

Second Sunday in Lent

# March 5, 2023

SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

3383 EAST LAKE LANSING ROAD

EAST LANSING, MI 48823

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Pastor Carl E. Ballard

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**VISITORS WELCOME!** If this is your first time worshipping with us, please sign our guest registry just outside the sanctuary doors. We hope you are blessed through worship today. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the church at (517) 351-8541.

**Children** are always welcome in worship! We consider the sounds of children a joyful noise. The choir room (off the sanctuary) can also be used as a ***cry room*** for younger children and includes a sound system so parents may continue to participate in the service. Clipboards with children’s bulletins, activities and crayons are available for use during the service.

**Sunday School/Education** is available September-May.

**This Bulletin** is for your use during the service and to take with you for the upcoming week. If you choose not to take it home, please place in the recycle receptacle in the back.

**Newsletters and Calendars of Upcoming Events** are available in the

lobby/narthex. We welcome anyone who has an interest in our small groups or activities! You can also look us up on the web at www.stpaul-el.org.

**Contacting Us:** The office e-mail address is [officemanager@stpaul-el.org.](mailto:officemanager@stpaul-el.org) Our Director of Music is Elene Kobulashvili. You may leave a message at (517) 351-8541.Pastor Carl can be reached at 517-515-3129

e-mail address is cballard123@msn,com

**Holy Communion** is available at most services. All who believe in the real presence of Christ in the bread and the wine are invited to celebrate Communion with us. Those who wish can come forward for a blessing.

**You are invited** to share in fellowship after worship. Kay (with the assistance of Bob) usually makes the most delicious snacks to our delight. We would love this opportunity to introduce you to the St. Paul community.

**P: Presiding Minister A: Assisting Minister C: Congregation**

**PRELUDE**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY**

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today’s gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are a given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God’s love for all the world..

**GATHERING**

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

(*Please rise as you are able)*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

who journeys with us these forty days,

and sustains us with the gift of grace.

**C: Amen.**

Let us acknowledge before God and one another

our need for repentance and God’s mercy.

*(Silence is kept for reflection.)*

P: 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.**

P: 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,

As a called and ordained minister in the Church of Christ and by his authority I therefore declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG This is the Spirits Entry ELW 448**

***In the cranberry Hymnal***

**GREETING**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

**KYRIE ELW Setting 2, Page 120**

*In peace, let us pray to the Lord.*

***Lord, have mercy.***

*For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.*

***Lord, have mercy.***

*For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.*

***Lord, have mercy.***

*For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.*

***Lord, have mercy.***

*Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.*

***Amen.***

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray.

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*(Please be seated.)*

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

*(Children are invited to Sunday School)*

**SENDING SONG ELW 595 Jesus Loves Me!**

*Jesus loves me! this I know, for the Bible tells me so;*

*little one to him belong, they are weak but he is strong.*

*yes, Jesus loves me, yes Jesus loves me,*

*yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.*

**THE WORD**

P: God speaks to us in scripture, preaching, and song.

### **FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a**

*God’s call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation. God’s call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.*

### 1The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

### 4aSo Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 121**

I lift up my eyes to the hills;

  from where is my help to come?

**My help comes from the Lord,**

**the maker of heaven and earth.**

The Lord will not let your foot be moved

  nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

**Behold, the keeper of Israel**

**will neither slumber nor sleep;**

the Lord watches over you;

  the Lord is your shade at your right hand;

**the sun will not strike you by day,**

**nor the moon by night.**

The Lord will preserve you from all evil

  and will keep your life.

**The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in,**

**from this time forth forevermore.**

### **SECOND READING:   Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

*In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God’s promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.*

### 1What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? 2For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” 4Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. 5But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

### 13For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

### 16For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, 17as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

## (Please rise as you are able.)

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ELW Setting 2, Page 125**

*Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord. Save us as you promised; we will trust your word. Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.*

### **GOSPEL ANNOUNCEMENT:***John 3:1-17*

### The Gospel according to John the 3rd chapter

**C: Glory to You O Lord**

*A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.*

1Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” 3Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

11“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14And 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.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord

**C: The Praise to you, O Christ.**

## (Please be seated.)

**SERMON Pastor Carl Ballard**

## (Please rise as you are able.)

### **HYMN OF THE DAY O Living Breath of God ELW 407**

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### ***In the cranberry Hymnal***

**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.**

## (Please be seated.)

**THE PRAYERS**

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

*A brief silence.*

O God, you so love your church. Raise up leaders who care for your people. Bless lay theologians, seminary and college professors, and all who are called to the ministry of teaching, that they form and inspire us for the work of the gospel. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your creation. Breathe new life into our planetary home. Guide the work of researchers, scientists, and activists who love your earth and who inspire us to care for the natural world. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love the world. Uphold leaders who resist tyranny and oppression. Strengthen organizations that promote peace and harmony (especially). Direct their work to alleviate human suffering and to address its root causes. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your people. Draw near to all who live with mental illness, depression, or addiction, and accompany them in healing and recovery. Hear the cries of those who look to you in their distress especially those in the MSU community who is trying to heal from the senseless violence. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your children. Bless the young in our midst, and delight us with their joy, wonder, and curiosity. Revive our ministries with children and youth and equip us all for faithful discipleship. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Send angels of protection to provide care and compassion to those who serve in our armed forces and protect and sacrifice for us so we can be free. We pray especially for Beth & Ryan, Coen, Jonathan, Jacob, Noah, Irene, and Alex. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

Healing God, raise up any who are bowed down with illness or sorrow. Deepen our care and concern for one another. We lift to you all who are undergoing transition in relationships, occupation, living situation, or health condition especially Ahren, Anne & Bob, Bev, Dan, David, John, Jon, Jordan, Lawton, Lera & family, Carrie, and Tim. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

We especially lift up to you Presiding Bishop Elizabeth, our Synod Bishop Craig, and Pastor Carl. We ask that you be with their respective staffs as they live out their callings to serve. As we are called to be one, even as Jesus and the Father are one, be with the leaders and the congregation of St. Johns Lutheran Church, in Baroda and other churches in our community. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your saints. As our ancestors in the faith have been a blessing to us, so inspire us by their example of holy living to be a blessing to those who come after us. Merciful God,

**C: receive 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.**

**GREETING OF PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

# **C: And also with you.**

# THE MEAL

*The gifts of the bread, wine and contributions*

*are brought forward to the altar.*

# **OFFERTORY Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful ELW 184**

*Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,*

*and ﬁll to the brim our cup of blessing.*

*Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,*

*that we may be fed with the bread of life.*

*Gather the hopes and dreams of all;*

*unite them with the prayers we offer.*

*Grace our table with your presence,*

*and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**God of good gifts,**

**receive these and all our offerings**

**as we present them in faithful service**

**for the sake of your gospel.**

**Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal**

**as you pour out your very presence**

**through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.**

**C: Amen.**

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P: The Lord be with you.

# **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

# **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PROPER PREFACE**

P: 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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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** **ELW Setting 10, Page 207**

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*

*Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.*

# **EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

P: 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.

P: 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.

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

# **C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

# **C: Come, Lord Jesus.**

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

# **C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

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

# **C: Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

# **C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

**COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION**

*All who believe in the real presence of Christ in the bread and the wine (juice) are welcome to the table. Others may come forward for a blessing.*

*Communion will be offered a couple of ways. You may either take a communion cup with host as you enter worship and come forward to the rail or take part where you are seated. Or you may come forward and receive Communion directly from the Pastor at the rail.*

*When approaching the communion rail, come forward down the side aisle, kneel, if you are able, starting at the front of the communion rail (spot closest to the font) on your side and filling in toward the back. After receiving both the bread and the wine, you may return to your seat by the center aisle. If you prefer grape juice, please ask the assisting minister.*

# **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

P: The body of Christ, given for you.

# **C: Amen.**

A: The blood of Christ, shed for you.

# **C: Amen.**

**COMMUNION HYMN ELW 493 Taste and See**

*In the cranberry Hymnal*

Taste and se, taste and see the good news of the Lord. Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.

*Repeat*

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

# **C: Amen.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Let us pray.

Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,

empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors

and touch the world with your love.

**C: Amen.**

**BLESSING**

P: God, the giver of love,

☩ Christ, the resurrection and the life,

and the Holy Spirit of rebirth

bless you in this Lenten journey.

**C: Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN I Want Jesus to Walk with Me ELW 325**

***In the cranberry Hymnal***

**DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Serve in love.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Announcements:**

Midweek Lenten Worship on Wednesday at 7 PM via ZOOM.

Acknowledgments

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