

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinabek Nations, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. This territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

This territory is also covered by the Toronto Purchase, Treaty 13 of 1805, and the Williams Treaties of 1923. Today, our community is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We gather by these territorial lands and waters to worship, listen, learn, share, and heal together in the name of our Creator, the Holy One of Blessing.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Lent Four

March 10, 2024

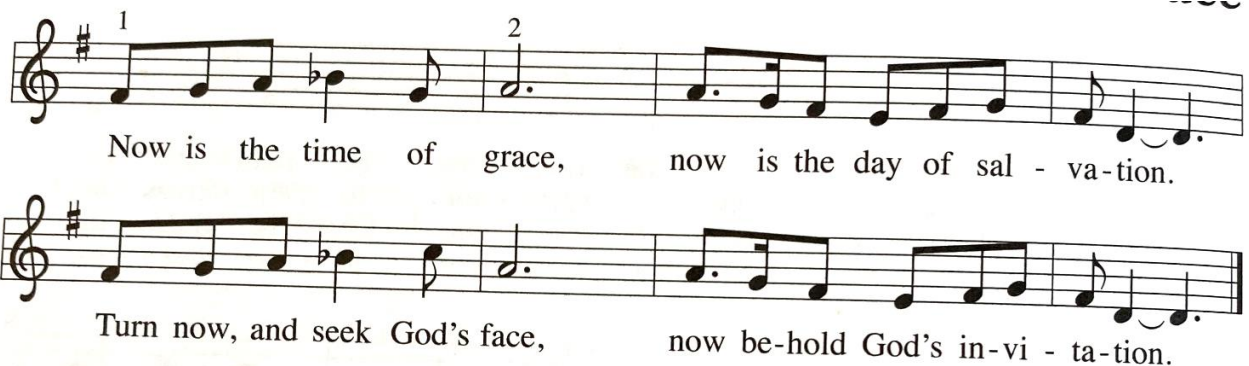
PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

ACS # 918 NOW IS THE TIME OF GRACE

Congregation



1 2

Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal - va - tion.

Turn now, and seek God's face, now be-hold God's in-vi - ta - tion.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection

Most merciful God,
**we confess that we have sinned against you
and your beloved children.
We have turned our faces away from your glory
when it did not appear as we expected.**
We have rejected your word
when it made us confront ourselves.
**We have failed to show hospitality
to those you call us to welcome.**
**Accept our repentance for the things we have done
and the things we have left undone.**
For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.
**Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe
in the glory of your Son born among us,
and reflect your love for all creation.**
Amen.

Rejoice in this good news: In + Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven.
You are descendants of the Most High,
adopted into the household of Christ,
and inheritors of eternal life.
Live as freed and forgiven children of God.
Amen.

HYMN ELW # 335 JESUS, KEEP ME NEAR THE CROSS

**Jesus, keep me near the cross,
There's a precious fountain;
Free to all, a healing stream,
Flows from Calv'ry's mountain.**

***Refrain:* In the cross, in the cross
Be my glory ever,
Till my ransomed soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.**

**Near the cross, a trembling soul,
Love and mercy found me;
There the Bright and Morning Star
Shed its beams around me. *Refrain***

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day
With its shadow o'er me. *Refrain*

Near the cross I'll watch and wait,
Hoping, trusting ever;
Till I reach the golden strand,
Just beyond the river. *Refrain*

PSALM 107

O give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good;

for God's steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,

Those God redeemed from trouble

and gathered in from the lands,

from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

Some were sick through their sinful ways,

and because of their iniquities endured affliction;

they loathed any kind of food,

and they drew near to the gates of death.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,

and God saved them from their distress;

God's word went out and healed them,

and delivered them from destruction.

Let them thank the Lord for steadfast love,

for the wonderful works to humankind.

And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,

and tell of God's deeds with songs of joy.

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

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 Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

NUMBERS 21:4-9

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The 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.” Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The 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. And 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.” So 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.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

You were dead through the trespasses and sins in 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. All 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.

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
**So that everyone who believes in him should not perish,
but have eternal life.**

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

JOHN 3:14-21

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "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. "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.

