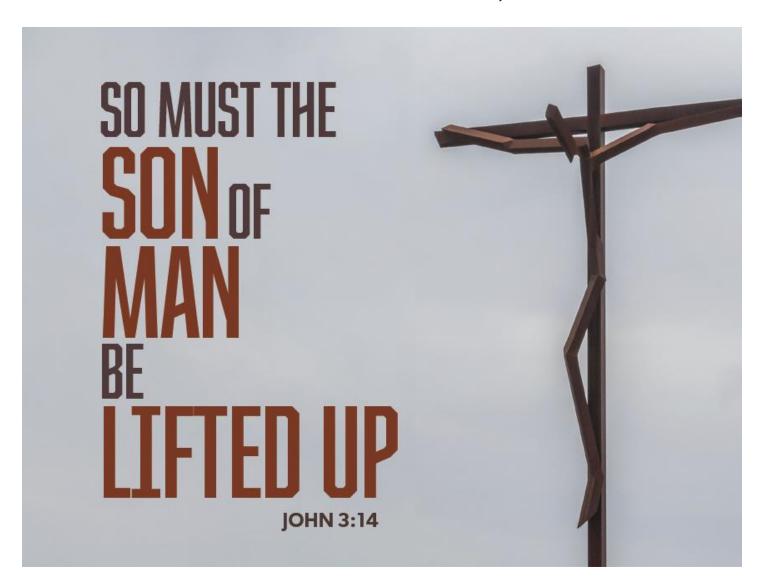
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church SUNDAY March 3rd, 2024



WELCONE,

to our Church Family.

We're Glad You're Here!

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

We are so glad that you chose to worship with us today. If you are visiting with us for the first time, please visit our Welcome Center in the North Narthex. As our way of saying thank you, you will receive a St. Paul's Welcome Bag with a coffee cup and information about our church. You may also want to download our new St. Paul's App and visit our website. Information on both is in the Welcome Bag.

For our young worshipers we have children's packets to play and color with during the service. These are on the white stand near the east entrance to our sanctuary.

You are welcome at the table!

If you have been baptized and believe Christ is present in the Eucharist (Holy Communion), you are welcome to join us at the table. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers and return to your seats using the side aisles. If you do not wish to partake in the Sacrament but would like to receive a blessing, please just cross your hands over your chest when you come forward.

Grape juice and Gluten-free wafers are available on request. Grape juice is in the colored glasses in the center of the communion tray. If you are not able to come forward and would like to receive communion, please inform an usher and the pastor will bring communion to you.

Altar Flowers

The **Altar Flowers** were given today by Barb Palmer, Liz & Brooke DuPlain in memory of Matthew DuPlain & Robert Haas' March birthdays.

Today's Worship Theme

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

Readings and Psalm

Numbers 21:4-9

The lifting up of the serpent

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

You deliver your people from their distress. (Ps. 107:19)

Ephesians 2:1-10

Saved by grace through faith for good works

John 3:14-21

The lifting up of the Son of Man

Church Carillon

Today's Hymns from The Tower The Westminster Strike Welcome and Announcements

PRELUDE L'homme armé Organ Mass: VI. Agnus Dei

Margaret Sandresky (b. 1921)

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, \pm one God, who writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus.

Amen.

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord.

Amen.

Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through + Jesus Christ.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

