

*Here is the
bridegroom!
Come out
to meet him*

MATTHEW 25:6



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net

www.stpaulsyork.org

www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George

YouTube: St. Paul's Lutheran Church - South George St. York

WELCOME Thank you for being with us.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 187 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

Offerings Offerings are received during the liturgy. They are presented along with gifts of bread and wine at the altar. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org

Postlude It is our tradition to remain seated for the postlude. If you need to leave we ask that you do so reverently. This tradition developed as a result of our livestream. We want anyone viewing to be able to listen to the postlude without unnecessary distraction. Thank you.

Restrooms are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery.

An AED/Defibrillator unit is located in the Good Shepherd room. It is placed on the wall left side of the Springettsbury door exit.

The Nursery is accessed through the front right double doors. The liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery. Parents are asked to stay with their children. Quiet activities are also available in the Narthex for infant through preschool children to use with an adult.

Please be aware that there is a rise in individuals loitering at church buildings and asking for money. This is panhandling and it is illegal. Please do not give money. Simply direct them to contact the Pastor at a time other than during worship. Thank you.

Parents, please do accompany your child to the restroom during the liturgy and wait with them. This is a way for us to practice good safety protocol within our building.

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Children Choirs Director	Julianna Jones	jjones.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Bell Choirs Director	Leah McComas	lmccomas.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

24th Sunday After Pentecost
Sunday, November 12, 2023
Holy Communion 8:00 & 10:30 AM

PRELUDE

Chorale Prelude on “Beach Spring”

Aaron David Miller

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

ENTRANCE HYMN

Let Justice Flow Like Streams (ELW 717)



- 1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar-king wa - ter, pure,
- 2 Let righ-teous-ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,
- 3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,



en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans-ing, sure.
an ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed.
and jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through.

APOSTOLIC 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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav'n-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa - ther, we wor -



ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, O Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have



mer-cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right hand of the

Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer. For you a - lone are the
 Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone
 are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,
 in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. . . Lord, when the day of wrath comes we have no hope except in your grace. Make us so to watch for the last days that the consummation of our hope may be the joy of the marriage feast of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING

Amos 5:18-24 (*back cover*)

PSALM Psalm 70

The organist introduces the tone then it is sung unaccompanied by cantor/congregation

- ¹ Be pleased, O God, to de- | liver me;*
O LORD, make | haste to help me.
- ² **Let those who seek my life be ashamed and altogeth- | er dismayed;***
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.
- ³ Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over | me turn back,*
because they | are ashamed.
- ⁴ **Let all who seek you rejoice and be | glad in you;***
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great | is the LORD!"
- ⁵ But as for me, I am | poor and needy;*
come to me speedi- | ly, O God.
- ⁶ **You are my helper and | my deliverer;***
O LORD, | do not tarry.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

(back cover)

Stand

VERSE

Sung by all



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

Repeat alleluia



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

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 25:1-13

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Stan Reep

HYMN OF THE DAY

Wake, Awake for Night is Flying (ELW 436)



1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and all her
3 Glo - ri - a! Let heav'n a - dore you! Let saints and



on the heights are cry - ing: a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
heart with joy is spring-ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom.
an - gels sing be - fore you, with harp and cym-bal's clear-est tone.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
Her dear friend comes down, all glo - rious, the strong in
Gates of pearl, twelve por - tals gleam - ing, lead us to



thrill-ing cry re - joice - es: "Come forth, you maid-ens! Night is past.
 grace, in truth vic - to - rious: her star is ris'n; her light is come.
 bliss be - yond all dream - ing, with an - gel choirs a - round your throne.



The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!"
 Now come, O Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God's own Son.
 No eye has caught the light, no ear the thun - d'ring might



Al - le - lu - ia! Rise and pre - pare the feast to share;
 Sing ho - san - na! Oh, hear the call! Come one, come all,
 of such glo - ry. There we will go: what joy we'll know!



go, meet the bride - groom, who draws near.
 and fol - low to the ban - quet hall.
 There sweet de - light will ev - er flow.