Those 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. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But 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.**

SERMON

HYMN ELW # 759 MY FAITH LOOKS UP TO THEE

**My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary, Saviour divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day
be wholly Thine.**

**May Thy rich grace impart
strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;
as Thou hast died for me,
O may my love to Thee
pure, warm, and changeless be,
a living fire.**

While life's dark maze I tread,
and griefs around me spread, be Thou my Guide;
bid darkness turn to day,
wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray
from Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,
when death's cold, sullen stream shall o'er me roll,
blest Saviour, then in love,
fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
a ransomed soul.

THE CELTIC CREED

We believe in God above us, maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon, of water and earth, of male and female.
We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ, the word made flesh,
born of a woman, servant of the poor, tortured and nailed to a tree.
A man of sorrows, he died forsaken.
He descended into the earth to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven, to be everywhere present,
and His kingdom will come on earth.
We believe in God within us, the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church, Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of resurrection and of eternal life.
Amen.

PRAYERS

SINGING INTO PRAYER ACS #1075 O GOD WE CALL

O God we call. O God we call.

From deep inside we yearn. From deep inside we yearn.

From deep inside we yearn for you.

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.

A brief silence

Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialogue. We pray for our Muslim siblings as Ramadan begins. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war.

Lord, in your mercy.....**hear our prayer.**

Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth.

Lord, in your mercy.....**hear our prayer.**

Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love. Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred. We pray for an end to war and strife in every land. In particular we pray for South Sudan, Ukraine, Russia, Israel, and Palestine. Strengthen international efforts to negotiate peace and provide humanitarian aid to people fleeing from conflict.

Lord, in your mercy.....**hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen healthcare workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with chronic illness and pain. We pray for any who are sick, recovering, lonely, grieving, and hungry. Hear our prayers for those in our thoughts and hearts this day
pause

Lord, in your mercy.....**hear our prayer.**

Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Lead us in your grace for holy vocation. We pray for Pastor Victoria as she is ordained today. May your love guide her ministry.

Lord, in your mercy.....**hear our prayer.**

Abiding God, your love saves. Those who died in the faith are made alive in Christ. We give thanks for your promise that we also will be raised to newness of life.

Lord, in your mercy.....**hear our prayer.**

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

Amen.

SINGING INTO PEACE ACS #1075 O GOD WE CALL

O God we call. **O God we call.**

From deep inside we yearn. **From deep inside we yearn.**

From deep inside we yearn for you.

SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

The offering will now be received and may God bless the gifts of your life

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Merciful God, receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives, that following in the way of the cross, we may know the joy of the resurrection, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE 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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

O God triune, majestic is your name in all the earth.

Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home,

A fragile tree of life.

Here by your wisdom are both life and death,

Growth and decay, the nest and the hunt,

Sunshine and storm, darkness and light.

Sustained by these wonders,

We creatures of dust join in the ancient song:

The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer.

In Christ you bring life from death;

We remember his cross, we laud his resurrection.

Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.

Out poured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness.

Receiving this mystery, we mortals sing our song:
The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**
We praise you for the heart of Jesus,
So filled with your love for this earth.
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.
Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song:
The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**
O God triune, you create the worlds,
You uphold the living, you embrace the dead.
Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.
Strengthen us for our journey with this meal,
The body and blood of Christ.
Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth.
Empowered by your promises,
we rise from our deaths to praise you again:
The earth is full of your glory. **The earth is full of your glory.**
Amen, amen. **Amen, 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.
Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Return to God with all your heart.
Receive bread for the journey, drink for the desert. **Thanks be to God!**

HOLY COMMUNION

you are invited to eat your bread and drink your wine as you hear the words "the body of Christ given for you" "the blood of Christ shed for you"

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us always in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth,
and claimed us as children of light,
strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you + peace.
Amen.

HYMN ELW # 338 BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS

**Beneath the cross of Jesus
I long to take my stand,
the shadow of a mighty Rock
within a weary land;
a home within the wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and the burden of the day.**

**Upon the cross of Jesus
my eye at times can see
the very dying form of One
who suffered there for me:
and from my contrite heart with tears
two wonders I confess,
the wonders of his glorious love
and my unworthiness.**

**I take, O cross, your shadow
for my abiding place:
I ask no other sunshine than
the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by,
to know no gain nor loss;
my sinful self my only shame,
my glory all the cross.**

DISMISSAL

Marked by the cross of Christ,
go forth to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE