

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

January 25th, 2026



**FOLLOW ME, AND
I WILL MAKE YOU
FISHERS OF PEOPLE**

MATTHEW 4:19

WELCOME

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 Jennifer and Craig Maurer in memory of Ruth and Eric Nelson.

Introduction

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God's grace and mercy.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 9:1-4

Light shines for those in darkness.

Psalm 27:1, 4-9

The LORD is my light and my salvation. (*Ps. 27:1*)

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Appeal for unity in the gospel.

Matthew 4:12-23

Revelation of Christ as a prophet.

KYRIE

Refrain

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all;
for this holy house, for all who worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor;
that we may live out truth and justice and grace,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

For peace in our hearts, for peace in our homes, for friends and family;
for life and for love, for our work and our play,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

For your Spirit to guide; that you center our lives in the water and the Word;
that you nourish our souls with your body and blood,
let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-4

¹ There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [the LORD] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Come Ye Saints

arr. A. Grant Williams

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA VERSE



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 4th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—

¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned.”

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and

proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Rev. Mark Kreemer

HYMN OF THE DAY

Will You Come and Follow Me **ELW 798**

APOSTLES' CREED

**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 INTERCESSION

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

After each petition the following response is given:

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

ANTHEM

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Bach

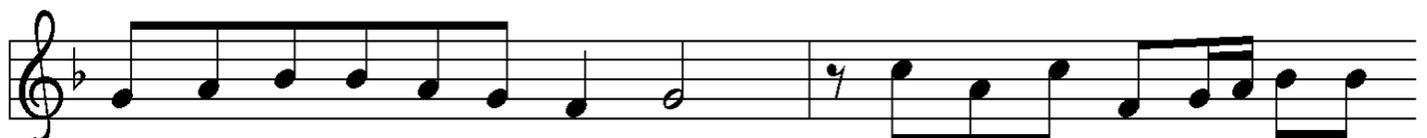
OFFERTORY



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.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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.

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,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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -



san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
 est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