Stand

NICENE 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;

**by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin
 Mary, and was made man.**

**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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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

Let us pray for the whole people of God, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

O God, come quickly to bringing salvation, and centering us in the hope found only in you. Deepen our faith through meaningful worship and send us out with your justice and truth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Restore creation. Provide clean water for all people and animals. Save us from foolish, wasteful living. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Let justice roll down like waters on all nations. Bless your people everywhere with wise leaders; save your children from war. We pray for the veterans of this community. Let them know that they are appreciated, supported and loved. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all who are in need. Provide for those experiencing homelessness or hunger, support the under- or unemployed, and comfort any who are suffering this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Inspire the music ministry of our congregation. Fill our worship with songs proclaiming your greatness. Help us to sing with joy telling boldly of your salvation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We remember our loved ones who have died and the promise of resurrected life in you (*especially*). Bring comfort and the assurance of new life to all who grieve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Sit

OFFERING 8:00 AM

Pange Lingua

Marcel Dupre'

10:30 AM Chancel Choir *All You Works of the Lord, Bless the Lord* Kenneth Jennings

Stand

OFFERTORY HYMN *The Sacrifices of God*

The gifts of bread and wine and monetary gifts are presented at the altar.

Litany in Phrygian Mode
Swedish *Mässa*, 1942
Adapted, REGINA H. FRYXELL

Unison

The sac - ri - fic - es of God are a bro - ken spir - it:

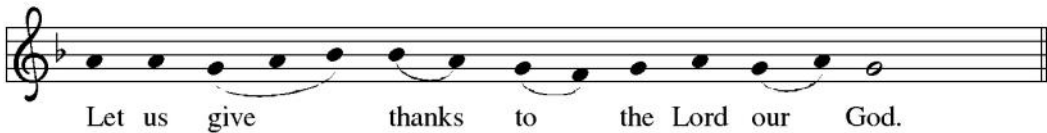
a bro - ken and a con-trite heart, O God, thou wilt not de-spise.

Do good in thy good pleas-ure un - to Zi - on: build thou the

walls of Je - ru - sa - lem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sac - ri -

fic - es of right-cous-ness: with burnt off - ering, and whole burnt off - ering.

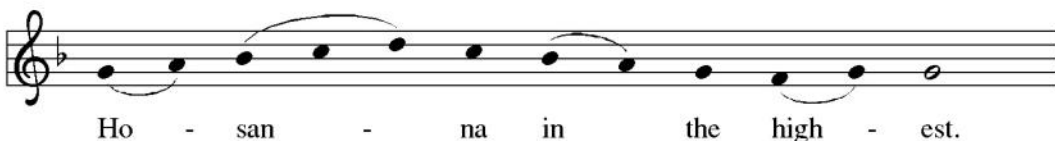
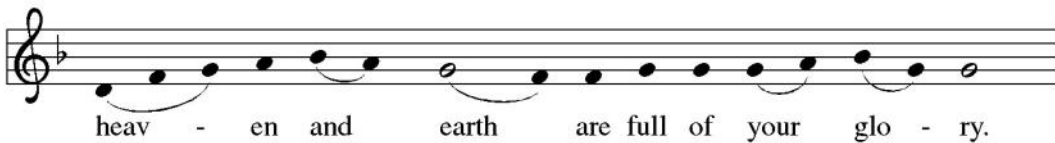
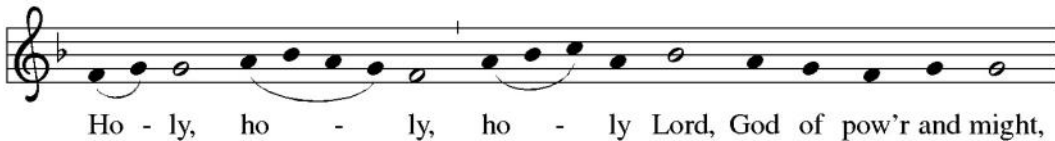
DIALOGUE



PREFACE *The preface appropriate to the day is said.*

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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:

SANCTUS *Sung by all.*





Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you

for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living
faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's
death until he comes.

Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place,
and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

**Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory
is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen**

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

THE 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;
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.**

FRACTION RITE *A brief silence is kept*

AGNUS DEI *Sung by all.*

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. A - men.

Sit The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Holy Communion at St. Paul's Church is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

Procedure for receiving Communion:

1. Come to communion using the center aisle.
2. Communion glasses are placed on credence tables at the front pews (left and right side).
3. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.
4. Take your place along the chancel step. The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.
5. Extend your hands to receive the communion host.
6. Consume the communion host.
7. Hold the communion glass with both hands at chest height so that the communion assistant can easily pour the wine into the glass.
8. Consume the wine before you leave the chancel edge.
9. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.
10. Return to your pew using the side aisle.

COMMUNION HYMN 10:30 AM *Sing to the Lord of Harvest (ELW 694)*



1 Sing to the Lord of har - vest your songs of love and praise;
2 God makes the clouds drop fat - ness, the des - erts bloom and spring,
3 Bring to this sa - cred al - tar the gifts his good-ness gave,



with joy - ful hearts and voic - es your al - le - lu - ias raise;
the hills leap up in glad - ness, the val - leys laugh and sing.
the gold - en sheaves of har - vest, the souls Christ died to save.



by him the roll - ing sea - sons in fruit - ful or - der move;
God fills them with his full - ness, all things with large in - crease,
Your hearts lay down be - fore him when at his feet you fall,



sing to the Lord of har - vest a joy - ous song of love.
and crowns the year with good - ness, with plen - ty and with peace.
and with your lives a - dore him who gave his life for all.

Stand

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers (ELW 244) next page

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Finale

Eric Thiman

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Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Set-up & Clean-up
11/12	8:00 AM	Bob Reed	Denise Rider	Harrison Palmer		John & Kathy Monk	Jeff Riese, Mike Postler, Alex Bastian	Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder
	10:30 AM	Tonya Cave	Anna Herdson	Scott Herdson	Rev. William Snyder	Mike & Becky Bingham, Tristan & Jessica Ericson	Kem Vaught, Larry Becker, Dave Kopp	Sandy Dickensheets, Tonya Cave



The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God in honor of Norma Shue's 90th birthday, with love from her children, grandchildren, & great-grandchildren.

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

Adult Sunday School Sessions



Nov. 12

Nov. 19

Nov. 26

Top 10 Bible Villains/Top 10 Bible Heroes

Ten Important Things that Happened between the Old & New Testament

Christ the King—Crowning the Year with Goodness, Mercy, and Love.

This Week at St. Paul's
Church Office hours Mon-Thurs 8am-4pm

Sunday, November 12—Photos for Directory

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
9:15 AM Sunday School for All
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Live Stream
11:45 AM Second Sunday Sandwiches
11:45 AM Youth Fellowship Grades 7-12—Youth Rm
5:00 PM Bridge of Hope Mtg.
6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

Monday, November 13

7:00 PM Council Meeting—Christ Hall

Tuesday, November 14

9:30 AM Food Pantry
6:00 PM CREATE—Preschool thru Grade 6

Please be sure to check with the church secretary *before* you schedule your meetings at the church. Call or email the office with your request.