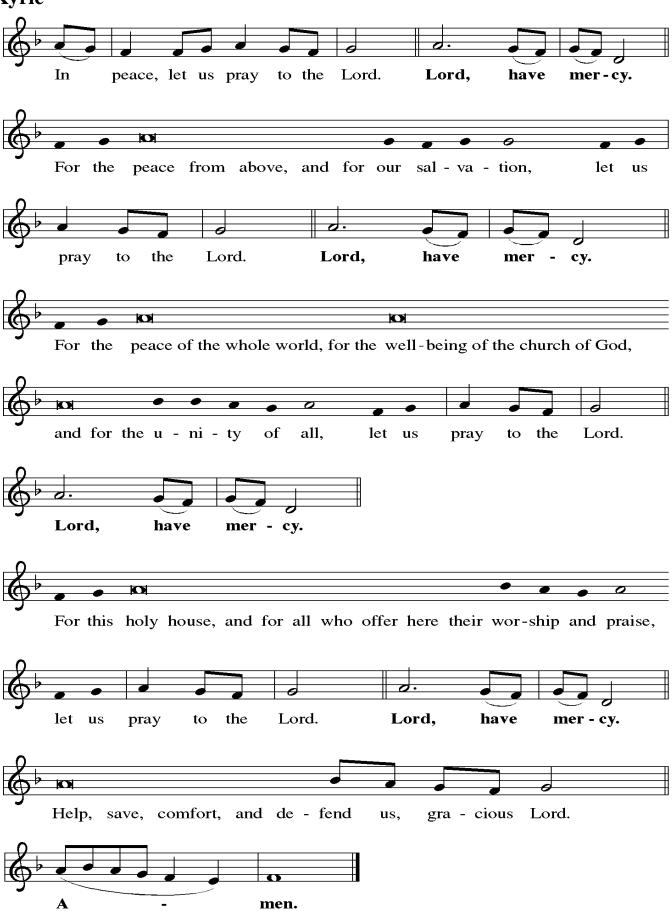
Give to God Our Immortal Praise ELW 848

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.





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect 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.

First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

⁴From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22



You de - li-ver your peo - ple from their dis-tress.

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the [|] LORD is good, for God's mercy en- [|] dures forever.

²Let the redeemed of the | LORD proclaim that God redeemed them from the hand | of the foe,

- ³gathering them in | from the lands; from the east and from the west, from the north and | from the south.
- ¹⁷Some were fools and took re- | bellious paths; through their sins they | were afflicted.
- ¹⁸They loathed all man- | ner of food and drew near | to death's door.
- ¹⁹Then in their trouble they cried | to the LORD and you delivered them from | their distress. R
- ²⁰You sent forth your | word and healed them and rescued them | from the grave.
- ²¹Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your | steadfast love and your wonderful works | for all people.
- ²²Let them offer sacrifices | of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with | shouts of joy. **R**

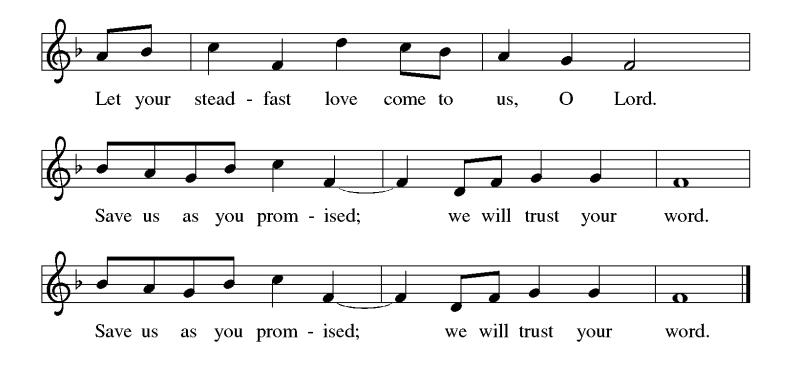
Second Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—6and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—9not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹oFor we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

The holy gospel according to John, the 3rd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴"Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

God Loved the World

ELW 323

NICENE CREED

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 INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

After each petition the following response is given:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

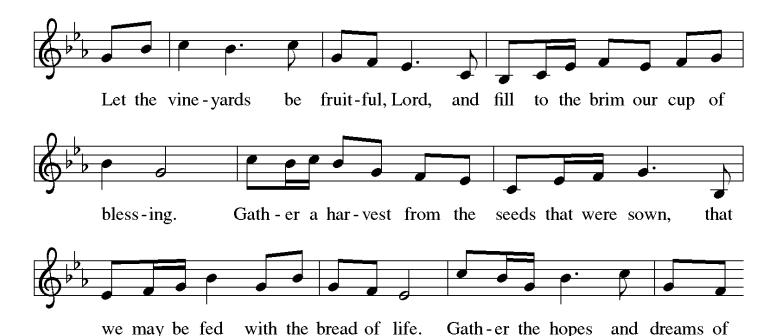
SHARING OF THE PEACE

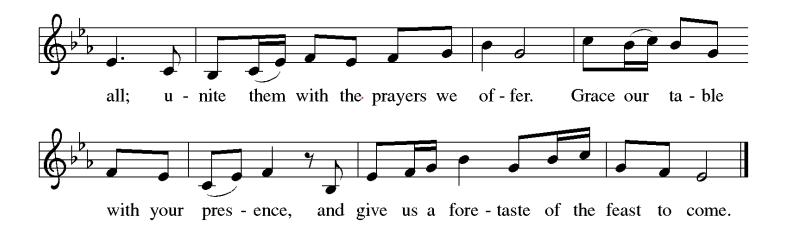
The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Offertory Anthem Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone Joseph M. Martin Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY





OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

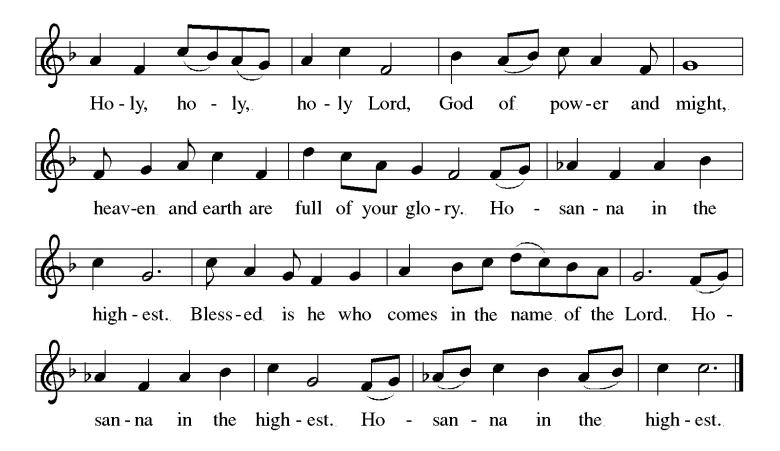
Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places.... 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:



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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 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 your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

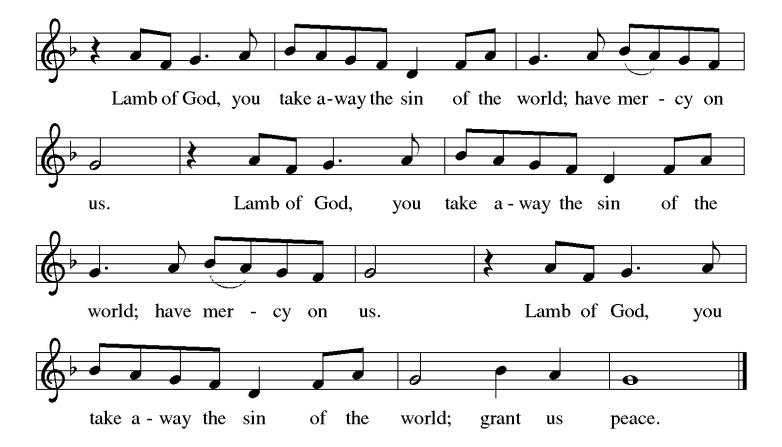
LORD'S PRAYER

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

Bread for the journey.

A feast for hungry hearts. Come!



COMMUNION HYMN For the Bread Which You Have Broken

ELW 494

COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Lift High the Cross

ELW 660

BLESSING

Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and + give you peace.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share your bread.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Andante in C minor

Alexandra Thomson (1867-1907)

In our prayers today we will remember

Errett Butler, Adam Sadler, Barb and Tom Hamilton, Paula Kritzer, Dave Paul, Eleanor Grunden, Lyn Delon-Fellonsteps, Mary Hardesty, Pat Adams, Linda Shaffer, Chris Collard, Chrissy Sturtz, and Carol Rohr, Mary Gainer, Adam Sadler, and Will Vandevander.

Music Notes

March is Women's History Month, and today's music features music performed and written by women!

The daughter of a gifted soprano and a well-known pianist, organist, and composer, Margaret Sandresky is the fourth generation of professional female musicians in her family. A graduate of Salem College (organ) and Eastman University (composition), with additional study under a Fulbright grant at the Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt, Germany, she has held teaching positions at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, the University of Texas at Austin, the North Carolina School of the Arts (where she established the organ department in 1965), and Salem College. She has held the position of organist at the Home Moravian Church, the First Baptist Church, and at Centenary United Methodist Church (all in Winston-Salem, NC). Her compositions include music for solo organ, music for mixed and unison chorus, piano music, harpsichord music, and music for small and large instrumental ensembles. She composed her L'homme armé Organ Mass, based on a fifteenth-century French secular tune that has been used as the basis for numerous mass settings, in 1979. The mass is somewhat conventional and traditional in its musical language, though there are symbolic episodes of extreme dissonance.

