

# ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

701 S. College Avenue, Newark, Delaware 19713

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*Growing in faith. Growing in community. Welcoming all in Jesus' name.*

**FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT**

**March 9, 2025**

**10 AM Service of**

**Holy Communion**



Even in the desert, Jesus expands our definitions of a full life. It's not the life the Tempter presents: a life defined by excess power, control, or reign. Excess is not abundance, but there is more. There is a fuller life we are called to live. Even in the midst of struggle, oppressive forces, hardship, and grief – God's promises spill over, like the bounty of the first fruits from the ground. Even in the desert, you are called to the riverside to be washed by grace.

**Hearing assist devices are available in the narthex.**

**If you need any other help with worship, please speak with an usher at the doors to the sanctuary.**

## **WE WELCOME WORSHIPPERS OF ALL AGES**

We hope that our young people experience God in our gathering together. Families are welcome to use the Prayground in the rear corner of the sanctuary if you want more space, and to use the Prayground in the narthex if you need a break from the activities in the sanctuary. Most of all, know that the joyful noise of young people in our worship is welcome!

## ✠ GATHERING ✠

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

*Upon entering the sanctuary, the people pray silently or engage in quiet meditation allowing the music to focus their attention on God and God's kingdom.*

### PRELUDE

"Slane"

arr. Peter Mathews

Anne Sullivan, harp & Mike Bareham, organ

### WELCOME

*Please stand, as you are able, and turn to face the font.*

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus went to the mountaintop to pray.

**Jesus went into the city to heal.**

Jesus walked to Samaria to extend love.

**Jesus went to the water's edge to teach.**

Jesus went to places of peace and connection,

**but Jesus also went to the wilderness.**

There is nowhere we can go that God does not walk with us.

**We are in God's house.**

**Let us worship Holy God.**

### PROCESSIONAL HYMN

**Bless Now, O God, the Journey**

ELW 326

*The assembly turns forward as the processional cross passes them.*

1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,  
2 Bless so - journ - ers and pil - grims who share this wind - ing way;  
3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.

the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.  
 your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus-tains the day.  
 We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,

The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun-tain round,  
 We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;  
 but wait-ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.

then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.  
 to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.  
 Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993  
 Music: LLANGLOFFAN, Welsh tune, 19th cent.  
 Text © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.  
 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Friends, we worship a God who doesn't keep score and doesn't hold grudges. We worship a God who invites us into a richer faith, a deeper love, a more compassionate existence with a million chances to try again. So, we speak truth into our lives, asking for God's help where we need it. Let us pray the prayer of confession together.

*Silence for reflection.*

Holy God, when we think that expansive life is about power –

**Teach us a new way.**

Gracious Creator, when we think that expansive life is about material wealth –

**Teach us a new way.**

Gracious Author, when we think that expansive life is about control –

**Teach us a new way.**

Teach us to live as you live.

**Teach us to love as you love.**

Forgive us when we don't.

**Gratefully we pray. Amen.**

Siblings in Christ, no matter how many times we mess up, no matter how far we wander, no matter how lost we feel, God's grace is full to the brim. It overflows in desert places. It finds us where we are and it covers us in mercy. Hear and believe this good news –

**God's love is overflowing. We are drenched in mercy.**

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

Let us pray.

God of the wilderness places in our lives, it can be hard to hear you in the desert. It can be hard to hear you in the city, in the midst of our calendar reminders, rush-hour traffic, and notification alerts. It can be hard to hear you, so we ask: make everything quiet. Pause the chaos. Still the rushing. Ease our racing thoughts. Give us ears to hear your Word for us today which promises that even

in the desert you are full to the brim. We are listening. We ache for your good news. Gratefully we pray.

