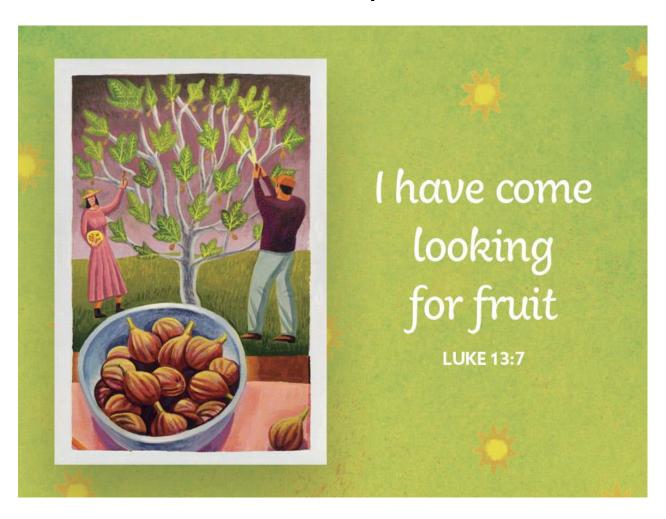
# St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025



## WELCOME

To our Church Family

We're Glad You're Here!

1

#### 🥿 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 Gwen & Phil Halco to the Glory of God.

#### Introduction

The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God's invitation to attentiveness: "Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live." The landowner's ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener's readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!

#### **Readings and Psalm**

#### Isaiah 55:1-9

Everyone who thirsts, come to the water; seek the LORD

#### Psalm 63:1-8

O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)

#### 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Israel, baptized in cloud and seas, ate the same spiritual food as Christians

#### **Luke 13:1-9**

Unless you repent, you will perish: parable of the fig tree

#### In our prayers today we will remember

Jason Loveday, Kathryn Sheets, Darlene Lewis, Betty Scot, Anna Lagenfeld, Jay Danielson, Dan Lint, the family of Rich Sadler, Chrissy Sturtz, Shirley Douglas, Matt Moore, Amy Williams, Phyllis Wilson, Jackie Whitman, Jessie Shaffer, Mark King, Rick Theiss, Ariane Roberts, Richard Green, and David Fox.

## The Westminster Strike Welcome and Announcements Prelude River of

**Prelude** River of Peace Maureen Howell

#### **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, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love. *Silence is kept for reflection.* 

Compassionate One,

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.

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.

Amen.

**GATHERING SONG** Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters ELW 445

#### **GREETING**

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

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**



#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, 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: Isaiah 55:1-9

<sup>1</sup> Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup> See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

<sup>5</sup> See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you,

because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,

for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup> Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

<sup>7</sup> let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts;

let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

<sup>8</sup> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

#### Psalm: Psalm 63:1-8



O God, ea-ger-ly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you.

<sup>1</sup>O God, you are my God; eager- | ly I seek you;

my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there | is no water.

- <sup>2</sup> Therefore I have gazed upon you in your | holy place, that I might behold your power | and your glory.
- <sup>3</sup> For your steadfast love is better than | life itself; my lips shall | give you praise.
- <sup>4</sup>So will I bless you as long | as I live and lift up my hands | in your name. R
- <sup>5</sup> My spirit is content, as with the rich- est of foods, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,
- <sup>6</sup> when I remember you up- | on my bed, and meditate on you in | the night watches.
- <sup>7</sup> For you have | been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I | will rejoice.
- <sup>8</sup>My whole being | clings to you; your right hand | holds me fast. R

#### **Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

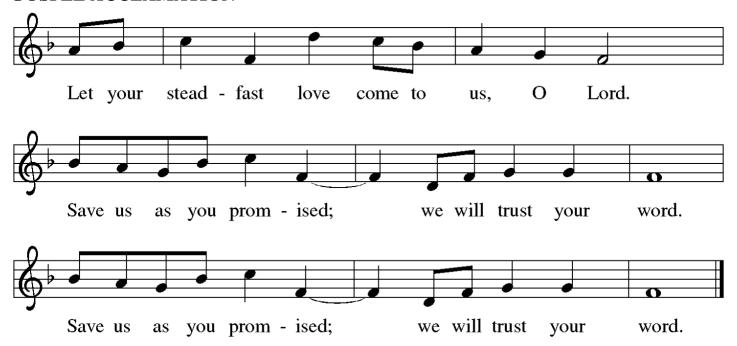
<sup>1</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." <sup>8</sup> We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup> We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup> And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup> So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup> No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

The word of the Lord.