Little is known about the life of the British composer Alexandra Thomson. She studied music with Dr. John Naylor, the organist of York Minster and became an Associate of the Royal College of Music. A wife and mother, she also wrote articles about music and composed a small oeuvre of music for SATB voices and instruments. Her best-known work, Battle of the Baltic, for chorus and orchestra, was written in 1801.

Chancel Choir Practice, every Wednesday 7:00 pm

Bell Choir 6:00 pm

Handbell ensemble will rehearsal February 28, March 6, and 13 from 6:00-6:50 in preparation to play in worship on March 17. We need ringers to have an ensemble, so please consider making this short-term commitment to enrich worship through ringing!

Adult Sunday School Getting Ready for Easter

What is a spiritual discipline? During this series of lessons, we'll explore spiritual disciplines that help get us ready for Easter, for resurrection, including our own. What is the place in our daily Christian lives for such practices as meditation, fasting, simplicity, and submission? And is there joy is this preparation, these disciplines? The answer is a resounding *yes*! Please join us as we meet each Sunday for Bible study and fellowship at 11:30, top floor of Parish Hall. An elevator is available for easy access.

Capital Campaign Report

Phase One Projects	\$337,000
Funds raised	\$239,109
Interest	\$ 1,706
Building Fund	\$ 30,000
Remaining funds	\$ 66,185
to be raised	

Cathedral Concert Series



Hector Olivera, Organist Sunday, March 10th 5:00 pm

We are looking forward to our first concert of the year, on Sunday, March 10 at 5:00 PM, when Maestro Hector Olivera will join us in concert on our beautiful Schantz organ! We hope you will join us and invite your friends to join us too!

The University of Akron Choirs

March 17th 4:00 pm

Reflections of Reverence

Performing selections of *Handel's Messiah*, Vaughan Willian's *Five Mystical Songs*, Shaw's *To The Hands*, and more



Thursday Morning Bible Study: John: The Gospel of Light and Life by Adam Hamilton 10:00 am

This Lent, join Adam Hamilton and experience a season of spiritual growth and life-changing renewal while exploring the major themes of John. Along with Hamilton's comments, this book includes the entire text of the Gospel of John (CEB), divided into six parts for ease of reading and study. Topics are:

- 1. The Word Made Flesh
- 2. The Miraculous Signs of Jesus
- 3. The "I Am" Sayings of Jesus
- 4. The Farewell Discourse
- 5. The Arrest, Trial, and Crucifixion of the King
- 6. Eternal Life



We invite you to **study**, **pray**, **reflect** and **give** with us during ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving — for our families, our neighbors and communities around the world.

These 40 days are a season to reflect and remember, to look forward and ahead. These are not easy times for many of us. We know the challenges our world faces. Yet the season of Lent reminds us that God is not yet through with us or our world. Amid our own dependence on God, we know by faith that God is even now at work, drawing us toward the resurrection and restoration of the world.

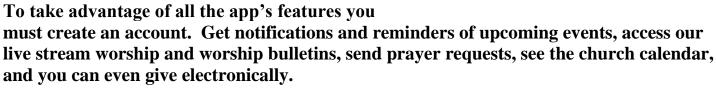
ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving invites us to be part of that work and to bear witness to it with partners, companions, friends and neighbors. Will you join us? Pick up your coin banks at the entrance to the sanctuary and return them on April 7th.

Download the St Paul's Phone APP

Go to your Google or Apple app store on your smart phone and download the "My Church" by Pushpay. It is a free download.

Open the app and search for St Paul's by typing STPLC APP.

Then click on the St Paul's logo, that's it.





