



ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday, March 19, 2023
Fourth Sunday in Lent

9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
1609 Kurtz Avenue ~ Lutherville, MD 21093

www.facebook.com/SPLutherville and www.stpaulslutherville.org

Welcome to our contemporary worship service. If you haven't already done so, take a moment to silence your devices, check in on social media, and breathe a bit before we start. Directions from the pastor will invite you to stand or "rise in body or spirit" for that section, also indicated by an asterisk.

As We Gather for Worship Today

Social Distancing: Wearing a facemask is optional in this space, and disposable masks are available at the host table. Please use hand sanitizer often, and you can find a dispenser at either of the main doors. Feel free to remove a chair from a row and reposition to create more space.

Restrooms: The bathrooms alongside the entrance hallway are available – please give one another space as needed.

Communion: We celebrate the sacrament of Communion as part of our worship, and all are welcome at the Table. When directed by the Host, you may turn right at the head of the aisle to pick-up pre-packaged Elements from the basket to commune at your seat, or turn left at the head of the aisle to be served bread and receive a pre-filled cup of red wine or white grape juice. Gluten-free wafers are also available. Please use the side aisles to return to your seat.

Offering: There is a basket at the host table to receive your paper offerings, and you may also give electronically at www.stpaulslutherville.org.

GATHERING

WELCOME & PRELUDE: *Blessings*

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Holy God,
we confess to you our faults and failings.
Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;
we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;
we spoil rather than steward your creation;
we cause hurt though you call us to heal;
we choose fear over compassion.
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
as we seek to follow in your way of life.
Amen.

Hear the good news:
God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all may receive life.
This promise is for you!
God embraces you with divine mercy,
✝ forgives you in Christ's name,
and revives you in the Spirit's power.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Holy is the Lord by Chris Tomlin & Louie Giglio

We stand and lift up our hands ~ For the joy of the Lord is our strength
We bow down and worship Him now ~ How great how awesome is He

And together we sing ~ Ev'ryone sing

Holy is the Lord God Almighty ~ The earth is filled with His glory
Holy is the Lord God Almighty ~ The earth is filled with His glory
The earth is filled with His glory

We stand and lift up our hands ~ For the joy of the Lord is our strength
We bow down and worship Him now ~ How great how awesome is He

And together we sing ~ Ev'ryone sing

Holy is the Lord God Almighty ~ The earth is filled with His glory
Holy is the Lord God Almighty ~ The earth is filled with His glory
The earth is filled with His glory

It is rising up all around ~ It's the anthem of the Lord's renown
It's rising up all around ~ It's the anthem of the Lord's renown

And together we sing ~ Ev'ryone sing

Holy is the Lord God Almighty ~ The earth is filled with His glory
Holy is the Lord God Almighty ~ The earth is filled with His glory
The earth is filled with His glory
The earth is filled with His glory

***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. Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Children of all ages are welcome to come and gather on the blanket to join in a message just for them! After we pray together, they will be invited to go back to their seats or to the Prayground.

OLD TESTAMENT READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the LORD, designating David as the LORD's chosen successor to Saul.

A reading from 1 Samuel.

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ²Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹²Jesse sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one."

¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL: John 9:1-41**

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of the one who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When Jesus had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."

¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Judeans did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Judeans; who had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this person, we do not know where he comes from."

³⁰The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but does listen to anyone who is devout and obeys God's will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of someone born blind. ³³If this person were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son-of-Man?" ³⁶He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Jesus. ³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near Jesus heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY: *Create in Me a Clean Heart by Andy Gilbert

Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me
Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, oh Lord
And take not Thy holy spirit from me
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And renew a right spirit within me

*CREED

Speaking words of belief and trust, let us confess our faith together.

**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**

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. We pray for leaders throughout the whole Church, for our church-wide bishop, Elizabeth, and our local bishop, William. Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. We pray for the active service women and men of our country, and for peace-keepers and peace-makers everywhere. Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve. Be present in the community surrounding us here in Lutherville. In this time, we offer prayers, concerns, and thanksgivings to you — with our voices, in our hearts, and within this open space (*we pause for spoken and silent prayers*)... Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Equip the feeding ministries of this congregation and community. Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

God of history, with thanksgiving we remember our ancestors in faith who cared for your people. We praise you for the ways they formed the faith of others and continue to inspire us. Merciful God,
hear our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

You are invited to share the peace with a wave from your seat to those outside of your household group, and to use a greeting or gesture you would like to share within your group.

MEAL

ANNOUNCEMENTS, OFFERING AND CONNECTION BOOKS

The Offering is the opportunity for us to share some of those gifts for the work of the church and the needs of the world. Thank you for your generosity! For those gathering onsite, an offering basket is located towards the main entrance of the hall, and for all we encourage you to give electronically at www.stpaulslutherville.org.

As the Offering is being gathered in and the Announcements shared, please check in and let us know you're here. Beginning at the end of each aisle, please pass and sign the black Connection Books as the host hands one to you. The books help us get to know one another, welcome guests, and keep us up to date on worship participation with our members. Once the Connection Book has reached the end of the row please pass it back or hand them to the ushers as they come around to collect them.

***GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE**

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.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide,
together with rivers and seas, wells and springs
we bless and magnify you.

You led your people Israel through the desert,
and provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,
who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

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.

Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, and resurrection,
we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.
Pour out your Spirit on this holy food
and on all the baptized gathered for this feast: wash away our sin,
that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, both now and forever.
Amen.

***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**

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

SHARING THE MEAL

As we celebrate the sacrament of Communion today, all are welcome at the Table. When directed by the Host down the center aisle, you may turn right at the head of the aisle to pick-up pre-packaged Elements from the basket to commune at your seat, or turn left at the head of the aisle to be served bread and receive a pre-filled glass of red wine or white grape juice, then placing your empty cup in the basket. If you have a gluten or food allergy, please let the server know. Use the side aisle to return to your seat. If you are not sharing in the Meal today, please join in reflection and prayer, until we all regather.

REFLECTION SONG: *Commune With Me*

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray. Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

***BLESSING**

May God, the giver of love, ✝ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

Amen.

***SENDING SONG: *Lord I Lift Your Name on High* by Rick Founds**

Lord I lift Your name on high ~ Lord I love to sing Your praises
I'm so glad You're in my life ~ I'm so glad You came to save us

You came from heaven to earth ~ To show the way
From the earth to the cross ~ My debt to pay
From the cross to the grave ~ From the grave to the sky
Lord I lift Your name on high

Lord I lift Your name on high ~ Lord I love to sing Your praises
I'm so glad You're in my life ~ I'm so glad You came to save us

You came from heaven to earth ~ To show the way
From the earth to the cross ~ My debt to pay
From the cross to the grave ~ From the grave to the sky
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You came from heaven to earth ~ To show the way
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From the cross to the grave ~ From the grave to the sky
Lord I lift Your name on high

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve in love.

Thanks be to God

POSTLUDE

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TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Thank you for helping to lead our worship service this holy day!

Preacher	The Rev. Karen Pugatch
Presider	The Rev. Dr. Ed Kay
Interim Contemporary Worship Musician	Peter Carpenter-Gonia
Assisting Minister	Courtney Mellecker
Host/Usher	Debi Maas
Refreshments	Lois Jean West