A vibrant, abstract illustration of Jesus. He is depicted from the chest up, with his hands raised in a gesture of blessing or teaching. He has dark skin, a beard, and long hair, and is wearing a red tunic and a blue and yellow shawl. The background is a complex, colorful composition of swirling lines and shapes in shades of yellow, orange, red, and blue, creating a sense of movement and energy. The overall style is reminiscent of modern religious art or stained glass.

Jesus
showed them his
hands and
his feet

LUKE 24:40

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

www.stpaulsyork.org

Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net

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 188 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 or use the QR Code provided.

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.

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.



Lutheran Church in York, PA - St. Paul's Lutheran...

stpaulsyork.org

Third Sunday of Easter Sunday, April 14, 2024 Holy Communion 8:00 & 10:30 AM

PRELUDE

Day of Arising

David Cherwien

Stand

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia!

ENTRANCE HYMN

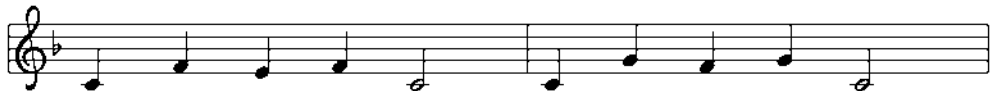
Day of Arising (ELW 374)



1 Day of a - ris - ing, Christ on the road - way,
2 When we are walk - ing, doubt - ful and dread - ing,
3 Lo, I am with you, Je - sus has spo - ken.
4 Christ, our com - pan - ion, hope for the jour - ney.



un - known com - pan - ion walks with his own,
blind - ed by sad - ness, slow - ness of heart,
This is Christ's prom - ise, this is Christ's sign:
bread of com - pas - sion, o - pen our eyes.



When they in - vite him, as fades the first day,
yet Christ walks with us, ev - er a - wait - ing
when the church gath - ers, when bread is bro - ken,
Grant us your vi - sion, set all hearts burn - ing



and bread is bro - ken, Christ is made known.
our in - vi - ta - tion: Stay, do not part.
there Christ is with us in bread and wine.

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.**

KYRIE

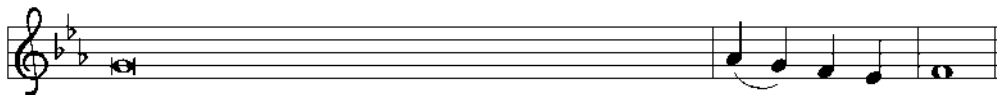


In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

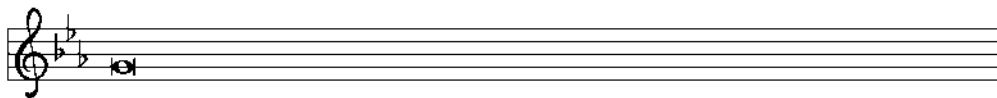
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For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



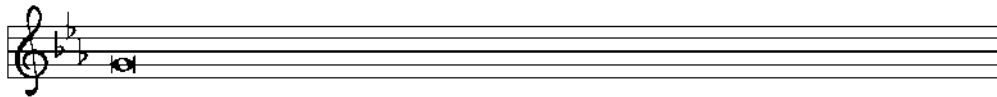
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

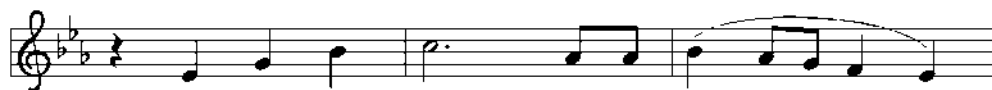


Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE



Glo - ry to God in the high -



est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - 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,



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.

Continued on next page...



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. . . O God, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world, rescuing us from the hopelessness of death. Grant your faithful people a share in the joys that are eternal; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

Sit

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING

Acts 3:12-19

(back cover)

PSALM

Psalm 4

spoken antiphonally Pulpit side/Font side

¹ Answer me when I call, O God, defender | of my cause;*

you set me free when I am hard-pressed; have mercy on me and | hear my prayer.