**Amen.**

**✠ WORD ✠**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**FIRST READING**

**Deuteronomy 26:1-11**

*The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.*

A reading from Deuteronomy:

<sup>1</sup>When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, <sup>2</sup>you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as the place where the name of God dwells. <sup>3</sup>You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us." <sup>4</sup>When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, <sup>5</sup>you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there became a great nation, mighty and populous. <sup>6</sup>When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, <sup>7</sup>we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. <sup>8</sup>The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; <sup>9</sup>and the LORD brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup>So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. <sup>11</sup>Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 91:1-2, 9-16**

*Sung by the congregation in unison to Psalm Tone 6*



- <sup>1</sup> You who dwell in the shelter of | the Most High,  
who abide in the shadow of | the Almighty –
- <sup>2</sup> you will say to the Lord, “My refuge | and my stronghold,  
my God in whom I | put my trust.”
- <sup>9</sup> Because you have made the | Lord your refuge,  
and the Most High your | habitation,
- <sup>10</sup> no evil | will befall you,  
nor shall affliction come | near your dwelling.
- <sup>11</sup> For God will give the angels charge | over you,  
to guard you in | all your ways.
- <sup>12</sup> Upon their hands they will | bear you up,  
lest you strike your foot a- | gainst a stone.
- <sup>13</sup> You will tread upon the lion | cub and viper;  
you will trample down the lion | and the serpent.
- <sup>14</sup> I will deliver those who | cling to me;  
I will uphold them, because they | know my name.
- <sup>15</sup> They will call me, and I will | answer them;  
I will be with them in trouble; I will rescue and | honor them.
- <sup>16</sup> With long life will I | satisfy them,  
and show them | my salvation.

**SECOND READING**

**Romans 10:8b-13**

*If you confess that Jesus is Lord, you will be saved.*

A reading from Romans.

<sup>8b</sup> “The word is near you,  
on your lips and in your heart”  
(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); <sup>9</sup> because if you confess with your  
lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the

dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. <sup>11</sup> The scripture says, "No one who believes in the Lord will be put to shame." <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who ask for help. <sup>13</sup> For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

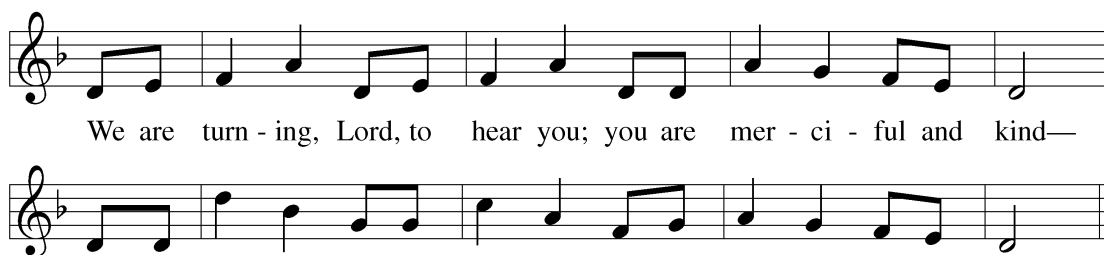
Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand, as you are able.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW Setting 10



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind—  
slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

## HOLY GOSPEL

### Luke 4:1-13

*The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days*

The Gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

<sup>3</sup> The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered the devil, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil led Jesus up and showed him in an instant all the dominions of the world. <sup>6</sup> And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please.

<sup>7</sup> If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." <sup>8</sup> Jesus answered the devil, "It

is written, 'Worship the Lord your God; the Lord alone shall you serve.'"

<sup>9</sup> Then the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, <sup>10</sup> for it is written,

'God will command his angels concerning you,  
to protect you,'

<sup>11</sup> and

'On their hands they will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

<sup>12</sup> Jesus answered the devil, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"<sup>13</sup> Having finished every test, the devil departed from Jesus until an opportune time.

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

*Be seated.*

**SERMON**

Pastor Cris Frigm

*Please stand, as you are able.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**Led by the Spirit to Desert Unknown**

CBM 88



1 Led by the Spir - it to des - ert un - known:  
2 Gath - ered by God in the wil - der - ness night:  
3 Called by the Christ in a dry, wea - ry land:  
4 Sought by God's love when we wan - der a - stray:  
5 Drawn by God's word to be - hold a new thing:



steep is the path - way and brit - tle the stone;  
ter - ror may threat - en and dark - ness af - fright;  
bar - ren, we thirst, for the riv - ers are sand;  
was - ting and wan - ton and los - ing our way;  
life from the stone—in the des - ert, a spring;





you, God, our ref - uge, your an - gels our guard:  
you, God, our shel - ter, our prom - ise you are,  
you, God, our source and the foun - tain of life:  
you, God, our wel - come, the wake - ful con - cern,  
you, God, our riv - er, our spring-time, our way,



oh, save us from fall - ing till dan - gers de - part.  
and what seems deep shad - ow may shine out with stars.  
oh, wa - ter us well to bear fruit of de - light.  
with robe and with ban - quet a - wait our re - turn.  
with Christ and the Spir - it bring forth a new day.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien  
Music: SLANE, Irish traditional  
Text © 2004 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe God is love.