Wednesday, November 15 Newsletter Deadline

10:00 AM Preschool & Pastor—Nave
10:30 AM Bible Study—Christ Hall
11:30 AM Mpuguso Mtg—Christ Hall
6:30 PM Volunteer cleaning of Christmas globes

Thursday, November 16

10:00 AM Preschool & Pastor—Nave
6:30 PM Handbell Choir—Chancel
7:30 PM Chancel Choir—Music Room

Sunday, November 19—Photos for Directory

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
9:15 AM Sunday School for All
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Live Stream
11:45 AM Annual Meeting followed by lunch
6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

Food Pantry—Fall

Thanksgiving in the Pantry Each year our preschool families collect food for our shoppers who come to the pantry. The number of shoppers has tripled since 2019. *You can help the preschool families in their collection by donating the following items by November 12.*

Stuffing Mix, Canned sweet potatoes, Instant potatoes

Please put your donations in the shopping cart in the Good Shephard Room. Thank You. We also need paper grocery bags with handles and plastic bags. Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a “special” envelope marked “Pantry”. **Volunteers are needed Tuesday mornings to help our neighbors shop. Call Teresa Rohrbaugh or the church office (717-843-8155) to volunteer.**

St Paul's is collecting clothing for Union Lutheran Church's Clothing Ministry. Union collects ‘gently used’ clothing (and shoes) for its clothing closet and offers it **free of charge** to needy families in the York City community. A bin has been placed in the Good Shepherd room to collect any clothing you would like to donate. These donations will surely be a blessing to our neighbors. Union's volunteers are very appreciative of our cooperation and our help.

2024 Flower Chart

The 2024 flower chart is posted on the Springettsbury vestibule bulletin board. The cost of the flowers is **\$35 per vase**. You are welcome to sign up to provide one or both vases. After you have signed up, simply make a check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and mark it altar flowers. This is a great way to honor someone, celebrate a milestone in life, or remember a loved one. The flowers may be taken home with you at the conclusion of the last liturgy or you may have them given to someone who is sick, shut it, or hospitalized. If you wish, you can contact the office to reserve a date, and to provide us with all of the correct information for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin.



Announcements and Up-dates for the week November 12, 2023

Deacon April Trout, ELCA representative to Konde Diocese, Tanzania, will be at St. Paul's on Wednesday evening November 29 at 6:00 PM. We will meet for a pot luck supper in Christ Hall where she will provide current information about our companion synod and our companion congregation Mpaguso Lutheran Church. Members of St. Paul's who are planning to travel to Tanzania during the summer of 2024 will meet following the supper at the appointed 7:00 PM meeting time. This pot luck meal provides opportunity for anyone interested in our mission partnership to join in conversation with April. Please notify Pastor Reep if you plan to attend.

New green and white sets of altar and pulpit hangings and clergy vestments will be blessed and dedicated on Sunday November 26, Christ the King, at the 10:30 AM liturgy. This gift was made by Martina Uffelman in memory of her late husband John.

Glass globes for the aisle posts will be cleaned on Wednesday November 15 at 6:30 PM in Christ Hall. Please come and help with this task. Christmas Eve is 6 weeks away and the globes must be ready for use when we decorate on Wednesday December 13.

Photos for a new pictorial directory are being taken in Christ Hall. The link for signing up is <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040D4BAEAC2AAAF49-45117049-stpauls#/>

In conjunction with the 60th Anniversary of the St. Paul's Lutheran Preschool a newly designed T-shirt is available for purchase. The preschool receives a percentage from each T-shirt purchased. Buy one to wear on Pentecost! The bright red color is sure to be noticed and you will help get the word out about our fabulous early childhood education program at St. Paul's.

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held next Sunday, November 19, 2023 at Noon in the Fellowship Hall. The Fellowship Committee will provide the meal. We will elect leaders, vote on proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, adopt a 2024 budget, and hear from council members and committee chairs regarding current and future ministry plans. Do plan to attend.

Mutual Ministry Committee has planned this year's staff recognition to be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting on November 19. Please do prepare a note of thanks, share a story about a meaningful part of ministry that you have experienced during the year and place it in the specially marked basket. Make certain you place the staff person's name on the exterior of the envelope. Blank cards are provided if needed.

Help us celebrate 60 years of St Paul's Lutheran Preschool!

T-Shirts for sale November 12-30. Orders go in on December 1st.

Pick-up will be Sunday December 17 during church 8-12 and Dec 18-20 during school hours 9-12.

Adult sizes Small-4XL. Youth XS-XL.