- ² "You mortals, how long will you dishon- | or my glory;*
 how long will you worship dumb idols and run af- | ter false gods?"
- ³ **Know that the LORD does wonders | for the faithful;***
when I call upon the LORD, | he will hear me.
- ⁴ Tremble, then, and | do not sin;*
 speak to your heart in silence up- | on your bed.
- ⁵ **Offer the appointed | sacrifices,***
and put your trust | in the LORD.
- ⁶ Many are saying, "Oh, that we might see | better times!"*
 Lift up the light of your countenance upon | us, O LORD.
- ⁷ **You have put gladness | in my heart,***
more than when grain and wine and | oil increase.
- ⁸ I lie down in peace; at once I | fall asleep;*
 for only you, LORD, make me | dwell in safety.

SECOND READING

1 John 3:1-7

(back cover)

Stand

VERSE

Al - le - lu - ia, 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

Luke 24:36b-48

(back cover)

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke
At the conclusion of the Gospel.
 The Gospel of the Lord.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Reep

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY *Peace to Soothe Our Bitter Woes (ELW 381)*



1 Peace, to soothe our bit - ter woes, God in Christ on us be - stows;
2 Peace with - in the church still dwells in our wel - comes and fare - wells;



Je - sus bought our peace with God with his ho - ly, pre - cious blood;
and through God's bap - tis - mal pow'r peace sur - rounds our dy - ing hour.



peace in him for sin - ners found is the gos - pel's joy - ful sound.
Peace be with you, full and free, now and through e - ter - ni - ty.

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

Rejoicing in the risen Christ let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

O God, as we share the holy meal that is the body and blood of Jesus given for us, lead us to share all that we have, and find, in generosity, abundant life. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

O God, calm storms, bring water to parched places, and protect the climate so that life is sustained in all its variety. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

O God, instruct lawmakers, judges, and elected officials to make decisions grounded in your justice and care for all people. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

O God, encourage those who are in times of transition, facing the loss of old ways and routines and anticipating change. Guide those who journey in grief, hope, and uncertainty (*especially*). God of grace,
hear our prayer.

O God, help us to remember our identity and purpose in ministry and mission. Move us to love our neighbors as ourselves and to share in beloved community. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O God, we remember our beloved who have died (*especially*). As we remember and share their love, comfort those who mourn with the promise of life eternal. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living 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.

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

8:00 AM

Organ *I Know My Redeemer Lives*

Raymond Haan

10:30 AM

Chancel Choir *This Joyful Eastertide*

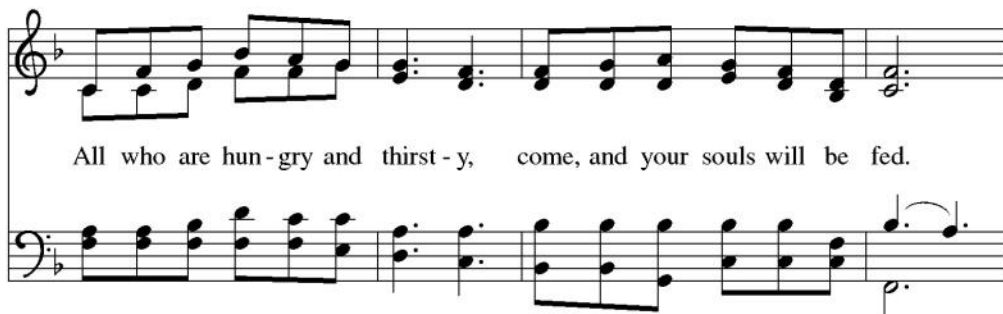
Alan Bullard

OFFERTORY

Come to the Table (ELW 481)



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.

Continued on next page...

Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Merciful Father,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

DIALOGUE

Sung by Pastor and congregation

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

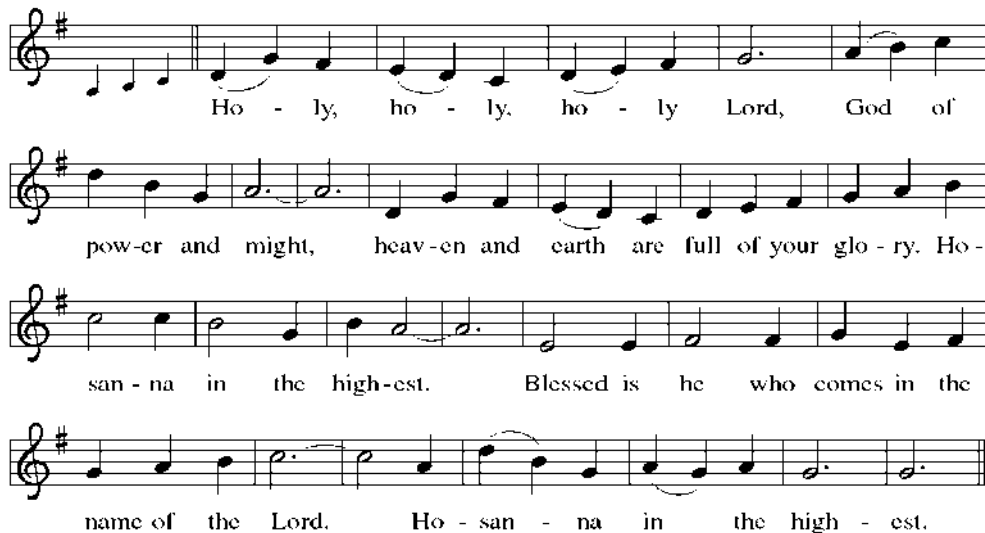
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. But chiefly we are bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of our Lord; for he is the true Passover Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who by his death has destroyed death, and by his rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING

You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all holiness;
you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence.
We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us.
We thank you for the new world to come and for the love that will rule all in all.
We praise you for the grace shown to Israel, your chosen,
the people of your promise:
the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land,
the memory of the fathers, the homecoming from exile,
and the prophets' words that will not be in vain.
In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son,
who fulfilled and will fulfill all your promises.

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 is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the incarnation of your Son:
his human birth and the covenant he made with us.

We remember the sacrifice of his life:

his eating with outcasts and sinners, and his acceptance of death.

But chiefly on this day we remember his rising from the tomb,

his ascension to the seat of power,

and his sending of the holy and life-giving Spirit.

We cry out for the resurrection of our lives, when Christ will come again in
beauty and power to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,

that we and all who share in this bread and cup

may be united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

may enter the fullness of the kingdom of heaven,

and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

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

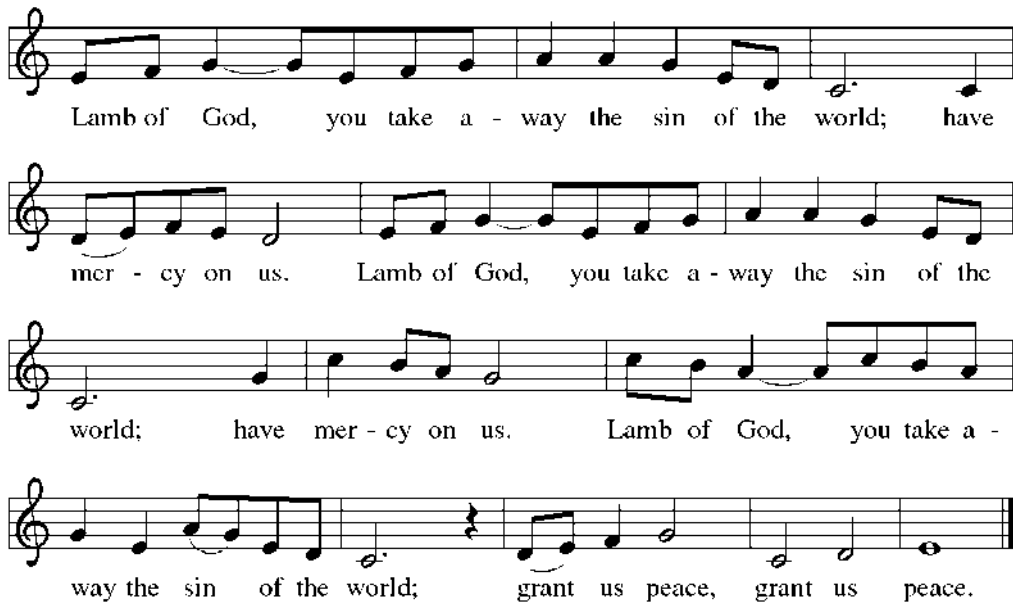
When we eat this bread, we share the body of Christ.

When we drink this cup, we share the blood of Christ.

**Reveal yourself to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, as once you revealed
yourself to your disciples.**

AGNUS DEI

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



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

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Our Communion is “open” to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist. We receive communion by intinction today.

1. Come to communion using the center aisle.
2. The Pastor will give the host, communicant dips the host in the chalice
3. Return to your pew using the side aisle.

