body and blood in their in their seats may lift up their elements at this time).

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. With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith: *Response:* Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Lord's Prayer

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your love and teach us to pray.

Response: 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

Pastor: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: Those who wish to remain at their seats to partake of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine/grape juice may do so now. The body and blood of Christ is given and shed for you. Take and eat. Take and drink. If you wish to come to the altar, you may do so at the ushers' direction.

Post Communion Blessing

Pastor: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace now and forever. *Response*: Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Assisting Minister: Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Response:* Amen.

Blessing

Pastor: God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, $\,\pm\,$ bless you now and forever.

Response: Amen.





Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847–1909 Music: THOMPSON, Will L. Thompson

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Children: And all God's children say, *Response:* Amen.

Postlude

"Processional on 'Praise to the Lord, the Almighty'" - Martin Shaw - Fonda Davies

Coffee 4 Social Hour is held in the Fellowship Hall after Worship.

Attendance for last Sunday morning: in-person; 172 views on line (3/24/25).

st. Paul Mission Statement

As a Holy Spirit-led family of God, we are called through baptism to proclaim and bear witness to God's reconciling grace in Jesus Christ to all so that by joyfully sharing God's Word and encouraging each other to service for the sake of others, our lives together make a difference for Christ and His kingdom.

Annovncements

Mid-Week Lent Soup Suppers and Worship Wednesdays April 2, and 9. Soup at 6p with worship at 7p. Worship focuses on our stained glass windows.

Nehemiah Action – Come out for justice on March 31, 2025 at 6:30p at Faith Lutheran.

Holy Week Schedule -

Saturday, April 12 at 10:30a, fill Easter eggs for the Kid's Celebration Palm Sunday, April 13, processional begins in the narthex; paint rocks after worship Maundy Thursday worship at 7p; Good Friday Pilgrim Walk Downtown Meet at Regal Hollywood 11 at 7a; Good Friday worship at 7p;

Saturday, Easter Kid's Celebration 1:30-3:30

Easter Sunday April 20 worship with butterfly release after. Bring in flowers for the living cross.

ECLC Art Show Fundraiser – Thursday, April 24 6:30-7:30p. Come out and see the children's art work, bid on silent auction items, 50/50 drawing, raffle for a vacation, all proceeds go to the ECLC. If you want to provide a silent auction item (gift cards or themed basket), please see PrAshley.

Symphony Salvage – Start collecting your gently used items (everything is collected except large furniture and large appliances). St. Paul has an on-going donation bin and collection for the organization who gives the items to non-profits in the Sarasota area and any unused items then go to Central America. St. Paul and the ECLC will receive money for the donations collected.

Please remember in your prayers...

All those serving in the U.S. Military, especially Gage Fournier. The homeless in our neighborhood, our city, our nation and the world. The Florida-Bahamas Synod Office of the Bishop Staff: Bishop Pedro, Assisting Ministers to the Bishop Pastors Carlos, Derek, Nicole, and Rob, Specialists Kim, Bill, & Brittney, Support Staff Tina, Yuliet, & Ileana. The Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. SURE – Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity. Community Meal and Food Pantry guests. Prayers upon the HOPE Community Prayer Cross. The Arlington Park Neighborhood.

St. Paul members, especially, Esther and Mark Smith and Jayvion Robinson, Betty Smowton, Kathie Snyder, and Sandy Tull St. Paul Early Childhood Learning center teachers and students, especially Hannah, Mark, Capri, Ms. Jamie and Ms. Miranda

St. Paul Early Childhood Learning center teachers and students, especially Hannah, Mark, Capri, Ms. Jamie and Ms. Miranda		
Members	Lori Boller – daughter-in-law of Dorothy	David McCall – brother of J. Roberts
Rick Barry	Boller	Marsha McKinney- former member
Beetle/O'Hara Family	Sheryl Brandes – sister-in-law of Sue	Becky Nobles – friend of Lindy
Dorothy Boller	Scherr	Lindemann
Susan Burmaster	John Broad – friend of H. Puckhaber	Linda and Jim Norris – family of
Judy Carnal	Kim Brown – niece of Hildreths	Doris Schlotterback
Sue Fisher	Buete and Pearson family- family of	Karen Paulsson – sister of J. Paulsson
Valerie Nicolls	Brian McCulley	Manny Ribas – friend of Cindy
James Paulsson	Caroline Burmaster – sister-in-law of	Schlotterback
Esther Smith	Susan Burmaster	Clint Shantz – former member
Betty Smowton	Todd Couch – son of Sandy Choquette	Brian, Kenny, & Tommy
Homebound Members	Mike Cunningham- friend of H. Roberts	Schlotterback—sons of Doris
Donna Casala	Rachel Dolgan – friend of H.	Schlotterback
Evelyn Gulliksen	Puckhaber	Haley Schlotterback – granddaughter-
Lindy Lindemann	David Eller – friend of Carolyn Mele	in-law of Doris Schlotterback.
Anna Mathisen	John and Joy Emanuelli – friends of	Bethany Smith – daughter of B&B
Virginia McQuaig	Roberts	Smith
John Miller	Gladys Faraone – friend of H. Roberts	Natalie Smowton Boxx – great-
Michael Reiter	John Foor – friends of Ryans	granddaughter of Betty Smowton
Carole Wilson	Susan Gallagher – daughter of Dorothy	Noel Scott Studenwalt – nephew of
Friends and Family	Boller	B&B Smith
Alice – friend of JoAnn Jordan	Gallagher Family – in-laws of Dorothy	Bill Sweeney – grandson of Marilyn
Bill – friend of Jan Kruse	Boller	and George Hutfilz
Debbie – friend of Scherrs	Glenn Greenwood – friend of Hildreths	Swisher Family – family of Kathie
Ed – friend of Sandy Choquette	Vickie Hall – sister of Fonda Davies	Snyder
Donnie – community meal guest	Lois Heisler – family of Irene Felicetti	Bill & Jean Thompson – sister and
Gina – friend of Jan Kruse	Niklaus Heisler – great-grandson of	brother-in-law of Dorothy Boller
Mark – friend of M & D Hillerich	Irene Felicetti	Dan Torrence – friend of K. Snyder
Rick – nephew of Linda Knight	Katy Hernandev – niece of M. Acevedo	David Van Ness – brother of Missy
Susan – friend of C. Paxton	Kara Johnson – friend of Amy Hildreth	Craig
Tunde – friend of Irene Felicetti	Nicole Ketler – friend of Susan	Elaine & Mark Vanderweight- friends of
Marie – friend of C. Paxton	Burmaster Dhilia Kaarlaa, friandaf Isaa Faliaatti	Jim Paulsson
Sandi Acevedo – sister-in-law of	Philip Koepke – friend of Irene Felicetti	Curtis Weckwerth – cousin of Rich
Acevedo	Kate Kretschmann- family of Lindy Lindemann	Weckwerth
Clinton Allen – friend of Jim Paulsson		John and Janet Welther – family of
Laura Anderson – niece of Roberts	Karen Kugler – friend of Marty Hillerich	Ethel Hamilton
	Kenny Manselle—son of June Manselle	
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St. Paul Lutheran Church

and Early Childhood Learning Center

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Florida-Bahamas Synod, established 1955 2256 Bahia Vista Street, Sarasota, Florida 34239 Phone: 941.955.6479 Fax: 941.955.8600 ECLC Phone: 941.955.6480 Website: www.StPaulSarasota.org

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Executive Committee JoAnn Jordan, President Judy Roberts, Vice President George Hutfilz, Treasurer Irene Felicetti, Secretary Congregation Council

Irene Felicetti Lori Fountain-Guillaume Amy Hildreth JoAnn Jordan Bob Lariviere Pr. Ashley Nicolls Nancy Parmakian Judy Roberts Mike Scherr Esther Smith Alexandra Wise







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