**We believe God's love is overflowing.**

We believe Jesus is a river.

**We believe that river is running toward us.**

We believe the Holy Spirit is a vessel.

**We believe that vessel holds mercy for you and for me.**

We believe the wilderness is real.

**We believe the desert is lonely.**

We believe that Jesus has been there.

**We know that we do not walk alone.**

Even in the desert,

**we are loved.**

Even in the desert,

**God is with us.**

Even in the desert,

**this love overflows.**

Thanks be to God.

**Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

*A brief silence.*

Gracious God, speak your word anew among your church. Strengthen it to withstand the temptation to turn inward in fear or complacency. Embolden church institutions to turn from self-preservation toward the self-giving love of Jesus. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Mothering God, speak the word of life into wilderness places and fertile fields. Grant wisdom to your people, that we may quell the urge to strip lands of their resources and instead preserve first fruits for future generations. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Almighty God, speak a word of wisdom to people in positions of power: mayors, councils, and tribal leaders, legislators, judges and juries, presidents, and monarchs. Help them discern your voice and follow your guidance, resisting the temptations of the evil one. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Steadfast God, speak words of courage to your people in the wilderness. Protect migrants and refugees on perilous journeys, that they find safe refuge and a portion in the bounty you have given humanity to share. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Loving God, speak gently to all who are alone. Bless lay ministers, home communion teams, and others who attend to those who are overlooked, vulnerable, or lonely, that all find belonging in your love. We pray for all who are ill, especially Dominic, Sloane, Gretchen, Kylee, Trudy, Jameson, Claude, Ricardo, Karen, Silas, Marie, Susan, Michael, JoEllen, Elizabeth, Melissa, and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts...*(brief silence)*. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Bountiful God, deepen our faith and that of our partners in ministry, especially St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Wilmington and Grace of God Lutheran Church in Millsboro, so that we may resist temptation and, in the midst of trial, proclaim

that Jesus Christ is Lord, now and forever. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Living God, we give thanks for all the faithful who have crossed the threshold from death to eternal life, especially Jim, Bill, Loretta, Betty, and Joan. Guide us who are living to learn from their wisdom and follow their example. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

*The presiding minister concludes the prayers.*

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.

**Amen.**

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The assembly exchanges Christ's peace  
in word and gesture, saying, **Peace be with you.***

*Be seated.*

## ✠ MEAL ✠

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## GATHERING OF GIFTS

We offer our gifts for service and mission.

*At this time, please sign the Fellowship Pad (the black folder) found at the end of your pew and pass it to your neighbor and back again. We ask **visitors** to provide us with contact information so we can thank you for enriching our worship experience. We ask **members** to update any changes to their information so records are maintained.*

## ANTHEM

“Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”

arr. Shackley

Sanctuary Choir  
Ted Hendricks, solo  
Jared Sharpe, clarinet

*Please stand and sing as the gifts are presented and the table is set.*

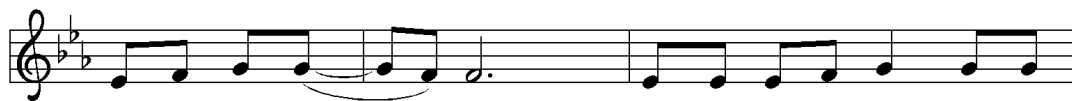
## OFFERTORY

## Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

ELW 185



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 to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me



with your free Spir - it. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God,



and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.

Music: *Liturgy of Joy*, James M. Capers, b. 1948  
Music © 1993 Augsburg Fortress.

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

God who knows us, we are amazed by you.  
Your love never runs out, your hope never runs dry, your joy never gives up.  
We wish that we could be more like you in that way.  
In a world that loves scarcity, your abundance is shocking.  
In a world that knows fear, your joy is compelling.  
In a world that knows anxiety, your peace is captivating.  
We long for these things.