COMMUNION CANTICLE *This is the Feast*



Refrain
This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose
 2 Sing . . with all the peo - ple of God, and



blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.
 join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:



Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and strength, and
 Bless - ing and hon - or, glo - ry and might be to



hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.
 God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



3 For the Lamb who was slain has be -



gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

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. All powerful and ever-living God, in the Eucharist we celebrate the Mystery of Faith. By this Easter Sacrament, renew in us the gift of faith in the New Life it promises. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever. **Amen**

BLESSING

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

HYMN

The Risen Christ (ELW 390)



1 The ris - en Christ, who walks on wound-ed feet
2 The ris - en Christ, who stands with wound-ed side,
3 The ris - en Christ, who breaks with wound-ed hand
4 May we, Christ's bod - y, walk and serve and stand



from gar - den tomb through dark-ened cit - y street,
breathes out his Spir - it on them to a - bide
the bread for those who fail to un - der - stand,
with those op - pressed in this and ev - 'ry land,



un - locks the door of grief, de - spair, and fear,
whose faith still wa - vers, who dare not be - lieve;
re - veals him - self, de - spite their lin - g'ring tears,
till all are blessed and can a bless - ing be,



and speaks a word of peace to all who hear.
new grace, new strength, new pur - pose they re - ceive.
en - flames their hearts, then quick - ly dis - ap - pears.
re - stored in Christ to true hu - man - i - ty.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

He is Risen, indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

The Risen Christ

Benjamin M. Culli

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This Week at St. Paul's

Church office open Mon–Thurs 7:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 14

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream
11:45 AM Second Sunday Sandwiches
3:00 PM York College Choral Concert
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Monday, April 15

6:30 PM Council Meeting—Christ Hall
9:30 AM Pantry

Tuesday, April 16

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

Wednesday April 17

10:00 AM Preschool w/ Pastor—Nave
10:30 Bible Study

Thursday, April 18

10:00 AM Preschool w/ Pastor—Nave
6:30 PM Handbell Choir
7:30 PM Chancel Choir

Sunday, April 21 Preschool Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream
Preschool/Children's Easter Play
4:30 PM Tanzania Mtg—Christ Hall
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Announcements and Up-dates for the week April 14, 2024

Benevolence Fund Applications are available (bright green paper) or online by request from the church office. If you are seeking funding to support a need in our community and beyond, please complete and submit an application. We still have capacity for projects in 2024. We are currently soliciting applications for 2025.

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 is in the Good Shepherd room for collections.

Jackson Elementary School Summer Activities—Please consider donating summer activity items for the Jackson students. Social Ministries Committee is collecting the following: **bubbles, jump ropes, flash cards, regular playing cards, sidewalk chalk, books, coloring books, activity books, crayons, colored pencils, and markers.** Donation boxes are located in the Good Shepherd Room **through May 5th.** Your generosity is much appreciated.



*The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God by:
Tina Llorente and in celebration of Joey Kinkella's
21st birthday by his father Joe.*



The Mother's Day Elegant Desserts Bake Sale is only a month away! Please contact Martina Uffelman if you can help. A dessert sign-up sheet is available in the Good Shepherd Room. All proceeds will support the Mpuguso congregation and the Konde Diocese while our mission delegation is with them this June.

Preschool Sunday is next week. Please join us in welcoming our Preschool families to the church. The children will perform the songs they have learned from Pastor Reep during Chapel Time. Immediately following the church service, we will host an Open House and invite the congregational members and preschool families to stay for a bagged lunch. Following lunch, church members may take a tour of the preschool rooms.

***Come Out, Lazarus!* An Eastertide Play/Musical for Children Sunday, April 21 at the 10:30 AM liturgy—In conjunction with Preschool Sunday**



Rehearsals are winding down. The children are learning the story of Lazarus from the 11th chapter of the Gospel of St. John. This is a resurrection story and is fitting for the Easter season. The children are having fun learning songs, adding movement, and committing the biblical text to memory. Please do come and support the children.

R&K Sub Fundraiser for St. Paul's Preschool—Order subs and pretzel sandwiches to help support the preschool! The money raised will be used for additional programs, updating materials and supplies for our students. Order forms will be in today's bulletin. Please make checks out to St. Paul's Lutheran Church Preschool or provide cash in exact change. **Turn in orders to the church office by April 19.** All sandwiches may be picked up on Tuesday, May 7 from 11:30-12 noon or 6-30 PM in the Good Shepherd room.

Upcoming Concerts at St. Paul's

Sunday, April 14 York College concert 3:00pm
York College Chorale and Chamber Singers under the direction of Dr. Grace Muzzo present a concert filled with music for voices, piano 4 hands and organ.