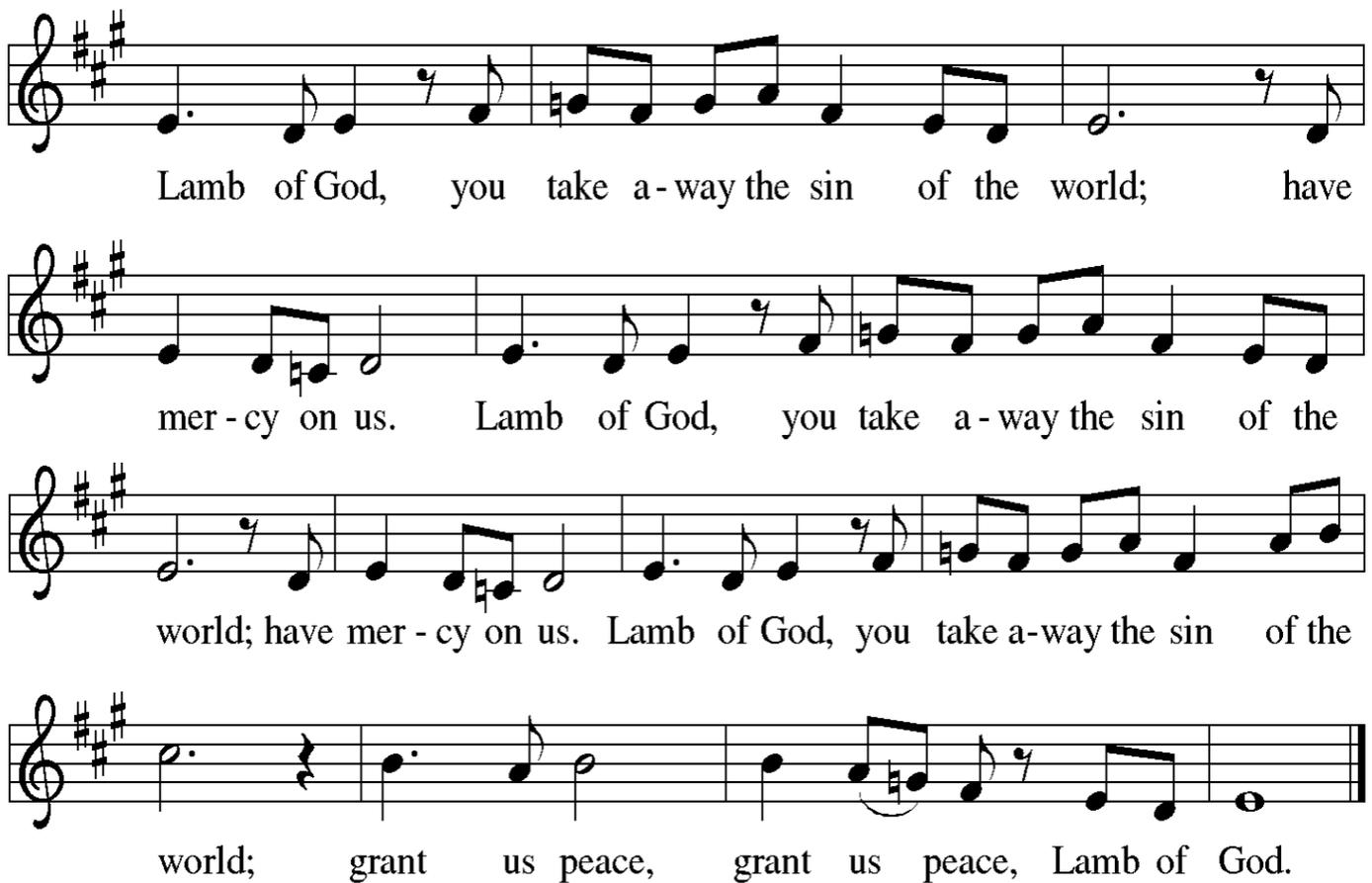
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

The joy of the Lord is our strength.
 Come, eat this meal of gladness.

COMMUNION SONG



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

Communion Panis Angelicus César Franck (1822-1890)
 Ave Maria Franz Schubert (1797-1828), arr. Lyne Latham

TABLE BLESSING

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Spirit of the triune God † bless you with joy,
anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

La Rejouissance

Georg Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

In our prayers today we will remember

Joan Spenser, Rick Theiss, Maggie Paul, Amy Williams, Cole, Marty, Curt & Paul Staver, Jessie & Linda Shaffer, Nancy Lint, Steve Kress, Lenny Herd, Pastor Groenke, Judy Hall, Tom Fry, Kenneth & Jean Dexter, Anna Langenfeld, Arthur Barrett, Karen & Paul Daily

Music Notes:

Blooming Strings Quartet

Violin I: Kayla Brant

Violin II: Cynthia Snyder

Viola: Barb Phelps-Hutson

Cello: Carol Butler

The Blooming Strings Quartet is comprised of current or past teachers, a group of friends who have journeyed together over the years in the Alliance Symphony Orchestra and the Tuscarawas Philharmonic.

Coming in 2026! The St. Paul's Steelband!

Through a generous donation of five instruments, Eleanor Manes will be starting a steelband for the congregation and greater Massillon community. No musical background necessary, and any and all ages/skills are welcome. For more information, please contact Ellie: 330-400-8543.

Cathedral Concert Series:

Sunday, February 22, 4:00 PM

**Baritone Dr. Emery Stephens,
Associate Professor of Voice Studies, St. Olaf College**

Adult Sunday School

2nd Floor of the Parish Hall

Pointing to the Redeemer: The Book of Ruth

The Old Testament contains many scripture passages and stories that point to the Redeemer, Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ. The Book of Ruth is one such story. Even in an ancient culture so different from our own, we see how God uses this story to point toward Jesus, God's beloved Son, the One to redeem all humanity. The story also reveals God's love and compassion for a world full of sorrow. Join us for this interesting study and good conversation each Sunday at 11:30. We meet on the top floor of Parish Hall. An elevator is available for easy access.