Short sleeved \$20 or long sleeved \$25 are for sale.

Adult sizes come in Hanes Cotton or a Tri-blend short sleeve upgrade for an additional \$10.

Samples will be in the Good Shepard room on Sunday 11/12, 11/19 and 11/27 to see sizes.

Orders are to be placed online. Please see clipboard by samples if you need assistance.

Shipping is free to the church or may be shipped to your home for \$9.95.



Proper 27 A, 2023

Amos 5:18-24

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Matthew 25:1-13

In 1979 the family car was a Buick Le Sabre. It was the car that traveled everywhere from Doctor's appointments to the weekly grocery run. It was October. I was home from college. Dad thought that we should go to Niagara Falls for lunch. My first childhood trip to "The Falls" predated my memory. So to rectify that childhood deficiency we took a road trip in the Buick. That car was massive. It cruised along like you were riding on a cloud. When we arrived at Niagara Falls mid-morning, I was overwhelmed by the thunderous power of the water cascading over the edge. So much water flowing continuously without concern for what or who was in its path. It just kept coming filling the chasm below, a chasm that never filled up, but simply moved the water on.

Amos' image of justice; to have it flow like Niagara Falls. Justice for Amos is to be a powerful, thunderous, continuous, force within the community of faith, for all people, not just the well positioned.

Amos heard God's people speak of "the day of the Lord." He heard them talk about it as though it was going to be a time of light, protection, rest, a time similar to a festival or a solemn assembly, with songs and harps and music making. But Amos proclaimed that nothing could be farther from the truth. "The day of the Lord" was more likely going to be a day of darkness, despair, gloom, noise and confusion. Amos called them out for their contempt of God's law and how they had drifted into religious complacency. Amos had come to the conclusion that God would no longer forgive his people. As you might imagine that message was not well received.

In 1993 the family vehicle was a Ford pickup. (That's 14 years later.) It was the vehicle that traveled everywhere from Doctor's appointments to the weekly grocery run. It was November. I was visiting my parents who then lived in Durango CO. Dad thought that we should take a road trip to Utah to see my brother Mark. The pickup was equipped with extra fuel tanks in order to make the journey across the arid land where there were few if any gasoline stations, stores, shops, or restrooms. It was my first time across the plateau of New Mexico and Arizona. We took the most direct route; these were less than secondary roads! The ride in the pickup wasn't like the 79 Buick Le Sabre, but the landscape was a vast, dusty, dry, sparkling gem in the sunlight. We traveled roads through areas during the month of November that were not passable in the spring time during the rainy season. The dried up stream beds that we drove across in November were not passable when it rained in April. When it rained water flowed, even flooded.

Amos' image of righteousness didn't permit a dry season and rainy season, an "off" season or an "on" season. Righteousness was to be an ever flowing stream, continuous, not connected to weather patterns or whether or not you personally felt up to it.

God's people had taken complete comfort in their election traditions, how God from the beginning selected them, chose them, saved them, rescued them, called them into being and called them out from among other peoples to be a blessing for others. Amos assessed the spiritual climate among the people of the Northern Kingdom and found it to be lacking. He provided what amounted to an unwelcome critique. God wouldn't stand for the thoughtless upper class, complacent with its abundant material possessions and ill-gotten prosperity. Amos found the quality of

their heart and mind to be deficient. There was little concern for others. Their self-centered life style had called into question their identity as God's elect people, people who were to be a blessing to others. Righteousness is to be an ever-flowing stream!

Pulling into our driveway the headlights of the Santa Fe passed a beam of light across the front lawn making the green grass glow; the pergola cast eerie shadows on the exterior of the house, and then the brilliant reflection of the glistening white garage door into my eyes. With the adjustment to the clock last weekend it wasn't really late, although it seemed like midnight when I arrived home.