Sunday, April 28 The Arsenal Duo (organ and piano) concert 3:00pm
Pittsburgh musicians Nathan Carterette (piano) and Edward Alan Moore (organ) have joined forces as The Arsenal Duo, presenting concerts that unite their respective instruments in a unique and spectacular fashion. They draw from a diverse repertoire, including works originally for piano and orchestra; works original to piano and organ; their own transcriptions; and solo offerings. Sponsored by York Chapter AGO

Sunday, May 5 High School Choirs concert 3:00pm
Come hear the best select singers from Central York High School, West York High School, and Red Lion High School in a combined choral concert presentation.

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Comm. Assist	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Guild
4/14	8:00 AM	Bob Reed	Ken Hinkle	John Monk		John & Kathy Monk	Team 3E: Sammy Barnes, Norma Shue, Cliff Beck, Sheridan Palmer	Tim & Melissa Yakim
	10:30 AM	Tonya Cav	Larry Becker	Ed LeCates	Deb Becker	Mike & Becky Bingham	Team 3L: Dan Garber, Joe Guarriello, Larry Becker	Tonya Cave, Sandy Dickensheets

Mother's Day Geranium Sale The Auxiliary to SpiriTrust Lutheran of York is holding its annual Mother's Day Geranium Sale to benefit the residents of Kelly Drive and Sprengle Drive Villages. Geraniums are available in red, white and salmon at a cost of \$5.00 per plant. Please contact Jennifer Ports at 443- 310-0897 or jleigh36@gmail.com to place an order. Checks should be made payable to "Auxiliary to SpiriTrust Lutheran" and must be received by Wednesday, May 1. The flowers will be delivered to your home unless you make arrangements to obtain them at St. Paul's between 10:15 and 10:30 am on Saturday May 11th. Please see the order form on the bulletin board at the Springettsbury entrance for more information.

GERANIUMS



Children's Sermons Summer 2024—Last year, during the sabbatical time provided for Pastor Reep, children's sermons were provided each Sunday morning throughout the summer by members of the congregation. We are hoping that you will consider using your talent to strengthen the congregation again this year. We are blessed to have families who faithfully bring their children to worship each week. A sign-up sheet attached to a clip board is located on the table in the Good Shepherd Room. Simply sign your name on the week you select. The themes and Biblical texts for each week are listed on the sign-up sheet. In advance, thank you for your time and consideration.

Food Pantry News—We need **canned soup, fruit, canned tuna!** Please put your donations in the shopping cart in the Good Shepherd Room. We are always in need of 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 also needed for a variety of tasks. Contact Patty Snyder, Ken Hinkle Teresa Rohrbaugh or the church office (717-843-

Benevolence Fund Applications are available (bright green paper) or online by request from the church office. If you are seeking funding to support a need in our community and beyond, please complete and submit an application. We still have capacity for projects in 2024. We are currently soliciting applications for 2025.

Tomorrow is tax day in the USA. It is the day when we as citizens and residents in the land account for our income, what we have earned through work and investment. And from that the government extracts a portion deemed necessary to operate the country supporting communal life together. That is one of many constructs available to make sense out of April 15.

Last week the morning news aired a segment featuring a tax expert. He had many tips, shared links to access forms, and identified some common errors and pitfalls associated with completing tax filing. He also referenced some faulty information circulating on social media about ways to file to increase or insure a refund. While the clip from the social media site put forth a compelling and persuasive presentation on which boxes to check and which to leave empty to garner a greater return, the tax expert cautioned that taking such action could lead to undesirable consequences. “The IRS isn’t going to care if you say “You didn’t know” or “that you saw it on TikTok.” “Pleading ignorance” he continued “is not a legitimate response for inaction or action taken.”

Ignorance is referenced in the reading from Acts this morning. Peter addresses the crowd gathered at the temple, in the portico where the religious elite congregate. In the verses preceding the portion of the first reading a lame man who begged at the gate was healed. This powerful witness to Jesus and the resurrection has created a bit of a stir. The group is mixed; religious elite, faithful Jews, followers of Jesus, ordinary folks surprised by the lame man’s restoration. Peter calls the group gathered “friends” as a way to reduce divisions, tensions, and seek common ground. Here it is that Peter puts forth ignorance in a way that on the surface sounds different from what an IRS agent might say. And yet in the end, ignorance isn’t an acceptable response. *“And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer.”* Peter calls upon their ignorance as a way to soften the hard cold reality that sin is Sin and that the things they left undone, to use language from the brief order of confession and forgiveness, remain in a column for which accounting is needed. Ignorance is not an acceptable defense. Peter is proclaiming to the entire crowd the message of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Peter’s message follows in direct line with that of the resurrected Lord Jesus. *“Thus it is written, that the messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”*