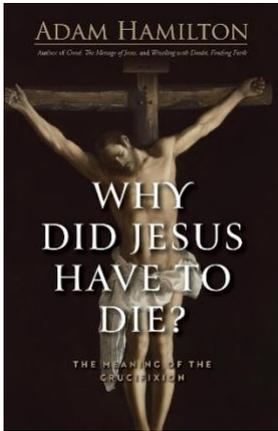
Women's Lenten Retreat

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble.

(Psalm 46:1)

The Women's Lenten Retreat this year will focus on the promise of God as our refuge. If you have ever wondered where God is when it hurts, you will be encouraged by this Saturday morning spent with other women during the season of Lent. There will be time for worship, Bible study, meaningful craft making, and Holy Communion.

The retreat will take place at St. Paul's on March 7 from 8:45 am until 12:30 pm. If you plan to attend and perhaps bring a friend, please let LaShell Williamson or Patty Long know. Registration is not required but it is helpful to have an approximate number of participants for planning purposes. Please consider taking advantage of this opportunity for spiritual growth and encouragement as we journey together toward Easter.



Thursday Morning Bible Study

Beginning March 4th

Why Did Jesus Have to Die?:

The Meaning of the Crucifixion

By Adam Hamilton

When words fall short, the cross still speaks.

Despite the crucifixion's central place in Christian faith, the New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus' death saves, or why, exactly, he had to die. The New Testament writers use a host of metaphors—ransom, sacrifice, reconciliation, victory—but never explain exactly how it works or why it had to happen this way.

What if that's because we've been asking the wrong question? What if the cross isn't a transaction to be explained, but a living Word from God meant to transform who we are and how we live?

Join the Fellowship Committee in these events!

February 7: Valentine Dinner Dance with Chuck Richard

We will gather for dinner at 5:00 pm followed by music with Chuck Richards. The cost per person is \$15, which you can pay at the door. We do need you to make a reservation. A sign up is in the lounge. Menu for dinner:

- Rolls
- Mediterranean Salad
- Chicken Cordon Blue or Chicken Skewers
- Scallop Potatoes
- Vegetable blend
- Valentine Dessert
- Punch, Red Wine, White Wine

Tuesday, February 17, from 5 to 7 pm: Shrove Pancake Dinner

This is our feast before we begin the Lenten season, serving pancakes (regular and gluten free), sausage, applesauce & drinks. The topping bar for pancakes will include maple syrup, whipped cream, strawberries, raspberries, chocolate, & caramel. Participants will be invited to make a Mardi Gras craft. We need volunteers to help cook pancakes and sausage. We will take a free will offering.

Any questions call or text Sue Reid at 330-323-6688

Capital Campaign Report

With joy and gratitude, we celebrate the completion of our new entrance and bathrooms—made possible by your faithful generosity. What a gift it is to see these improvements already serving our community!

Yet our work of caring for God’s house is not finished. Three pressing needs lie ahead: a \$125,000 replacement of the Parish Hall heating and cooling system, repairs to the Parish Hall window wells, and fixing a boiler leak in the Education Building. Through your continued giving, we can preserve this sacred space as a place of safety, welcome, and comfort for all who come through our doors. Together, we are ensuring that our church remains a living witness to God’s grace for generations to come.

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.



Assisted Hearing Devices Available

Four assisted listening devices are available at the sound system table in the back of the sanctuary at the beginning of worship. Please see Jim Johnson or John Stanko if you need assistance with these devices.