So today we ask you—be with us on the hamster wheel.

**Be with us when compassion fatigue rears her head.**

Be with us when stress makes it hard to breathe.

**Be with us when self-doubt pushes in close.**

Be with us when exhaustion becomes constant  
or when loneliness becomes our primary language.

**Be with us and show us the way to the life you long for us.**

Be with us as we remember the night in which 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.

Show us a life of expansive faith.

**Show us a life of overflowing joy.**

Show us a life of absorbing beauty.

**Show us a life of engrossing purpose.**

Show us a life that is as honest, and rich, and meaningful as the one Jesus led.  
And until that expansive and holy day, we will continue to gather at this Table.  
Until that day we will continue to look for you in our midst. So pour out a double portion of yourself onto this bread and cup so that we might catch a glimpse of your goodness. God, we are amazed by you. Your love never runs out, so bring that never-ending love here as together we pray...

**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 TABLE**

Jesus has always been one to invite, and that has not changed.  
So friends, you are invited to this Table.  
**Each and every one of us – with our doubts, our fears, our scars, our joy,  
our dreams, our hopes, our questions – we are invited to God’s table.**  
And here we will be met. Here we will be fed. Here we are given a taste of an  
expansive life that is full to the brim with love, overflowing with joy. So come.  
**Not because we must, but because we can.**  
Come. You are invited. This Table is for you.

## **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

Jesus, Lamb of God,  
**have mercy on us.**  
Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
**have mercy on us.**  
Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
**grant us peace.**

*Be seated.*

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

*In Christ’s body and blood given to us, God forgives us and nourishes us for mission.*

*All are welcome at the Lord’s Table. Children not yet communing are welcome to come forward for a blessing, indicated by crossed arms. If you would like to receive communion in your pew, please notify an usher.*

*Non-alcoholic grape juice and gluten-free communion wafers are available upon request.*



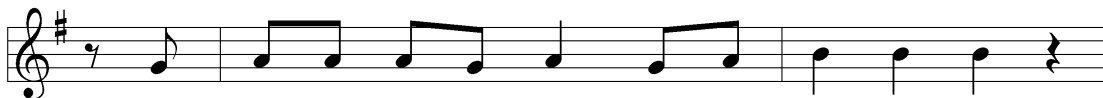
1 Driv - en by the Spir - it out in the wil - der - ness;  
 2 Tempt - ed by the dev - il out in the wil - der - ness;  
 3 An - gels all a - round you out in the wil - der - ness;  
 4 "You are my be - lov - ed" out in the wil - der - ness.



driv - en by the Spir - it out in the wil - der - ness;  
 tempt - ed by the dev - il out in the wil - der - ness;  
 an - gels all a - round you out in the wil - der - ness;  
 "You are my be - lov - ed" out in the wil - der - ness.



when the Spir - it says, "Go," you can't say, "No."  
 though you try to be strong, it's been so long.  
 you are far . . . from home where wild things roam.  
 When you were . . . bap - tized, you re - a - lized



You lis - ten for the voice when you're bend - ed low;  
 He whis - pers in your ear and you know he's wrong;  
 There's dan - ger ev - 'ry - where but you're not a - lone;  
 you'd heard the voice of God from the o - p'ning skies:



driv - en by the Spir - it out in the wil - der - ness.  
 tempt - ed by the dev - il out in the wil - der - ness.  
 an - gels all a - round you out in the wil - der - ness.  
 "You are my be - lov - ed" out in the wil - der - ness.

Text: Jay Beech  
 Music: OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, Jay Beech

Text and music © 1999 Jay Beech

# I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

ELW 325



1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;  
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;  
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



I want Je - sus to walk with me;  
in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;  
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,  
when my heart is al - most break - ing,  
when my head is bowed in sor - row,



Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.  
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.  
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: SOJOURNER, African American spiritual

*After all have communed and returned to their places,  
please remain seated.*





## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Strengthened by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and kept in his grace, we pray.

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.

**Amen.**

## ✠ SENDING ✠

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## LIFE OF THE CHURCH – ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please stand, as you are able.*

## BENEDICTION AND DISMISSAL

As you leave this place, may you be awestruck by the beauty of this world. May you laugh, and may it be contagious. May you overflow with love for those around you. May you be effusive with hope and quick to point out joy. And in all of your living, and breathing, and being, may you find yourself full to the brim with God's Holy Spirit, and may it change your life. In the name of the Lover, ✠ the Beloved, and Love itself – go in peace, full to the brim.