Most of the time we get caught up in the first part of the story, the part about Jesus appearing to his followers, his revealing his nail pierced hands and the wound in his side, and the fear that permeated followers, fear that can lead to inaction. Jesus speaks peace. His followers remain startled and terrified. He even eats with them illustrating that he is not a phantom or a ghost, and referencing the many times they ate together, shared food with others during difficult times, and participated in what many call the Last Supper, the night of his betrayal and arrest. Ignorance among this group is not something to be claimed, or to be selected as a defense for action or inaction. The risen Lord Jesus opens their minds and sends them in mission. Proclaim repentance and forgiveness in the name of Jesus. And then we hear the concluding line from the gospel reading *“You are witnesses of these things.”* The “these things” have everything to do with salvation history. Not the long view from creation through the birth of Jesus, but the events of the most recent days. A summary was included on Easter day from both Acts and First Corinthians and for which I offered a children’s sermon; Jesus died, recorded in the scriptures, He was

buried, He was raised from death to life, He appeared to Peter, his followers, and to 500!

Most of us are more likely to bear witness to a favorite TV show, a book that we are reading, or a post from social media, than to give account of the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. We may even loan a book, or share a post, forwarding it on or posting it on our own account, than we are to share “*these things*” that have been revealed to us this morning. Perhaps our own fears and doubts make it easier to bear witness to a great movie, a book we would recommend to a friend, an accomplishment we would share with a coworker, a highlight from a sports team whose jerseys comprise our wardrobe. But to witness to “*these things*” which bring release from what holds us captive, that allows for a reordering of life, that transforms perceptions and understandings through God’s word of grace, love, peace, patience may prove to be as challenging for us as it was for those first followers. And yet, both the Risen Christ gathered with his followers, and Peter at the temple in Jerusalem, call upon us to be witnesses of “*these things*” the events surrounding the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, which make possible the part of the story in Acts that precedes the first reading, a lame man leaping, and from Luke’s gospel, startled terrified disciples believing.

Witnesses are not limited to the women at the tomb on that Easter morning. Witnesses are not limited to Cleopas and his friend at Emmaus on that Easter evening. Witnesses are not limited to the disciples to whom Jesus spoke peace on that Easter night. Witnesses are not limited to Peter and the man restored to perfect health in Jerusalem. Witnesses are made through the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. You and I are witnesses of these things so that a time of wholeness and peace may come for all people. Such wholeness and peace come from the presence of the Lord. Please don’t think that you can claim ignorance for not bearing witness. It is hard to even consider that Jesus the resurrected Lord, Peter speaking in Jerusalem and the IRS, all have something in common; ignorance isn’t a response for action or inaction.

Tomorrow is tax day in the USA. It is the day when annually we give account of our earnings. As disciples of the risen Christ we hold that the day is coming when we will give a cumulative account before God. With both scenarios there are experts who will provide tips along the way, offer acceptable forms for engagement, site videos and posts from Facebook, Instagram, X, and TikTok. While the government extracts a portion deemed necessary to operate the country supporting communal life, God’s consistent message in preparing for that great day has everything to do with the message wrapped up and surrounding “these things” for which we are witnesses. Chiefly “*that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations.*” Luther writes in the catechism “*for where there is forgiveness of sins, there is life and salvation.*” It is through repentance and forgiveness that God, through Christ Jesus, and his Holy Spirit supports communal life, granting healing and removing fear. God’s day to give account may or may not be April 15. God’s accounting is not to be feared. God’s accounting gives life to and for all. And while many have tried throughout the millennia to zero in on a day and time for humanity to give account before God, a kind of theological April 15th, they have remained ignorant to God’s time of grace. “*You are witnesses of these things.*” Amen.

FIRST READING: Acts 3:12-19

[Peter] addressed the people, “You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. ¹⁴But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, ¹⁵and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

¹⁷“And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.”

Psalm 4**SECOND READING: 1 John 3:1-7**

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

⁴Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ⁵You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. ⁷Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

GOSPEL: Luke 24:36b-48

Jesus himself stood among [the disciples] and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ³⁷They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.”