You can also use your smartphone to access the system. Go to your app store and download the **WaveCAST** app. Then connect to the sanctuary Wi-Fi: **Network:** sound media **Password:** Sound127

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*”

Thank you to those serving today:

Presiding Minister	Rev. Mark Kreemer
Director of Music	Dr. Abigail Haake
Assisting Minister	Sue Reid
Lector	Scott Larson
Greeters	Gary Collard
Communion Assistants	Brady Rupp & Sue Reid
Sacristan	Mary Ann Poling
Ushers	Chuck Green, Chuck Richards, Dick Longworth, Mike Skelly
Acolytes	Scot Larson, Thomas Haake
Soundboard	Jim Johnson
Video/Live-Stream	John Stanko

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GATHERING HYMN Thy Strong Word **ELW 511**
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HYMN OF THE DAY Will You Come and Follow Me **ELW 798**
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SENDING HYMN Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling **ELW 582**
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Thy Strong Word



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; at thy
 2 Lo, on those who dwelt in dark - ness, dark as
 3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; bright with
 4 From the cross thy wis - dom shin - ing break - eth



speaking it was done. For cre - at - ed light we
 night and deep as death, broke the light of thy sal -
 thine own ho - li - ness, glo - rious now, we press toward
 forth in con - qu'ring might; from the cross for - ev - er



thank thee, while thine or - dered sea - sons run.
 va - tion, breathed thine own life - breath - ing breath.
 glo - ry, and our lives our hopes con - fess.
 beam - eth all thy bright re - deem - ing light.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise to thee who light dost send!



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

5 Give us lips to sing thy glory,
 tongues thy mercy to proclaim,
 throats that shout the hope that fills us,
 mouths to speak thy holy name.
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 May the light which thou dost send
 fill our songs with alleluias,
 alleluias without end!

6 God the Father, light-creator,
 to thee laud and honor be.
 To thee, Light of Light begotten,
 praise be sung eternally.
 Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
 glory, glory be to thee.
 Mortals, angels, now and ever
 praise the holy Trinity!

Text: Martin H. Franzmann, 1907–1976
 Music: EBENEZER, Thomas J. Williams, 1869–1944
 Text © 1969 Concordia Publishing House

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Will You Come and Follow Me

The Summons



1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call
 2 "Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call
 3 "Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call
 4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call
 5 Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true when you but call



your name? Will you go where you don't
 your name? Will you care for cruel and
 your name? Will you set the pris - 'ners
 your name? Will you quell the fear in -
 my name. Let me turn and fol - low



know and nev - er be the same?
 kind and nev - er be the same?
 free and nev - er be the same?
 side and nev - er be the same?
 you and nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, will you let my
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare, should your life at -
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as -
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and



name be known, will you let my life be
 tract or scare? Will you let me an - swer
 this un - seen, and ad - mit to what I
 world a - round, through my sight and touch and
 foot - steps show. Thus I'll move and live and



grown in you and you in me?"
 pray'r in you and you in me?"
 mean in you and you in me?"
 sound in you and you in me?"
 grow in you and you in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949
 Music: KELVINGROVE, Scottish traditional
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Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling



1 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er dwell-ing in the ho - liest realms of light;
2 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er liv - ing as the church's ver - y life;
3 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev - er work-ing through the church's min - is - try;



Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er brood-ing o'er a world of gloom and night;
Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er striv - ing through us in a cease - less strife;
quick-'ning, strength-'ning, and ab - solv - ing, set - ting cap - tive sin - ners free;



Ho-ly Spir - it, ev - er rais - ing those of earth to thrones on high;
Ho-ly Spir - it, ev - er form-ing in the church the mind of Christ:
Ho-ly Spir - it, ev - er bind-ing age to age and soul to soul



liv - ing, life - im - part - ing Spir - it, you we praise and mag - ni - fy.
you we praise with end - less wor - ship for your gifts and fruits un - priced.
in com - mu - nion nev - er end - ing, you we wor - ship and ex - tol.

Text: Timothy Rees, 1874–1939, alt.

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710