Lenten Services

Wednesday Community Lenten Service Soup Supper 5:30 Worship 6:30

March 13th St. Timothy's Episcopal March 20th First Baptist

Holy Week at St. Paul's Lutheran

Palm Sunday
Maundy Thursday
Community Stations of the Cross
(St Mary's Roman Catholic)

March 24, 10:00 AM
March 28, 7:00 PM
March 29, 12:00 noon

Good Friday March 29, 7:00 PM
Easter Sunrise March 31, 7:30 AM
Easter Morning March 31, 10:00 AM

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GATHERING HYMN Give to God Our Immortal Praise ELW 848

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HYMN OF THE DAY God Loved the World ELW 323

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COMMUNION HYMN For the Bread Which You Have Broken ELW 494 Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, **License #A-734490**. All rights reserved

SENDING HYMN Lift High the Cross ELW 660

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Thank you to those serving today:

Presiding Rev. Mark Kreemer

Director of Music Dr. Abigail Haake

Lector Rev Lynn Williamson

Assisting Minister Scott Larson

Communion Assistants Lea Lang & Greg Klein

Greeter Rob Pritchett

Sacristy Sue Ambrosic

Ushers Gary Collard, Chris Hall

Shane Jackson, Craig Maurer

Soundboard Jim Johnson

Video/Live-Stream John Stanko

Images in the Readings

One important image for the day is **light**. According to Genesis 1, light is the first creation of God. In John, Christ not only brings light: he is the very light of God. And so the synoptics describe the crucifixion as effecting an eclipse, and when Judas leaves the company for the betrayal, the fourth evangelist writes, "And it was night."

The **serpent on the pole** is an example of the many layers that a metaphor can acquire. In Canaan, as in some other world religions, the goddess of life was imaged as a serpent. Thus, to oppose devotion to other deities, in the Bible the serpent is used to signify evil. In the narrative, the serpents are giving out death, and the serpent on the pole, Death enthroned, gives life. So for Christians, the man dying of execution on the cross gives life to the world. For the crucifixions in the Roman Empire, a pole was permanently set into the ground, and the victim was attached to the crosspiece and so lifted up onto the pole.

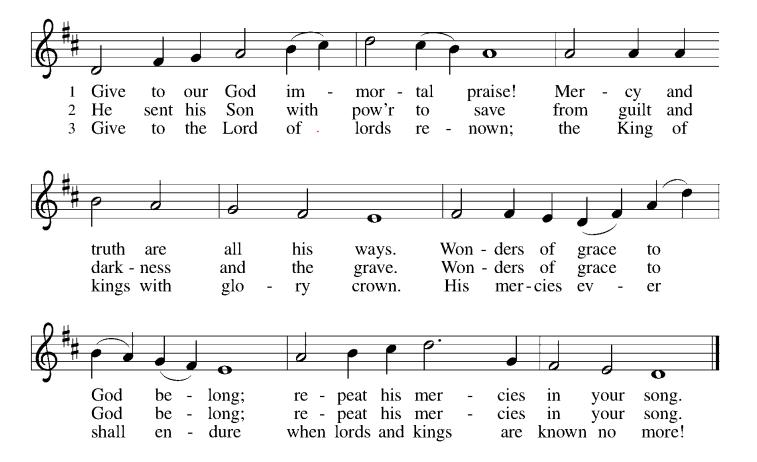
"We were **dead**" before baptism. This stark biblical language that describes the life that comes only from God helps believers to face their physical death in the peace of Christ: in baptism we have already died, and we already experience life that is eternal.

The Cosmic Love of God

The prologue of John's gospel begins with the story of creation, connecting the Word that became flesh in Jesus with the bringing forth of life and all things. Then, as the gospel continues, the testimony of John the Baptist is shared, which continues to point the reader to Jesus' significance for the whole world, not only one group or people. John, upon seeing Jesus approach him in the wilderness, declares "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). The Gospel of John highlights the cosmic reach of Jesus and the purpose for which Jesus was sent. God loves the whole world, not just part of it. And God loves us, all of us. God's purpose in sending Jesus is "that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:17).