**Amen.**

## RECESSIONAL HYMN

## Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud

ACS 947

*Found on p. 18*

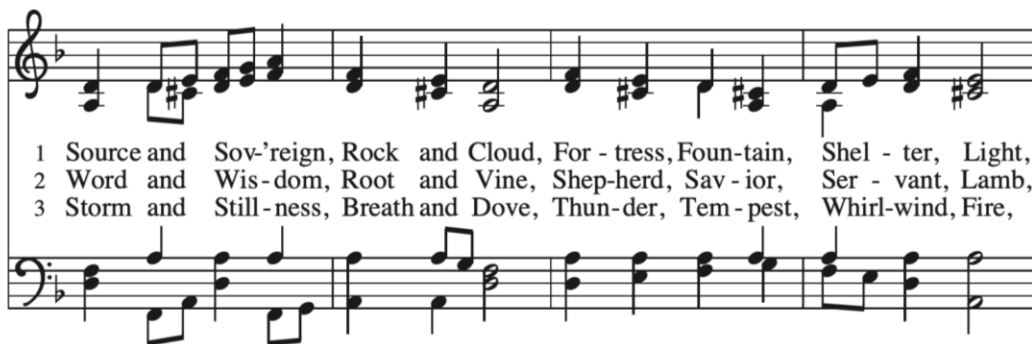
Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: ABERYSTWYTH, Joseph Parry, 1841–1903

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Postludes, a festive element of worship,  
will not be played during the season of Lent.

# Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud

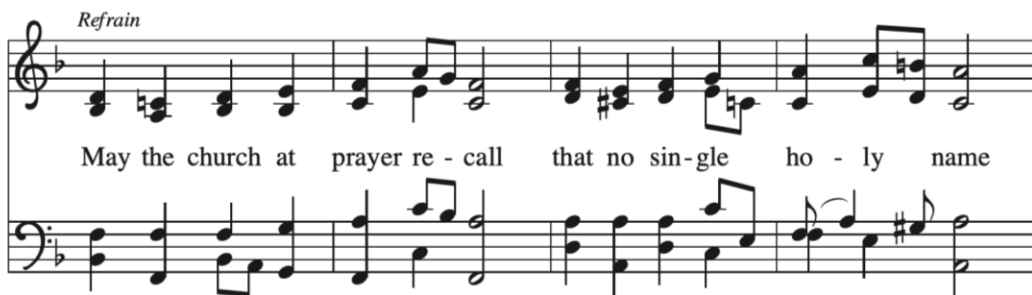


1 Source and Sov'-reign, Rock and Cloud, For - tress, Foun-tain, Shel - ter, Light,  
2 Word and Wis-dom, Root and Vine, Shep-herd, Sav - ior, Ser - vant, Lamb,  
3 Storm and Still-ness, Breath and Dove, Thun-der, Tem - pest, Whirl-wind, Fire,

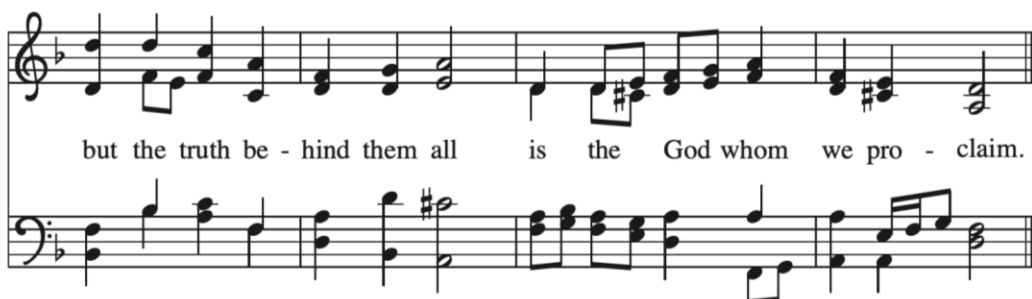


Judge, De - fend - er, Mer - cy, Might, Life whose life all life en-dowed:  
Well and Wa - ter, Bread and Wine, Way who leads us to I AM:  
Com - fort, Coun-s'lor, Pres - ence, Love, En - er - gies that nev - er tire:

*Refrain*



May the church at prayer re - call that no sin - gle ho - ly name



but the truth be - hind them all is the God whom we pro - claim.