#### Thanks be to God.

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



#### GOSPEL: Luke 13:1-9

The holy gospel according to Luke.

#### Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup> At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> [Jesus] asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? <sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

<sup>6</sup> Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup> So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' <sup>8</sup> He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. <sup>9</sup> If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

**SERMON** Rev. Mark Kreemer

**HYMN OF THE DAY** 

For All the Faithful Women

ELW 419 vs. 1, 6, 7, and 9

#### **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

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

After each petition the following response is given

God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

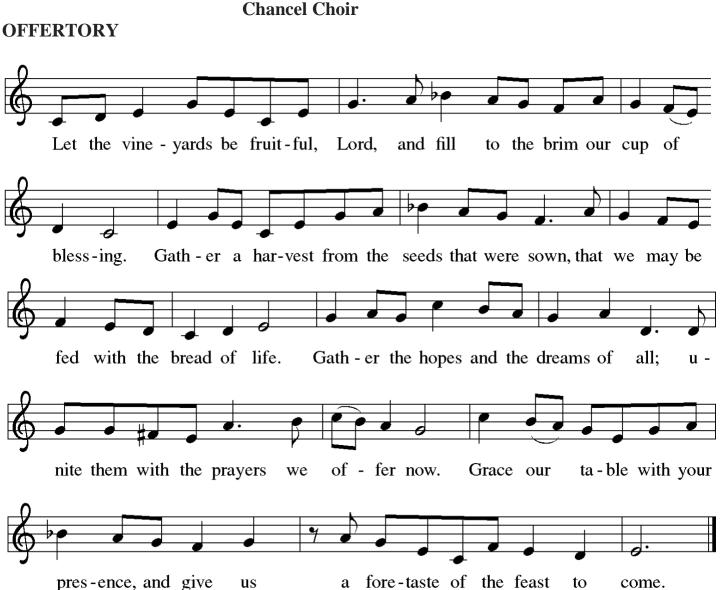
Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **Amen.** 

#### **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. And also with you.

#### **OFFERING**

What Wondrous Love Is This Geoff Weaver (b. 1943) **ANTHEM:** 

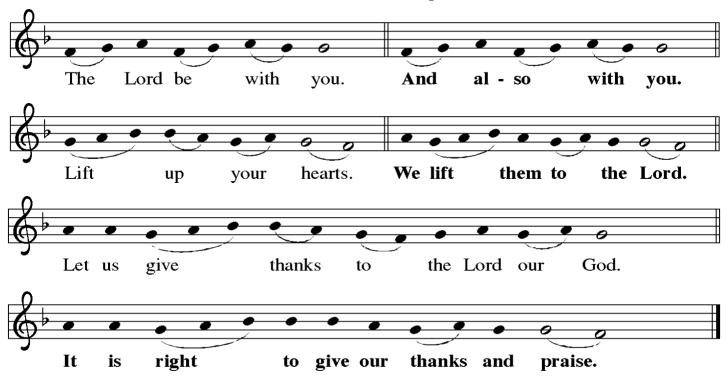


#### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us Pray,

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. Amen.

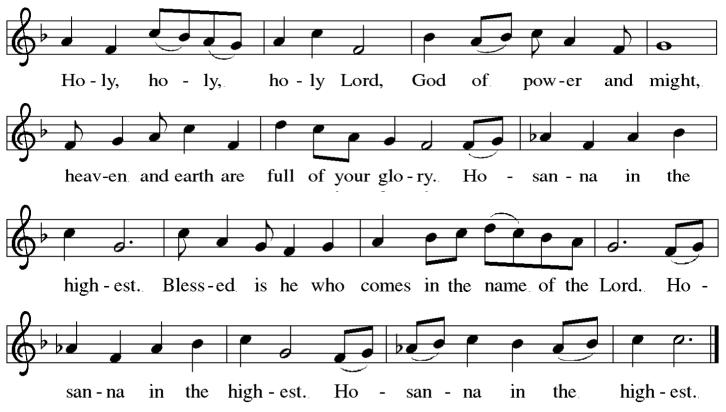
#### **DIALOGUE**



#### **PREFACE**

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......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:

#### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



#### THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

#### LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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,

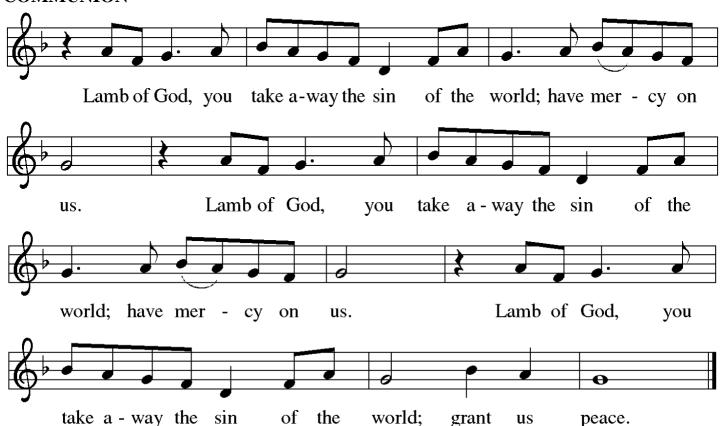
forever and ever. Amen.

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All who are hungry, come!

The feast of grace is spread.

#### **COMMUNION**



grant

us

peace.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us 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 SONG** 

O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts

ELW 658

#### **BLESSING**

God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, + bless you now and forever.

Amen.

#### **DISMISSAL**

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

Thanks be to God!

**POSTLUDE** Prelude in D minor, Op. 16, No. 3 Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

#### **Music Notes**

Maureen Howell is a native of Virginia, currently serving as Organist at First Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from The College of William and Mary and a Masters in Church Music from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. As a church musician for more than 40 years, she has served churches of various denominations in Virginia, Florida, North Carolina, and Kentucky, working in music ministry alongside her husband, Warren. She has been featured on American Public Media's Pipedreams. Howell enjoys composing and arranging for piano, organ, and choirs, especially creating fresh settings of familiar hymns. She has publications with MorningStar Music Publishers and GIA Publications, Inc. Her piece, "Reflection on Kingsfold," won first prize in the 2025 Woman Composer Sunday composition contest for new and unpublished works for organ, presented by the American Guild of Organists.

Clara Schumann was unusual among nineteen-century women in being trained from childhood for a musical profession, but typical in that her career was severely limited by domestic demands. Clara married the composer Robert Schumann, and, for a time, her composing, piano practice, and performing were overshadowed by her domestic duties as a wife and mother of eight children. After Robert's death in 1856, she revived her performing career to increase her income as a single parent to their seven surviving children, and in 1878, she became the piano professor at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt. She composed a large body of music for piano, chamber groups, choirs, and solo voice. Although her Prelude in D minor was designated for piano solo, its sustained pedal points and large stretches suggest it is likely that she also had in mind performance on the organ.

## **Capital Campaign Report**

<b>Remaining Phase One Projects</b>	\$377,000
Funds raised	\$351,317
Remaining funds	\$ 25,683
to be raised	

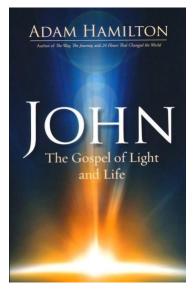
## **Adult Sunday School Class**

#### God is With Us

I am with you and will keep you wherever you go.... (Genesis 28:15a)

During the month of March, we will continue to study the life of Jacob and watch the ways in which God's presence and promise of keeping guide and protect him. Even when Jacob fails, God's grace is poured out. And so it is with us!

We meet together each Sunday morning at 11:30 for fellowship and Bible study, top floor of Parish Hall. An elevator is available for your convenience.



## **Thursday Morning Bible Study**

John: The Gospel of Light and Life

By: Adam Hamilton

The Gospel of John is the most deeply spiritual of the four gospels. This writing is filled with rich images and profound truths, but John notes that his aim in writing the gospel is that readers will not only believe in Jesus Christ, but that they "may have life in his name."

Adults, youth, and children alike can experience a season of spiritual growth and life-changing renewal in Adam

Hamilton's six-week, DVD-series, John: The Gospel of Light and Life. You'll follow the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus through the Gospel of John and understand the context of some of the best-known verses in the New Testament.

## Windows to Wonder: A Devotional Crafting Series for Lent 2025

This Lent, engage your faith through devotional crafting with Windows to Wonder, a creative series inspired by Nicodemus' journey in the Gospel of John. Choose from three free creative options: a mystery cross-stitch stitch-along, a crochet-along shawl, or weekly creative writing prompts. Each craft is paired with a devotional podcast co-hosted by Pastors Tina Crog and Angel Jackson, exploring how we see Jesus more clearly over time.