We hear the parable of the bridesmaids. There are 10 of them. Some were wise and some were foolish. Five of them took flasks of oil so as to have enough fuel to provide illumination through the darkest longest night. By contrast, five others simply took their lamps. There was a delay in the bridegroom's coming. All of the bridesmaids became drowsy and slept. When the cry came announcing the bridegroom's arrival they all awoke and trimmed their lamps to light the path, to illumine the way. Those who are prepared don't share. Those who needed oil went to search for some in the market. During the confusion the bridegroom came. Those who were ready and waiting went into the wedding banquet and the door was shut. Later when the others arrived and they pleaded at the door for the bridegroom to open to them they were told that the bridegroom didn't know them. Matthew's account of the gospel calls the community of faith into the light.

"Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." We are bearers of light. Making good things glow, removing eerie shadows of despair, and positioning our lamps to light the way so that all eyes may be drawn toward the long expected One, Jesus. Our enterprise is to make God's word of hope and salvation known by the illuminating power of the fruit born from obedience; good works, good behavior, love of enemy, love of Jesus and love of God. Darkness falls with regularity and we all grow drowsy, but the command comes, "stay awake!"

Road trips make for great stories and lasting memories. They don't have to be long trips; like to Niagara Falls, or across the aired plateau of New Mexico and Arizona. They may be short trips to the Doctor's or the weekly grocery run. And the ones we make after the sun goes down make us appreciative of headlights to illumine the way.

Together, with all God's people, we are on a journey. Sometimes the journey is smooth and cloud like as in the days of the 79 Buick Le Sabre. And sometimes the journey is rather stiff and bumpy, as in the days of the 93 Ford truck. Amos wants us to remember whose we are and what we are to be about; justice, righteousness, blessing. For Amos there is no time for complacency he proclaims consistency for God's people. And Matthew stresses the promised return of the one who enters into the Holy City riding on a donkey, who is wrongly accused, sentenced to death on a cross, dies and it raised by the Father on the third day. Jesus is the Bridegroom, he is the one for whom we wait. "Stay awake!" His justice and righteousness provides the way for us, illuminating the path, so that together with all of God's people, we have a seat at the heavenly banquet table. Amen.

FIRST READING: Amos 5:18-24

Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD!

Why do you want the day of the LORD?

It is darkness, not light;

¹⁹as if someone fled from a lion,

and was met by a bear;

or went into the house and rested a hand

against the wall,

and was bitten by a snake.

²⁰Is not the day of the LORD darkness,

not light,

and gloom with no brightness in it?

²¹I hate, I despise your festivals,

and I take no delight in your solemn

assemblies.

²²Even though you offer me your burnt

offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them;

and the offerings of well-being of your

fatted animals

I will not look upon.

²³Take away from me the noise of your songs;

I will not listen to the melody of your

harps.

²⁴But let justice roll down like waters,

and righteousness like an ever-flowing

stream.

or Wisdom 6:12-16 [not printed]

Psalm 70

or Wisdom 6:17-20

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died

and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1-13

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹²But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Next Sunday's Readings: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30.

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Tracks 1 and 2
ELCA-R

Poinsettia Orders

Decorating our beautiful church chancel and nave with brilliant red poinsettias is a Christmas tradition at St. Paul's. With the joyful anticipation of celebrating the Nativity of our Lord we are asking you to contribute a poinsettia. Plants this year are \$12.00. An order form is below. The donor recognitions will be printed in the Christmas bulletins. Once again, thank you for your support and for helping to make our church ready for our Christmas liturgies. The deadline for orders is Nov.26.



**Cost is \$12.00 per plant.
They will be RED in
color.**

**List plant(s) as shown below
(please print clearly)**

Number of plants _____ in Honor of:

Number of plants _____ in Loving Memory of:

Number of plants _____ Dedicated to the Glory of God

Your Name:

**Plants may be picked up anytime *after* the
10:30 a.m. service on Monday, December 25th.**

Total # of Plants _____ @ \$12.00 each = \$ _____
Checks made payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church

The completed order form with payment attached may be placed
in the offering plate or returned to the church office.

Orders due by Sunday, November 26th