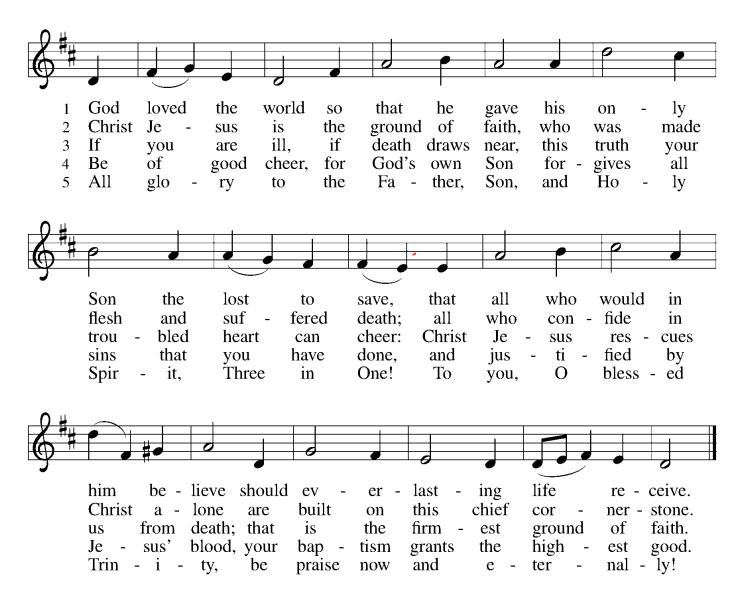
Our world and our lives include darkness and sin, evil and brokenness. But God's love for us and for the world is complete, passionate, and sacrificial. God is not willing to settle for part of the world, or for some of us. Instead of condemning all that is not pleasing, God gave God's own son, lifted up on the cross, so that all might have the possibility of eternal life. The light of God's love shining down from the cross demonstrates the totality of God's love and proclaims God's desire to transform the dark places in this world into places of light, healing, and salvation.

Give to Our God Immortal Praise!



Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748 Music: DUKE STREET, attr. John Hatton, d. 1793

God Loved the World



Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt. Music: ROCKINGHAM OLD, Edward Miller, 1731–1807, adapt.

For the Bread Which You Have Broken



- 1 For the bread which you have bro ken, for the wine which you have poured,
- 2 By this prom ise that you love us, by your gift of peace re stored,
- 3 With the saints who now a dore you, seat-ed at the heav'n-ly board
- 4 In your ser vice, Lord, de fend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;



for the words which you have spo - ken, now we give you thanks, O Lord. by your call to heav'n a - bove us, hal - low all our lives, O Lord. may the church still wait - ing for you keep love's tie un - bro - ken, Lord. in the world to which you send us let your king-dom come, O Lord.

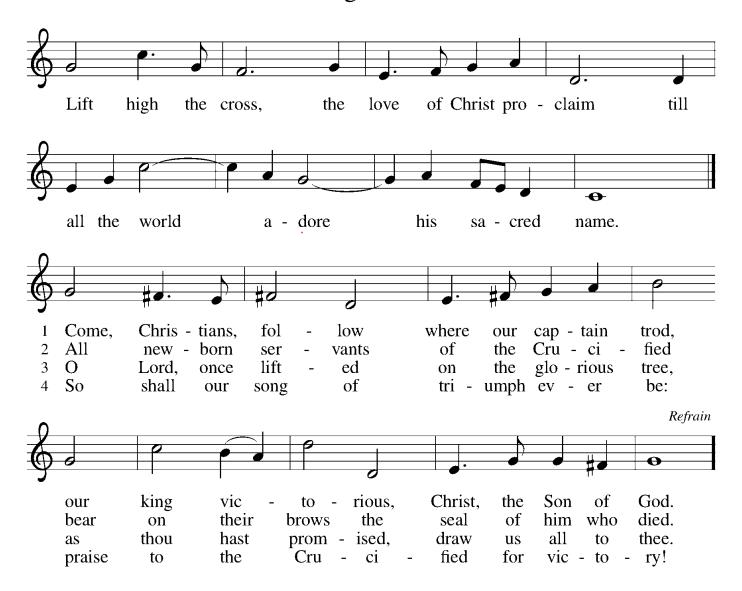
Text: Louis F. Benson, 1855-1930, alt.

Music: OMNI DIE, Gross Catolisch Gesangbuch, Nürnberg, 1631

Text © Robert F. Jefferys Jr.

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Lift High the Cross



Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827-1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874-1956

Music: CRUCIFER, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947 Text and music © 1974 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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