Deepen your faith with this prayerful, hands-on Lenten journey! All materials are free. Visit <a href="www.stitchologycrafts.com/windowstowondersal">www.stitchologycrafts.com/windowstowondersal</a>

## 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.



To take advantage of all the app's features you must create an account. Get notifications and reminders of upcoming events, access our live stream worship and worship bulletins, send prayer requests, and see the church calendar. You can even give electronically.

## Massillon Area Clergy Association Community Lenten Worship Services

March 26th St. John's UCC 101 Tremont Ave SE, Massillon, OH 44646 Rev. Tina Crog preaching on almsgiving

April 2nd First UMC 301 Lincoln Way E, Massillon, OH 44646 Rev. David Anderson preaching on penitence

April 9th First Baptist Church 20 Sixth St. SE, Massillon, OH 44646 Rev. Ed Hill preaching on repentance

Through the season of Lent, churches in the Massillon area will once again join together for worship and Holy Communion, rotating locations and preachers. Our focus this year is "The Five Themes of Lent."

A light dinner of soup and salad will be served at 5:30pm. Then at 6:30pm, we will worship together. Childcare may be provided. Offerings will go to the Family Living Center, which provides housing for local families in need.

## **Forty Days of Giving**

We have bottled water, personal water bottles, cold water on our refrigerator doors, rainforest showerheads. Our daily water supply is simply not a matter that we think about often. But in many countries, obtaining daily water is sometimes impossible or may involve walking many miles to the nearest well which may or may not provide safe water on any given day.

This Lenten season we will be joining in the ELCA Safe Water Access project to provide a well in a needy community. Please consider picking up a Lenten folder and donating one dollar a day during Lent. If we can collect just 62 folders, we can provide an entire well!!! You can fold a bill into the slots, merely put the bills inside the folder, or enclose a check written to St. Paul. Thank you so much for your generosity during the 40 days of Lent.

Welfare and Social Action Committee and Evangelism Committee

## **Community Social Media Pages**

Facebook & Instagram, Search "Massillon Lutheran Churches"

#### **Facebook**

"St Paul's Lutheran Church in Massillon" or "Cathedral Concerts at St Paul's"

## St. Joseph Lenten Concert Series

Wednesdays 12:00 noon

March 26: Phyllis Staver, Substitute/accompanist/adjudicator

April 2: Dennis Roden, Little Flower Catholic Church

April 9: Heather Cooper, Christ Presbyterian Church, Canton

### Last Cathedral Concert for '24-'25

The Canton Symphony Orchestra Chorus Sunday, May 17, 2025, 2:00 pm "Come to the Water"

### **Upcoming St. Paul's Concerts**

These concerts are FREE and open to all. Your freewill offering is gratefully received.

Malone University Choir, Sunday, March 23, 4:00 PM

Sonnenberg Station, Sunday, April 6, 3:00 PM

#### Thank you to those serving today:

Presiding Minister Rev. Mark Kreemer

Director of Music Dr. Abigail Haake

Assisting Minister Veronica Kreemer

Lector Lynda Klein

Greeter Mary Ann & Russ Poling

Communion Assistants Patty Long & Gary Collard

Sacristan Lynda Klein

Ushers Gary Collard, Chris Hall,

Shane Jackson, & Craig Maurer

Soundboard Jim Johnson

Video/Live-Stream John Stanko

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**HYMN OF THE DAY** For All the Faithful Women ELW 419 "Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, **License #A-734490**. All rights reserved

**COMMUNION** When We Are Tested Pg
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**SENDING SONG** O Jesus, Joy Of Loving Hearts ELW 658

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#### When We Are Tested



Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

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#### Fertilized, Fruitful, and Free

God's word for us today is nutritious and wholesome, though hard to digest. The gospel reading seems oddly brutal alongside the abundance and comfort of the texts from Isaiah ("delight yourselves in rich food") and Psalm 63 ("My spirit is content as with the richest of foods"). Even Paul finds himself using physical sustenance as a metaphor ("they drank from the spiritual rock, . . . and the rock was Christ"). Surrounded by this food imagery, we now find Jesus using some horrific events as illustrations. After the mingled blood and fallen towers, it may be hard to hear the fig-tree parable as the grace-full story it really is. But here is Christ himself as gardener: digging, fertilizing, protecting, and nurturing us. We are fragile creatures, living in a world of tragedy and terror, but God does not punish fragility with death. On the contrary, God sent Jesus to us so that we may live.