## ASSISTING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Assisting Minister: Jeanine Heath  
Lector: Henry Chisholm  
Crucifer: Mark Deschere  
Bread Provider: Lynn Deschere  
Altar Guild: Cheri Simons

**There are no flowers in the chancel during the season of Lent. Instead let the décor remind you that God wants a life for you so expansive that faith, joy, and hope flow over the edges.**

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*Fill to the Brim: An Expansive Lent* worship resources written by The Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed  
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**Full  
to  
the  
Brim**

## SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

**March 16, 2025**

*Under God's wing*

God is our refuge. There is nothing that can separate you from God, or could keep God from gathering you in, protecting you fiercely. Jesus' lament for Jerusalem is surprising given how he is treated by Jerusalem. And yet, no matter how much we try to separate ourselves from God, God will run to protect us. God's love for us is fuller than we can imagine.

### **THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, March 23**

*You are worthy*

Like the fig tree, you are worthy. You're not a lost cause. You're not a waste of resources. You deserve to be nurtured. Your fruit will come. Like the gardener, you are invited to see others with audacious hope and budding potential. The lesson of the fig tree invites us to unpack the source of our worth in a system and society that often measures worthiness by commerce, production, output, success, status, achievement, ethnicity, and/or gender identity. We might ask, "Can the fig tree have worth even if it never produces any figs?" What does that mean for us if the answer is "yes"?

### **FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT, March 30**

*Prodigal grace*

The word "prodigal" is commonly used to describe the son who squanders his inheritance. Yet, this parable invites us to consider how God's grace is also prodigal – extravagant, lavish, illogical. This parable disrupts and expands our definitions of grace. Once again, grace is not earned. After wasting his resources, the younger son becomes destitute and returns home to his father, saying, "I am no longer worthy." His father, instead, greets him with a celebration and the fatted calf. The older son, in contrast, has done everything "right" – he's tried to perform, work hard, check all the boxes – but he forgets how to celebrate. How might you receive and extend prodigal grace?

### **FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT, April 6**

*Brazen acts of beauty*

God is brazen in turning tears into joy. Not so long after their brother, Lazarus, dies and is raised from the dead, Mary and Martha joyfully welcome Jesus into their home. Mary pours out the fragrant perfume (perhaps originally intended to anoint her brother's body after death) and it fills the whole room. This is a brazen act of beauty. Beauty is resistance to death; beauty is an act of love. Her anointing of Jesus' feet is also a public act of worship. Her faith does not hide; it is not frugal. It is embodied, broken open, and poured out. This isn't a frugal faith – it is an abundant, extravagant faith. Mary's act is also risky – she puts her full body into it, sort of like a protest. She exhibits a shameless and brazen faith.

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# ST. PAUL'S WEEKLY EPISTLE

## IMPORTANT NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 9, 2025

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### FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

These forty days called Lent are like no other. It is our opportune time to return to the God who rescues, to receive the gifts of God's grace, to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the wonder of God's love in Jesus, and to resist temptation at every turn. This is no small pilgrimage on which we have just embarked. It is a struggle Jesus knew. It is a struggle Jesus shares. The nearness of the Lord, in bread and wine, water and word, will uphold and sustain us.

### ADULT FORUM

Through the season of Lent, we will have a series of Adult Forums led by Pastor Cris. We'll focus on the Gospel readings with maybe a little bit of art thrown in as we explore our Lenten theme, "Full to the Brim." Join the conversation as we move beyond thinking of Lent as a season to "give something up" and more about how God fills our lives with what we need. We start at 8:30 AM on Sunday mornings in the Blue Room.

### BREWING THEOLOGY

For everyone 21 and older, please plan to join us on Wednesday, March 12, at 7 PM at the Delaware Saengerbund for a tasty beverage, some snacks, and some hearty conversation. Our topic for this month will be "Ethical Considerations in Healthcare Decisions".