Living in that nurtured garden of Christ, tended to and cared for as we grow in that love, how can we keep from blossoming? Live, yes, and live fruitfully, our gospel proclaims! Grow, yes, and grow gloriously! Now the good news of Christ's redeeming mercy becomes clear: we are each treated with boundless mercy, not impartial justice. While the world may want to blame the withering tree for its inability to be productive, our Savior and Lord reaches into our lives, reminds us of our roots, nourishes us with grace, and allows us to bloom, to flourish, to freely share our gifts with the world.

### Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters



- 1 Wash, O God, our sons and daugh-ters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
- 2 We who bring them long for nur ture; by your milk may we be fed.
- 3 Oh, how deep your ho ly wis dom! Un im ag ined, all your ways!



Num - ber them a - mong your peo - ple; bless as Christ blessed long a - go. Let us join your feast, par - tak - ing cup of bless - ing, liv-ing bread. To your name be glo - ry, hon - or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light. God, re - new us, guide our foot - steps; free from sin and all its snares, We your peo - ple stand be - fore you, wa - ter - washed and Spir - it - born.



Fill, a - noint them; send your Spir - it, ho - ly dove and heart's de - light. one with Christ in liv - ing, dy - ing, by your Spir - it, chil - dren, heirs. By your grace, our lives we of - fer. Re - cre - ate us; God, trans - form!

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

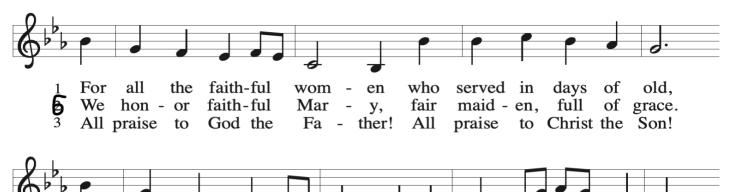
Music: BEACH SPRING, The Sacred Harp, Philadelphia, 1844

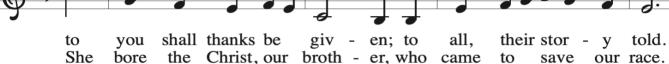
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### For All the Faithful Women Mary, Mother of Our Lord







Spir - it, who binds

the

church as

one!

They served with strength and glad - ness in tasks your wis-dom gave. May we, with her, sur - ren - der our-selves to your com-mand With saints who went be - fore us, with saints who wit-ness still,



To you their lives bore wit ness, pro-claimed your pow'r to save. and up - on vour al tar our gifts of heart and hand. we sing glad al - le lu and strive to do vour will.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923-2007

praise

to

God the

Music: KUORTANE, Finnish folk tune

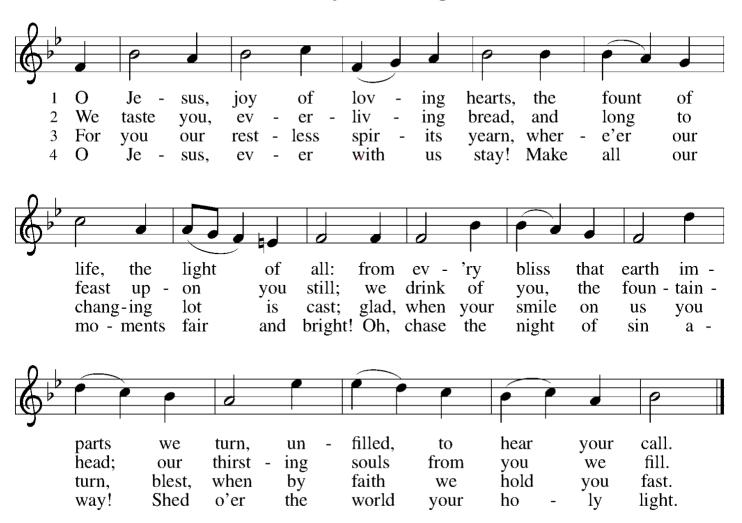
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- 7. We sing of busy Martha, who toiled with pot and pan while Mary sat in silence to hear the word again.

  Christ, keep our hearts attentive to truth that you declare, and strengthen us for service when work becomes our prayer.
- 9. We praise the other Mary, who came at Easer dawn and near the tomb did tarry, but found her Lord was gone. As joyfully she saw him in resurrection light, may we by faith behold him, the day who ends all night.

## O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts



Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091-1153; tr. Ray Palmer, 1808-1887, alt.

Music: WALTON, W. Gardiner, Sacred Melodies, 1815