### HOLY HIKE

Our next Holy Hike will be Sunday, March 23, as we hike the James Hall Trail, 15 Innovation Way, Newark. This flat, paved trail is 3.6 miles out and back. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Grund at [lgrund923@gmail.com](mailto:lgrund923@gmail.com) or Rudy Schock at [rschock324@gmail.com](mailto:rschock324@gmail.com).

## COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Please join us on Sunday, March 16, from 11:30 AM to 1 PM as we continue our series of Coffee and Conversation. This month's topics will include worship at St. Paul's, suggestions for website enhancements, and the need for enhanced technology. Any questions – please touch base with coordinator Linda Grund at lgrund923@gmail.com or 302-738-5491.

## BOOKS AND BANTER

St. Paul's avid readers meet the fourth Wednesday of each month at 1PM in the Youth Room. If you have a book that you would like to share with the group, please let us know. Please join us for conversation and fellowship.

Upcoming Books:

March 26	“Remarkably Bright Creatures” by Shelby Van Pelt
April 23	“Horse” by Geraldine Brooks

## SAINTLY SENIOR SPRING SPECIAL

Our support of our homebound members has been growing over the last few years thanks to your generous support and participation. We are currently maintaining an outreach to 18 seniors. On March 16, join us right after church as we put together some beautiful spring flowers in pretty vases to deliver to our seniors along with some yummy chocolates. We are also seeking **monetary contributions** to support this effort – please see Ellen Garrison with your check or cash donation. We are also looking for a few more **volunteers to visit** our seniors. Please let coordinator Linda Grund know if you are available to do so on March 16 or a day or two after that.

## MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY

*Thinking of You:* Have you noticed recently that a friend in our congregation hasn't been in church for a while? If so, please take a moment to send them a card to let them know you care. Cards and addresses are located on the table in the back of the narthex.

*Prayer Squares:* Do you know someone who could use a hug, comfort or love? Take a pocket prayer square from the basket in the rear of the narthex and deliver this reminder that God loves them and so do you!

## Q&A WITH PASTOR CRIS

If you haven't done so already, please sign up for a listening session with Pastor Cris. Sessions need 6-12 people to be successful. Remaining session sign-up sheets are on the table outside the fellowship hall. Sign up today!

### *From Here in the Sand*

Written by: Rev. Sarah Speed

You've been here before.  
I squeeze that truth like an orange in my hands,  
willing some form of comfort to run out,  
roll down my wrists,  
calm these aching nerves.

You've been here before –  
in the wilderness, in the desert,  
in the place where nothing is what it seems  
and everything is sharp.

You've been here before  
so surely you know how hard it is  
to hold tight to what is real  
in the middle of a storm.

But because you've been here before,  
I will stand tall.  
I will sing songs of the river,  
from here in the sand.  
I will sing songs of the river,  
into the wind.





# St. Paul's Lutheran Church Welcomes All in Jesus' Name

Phone/Fax: 302-368-0064 Website: [www.stpaulsnewarkde.org](http://www.stpaulsnewarkde.org)

*Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly, and serve joyfully.*



## The Reverend Cris Frigm

*Pastor*

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## Church Council

Anne Sullivan, *President*

Greg Johnson, *Vice President*

Heidi Burch, *Secretary*

Mary Collins, *Treasurer*

Kristine Cassar, Phillip Gerecke,

Winnie Hull, Ian Kenyon, Susie Olson

## St. Paul's Online Prayer Ministry

Send prayer requests to:

[prayonstpauls@gmail.com](mailto:prayonstpauls@gmail.com)

## Michael Bareham

*Director for Music and Worship*

302-368-0064 ext. 123

[music@stpaulsnewarkde.org](mailto:music@stpaulsnewarkde.org)

## Nalini Janaki

*Business Administrator*

302-368-0064 ext. 102

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## Vacant

*Early Education Director*

St. Paul's Lutheran School

302-368-0064 ext. 118

[stpaulschool@comcast.net](mailto:stpaulschool@comcast.net)

## Weekly Epistle/E-mail Blast

Articles due by Wednesday morning at

10 AM. Late submissions will be shared

the following week. Please send articles to

the church office at [office@stpaulsnewarkde.org](mailto:office@stpaulsnewarkde.org)

**WISH TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRIES  
OF ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH?  
THEN SCAN THIS QR CODE**

