



My eyes have seen  
your salvation

LUKE 2:30



# St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

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[www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org)

[www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com](http://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](http://www.stpaulsyork.org) or use the QR Code provided.



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

[stpaulsyork.org](http://stpaulsyork.org)

**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 nurse-ry which is accessed through the double doors front right.

**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.

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

**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.

***The altar flowers are presented to the glory of God in honor of the Baptism of Hannah Louse Mullen by her parents, Charles & Nicole.***



Flowers This Week



Altar Flower sponsors are needed for 2 vases on 2/23 & 3/2. Vases are \$35 per. Please contact the church office you would like to sponsor a vase.

## STAFF

Pastor

Youth Director

Organist, Choir Director

Children's Music Director

Bell Choirs Director

Secretary

Sexton

Preschool Director

Rev. Stanley Reep

Kelly Moore-Spencer

Victor Fields

Juliana Jones

Leah McComas

Patee Pizzirusso

Ted Weikert

Deb Becker

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[director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com](mailto:director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com)

**February 2, 2025**  
**Presentation of Our Lord**  
**Holy Communion 8:00 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.**  
*Musical setting #1 Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

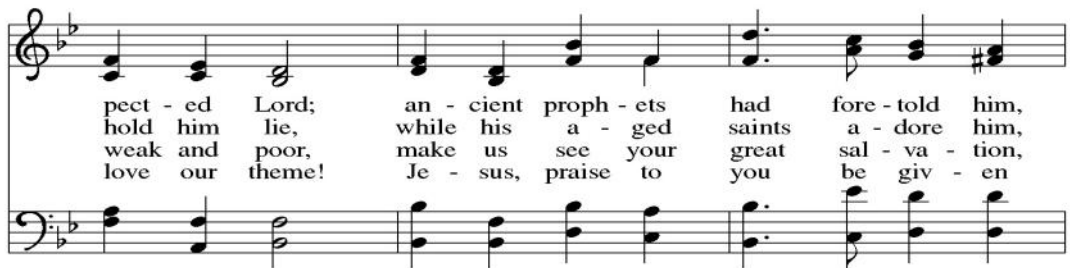
**PRELUDE**      *Alleluia, Song of Gladness*      Robert Buckley Farlee

**10:30 A.M. SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM** (*insert*)


**ENTRANCE HYMN**      *In His Temple Now Behold Him (ELW 417)*



1 In his tem - ple now be - hold him, see the long - ex -  
2 In the arms of her who bore him, vir - gin pure, be -  
3 Je - sus, by your pre - sen - ta - tion, when they blessed you,  
4 Prince and au - thor of sal - va - tion, be your bound - less



pect - ed Lord; an - cient proph - ets had fore - told him,  
hold him lie, while his a - ged saints a - dore him,  
weak and poor, make us see your great sal - va - tion,  
love our theme! Je - sus, praise to you be giv - en



God has sent the prom - ised Word. Now to praise him,  
ere in per - fect faith they die. Al - le - lu - ia!  
seal us with your prom - ise sure; and pre - sent us,  
by the world you did re - deem, with the Fa - ther




his re - deem - ed shall break forth with one ac - cord.  
Al - le - lu - ia! Lo, the in - car - nate God Most High!  
in your glo - ry, to your Fa - ther, cleansed and pure.  
and the Spir - it God of maj - es - ty su - preme!

## 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



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.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for you have sent us your salvation. Inspire us by your Holy Spirit to see with our own eyes him who is the glory of Israel and the light for all nations, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Sit*

**BELL CHOIR**      *Go Tell It on the Mountain*      arr. Sandra Eithun

**FIRST READING**      Malachi 3:1-4      (*back cover*)

**PSALMODY**      **Psalm 84**      *Spoken responsively*

<sup>1</sup> How dear to me is your dwelling, O | LORD of hosts!\*

My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the | living God.

<sup>2</sup> **The sparrow has found her a house**

**and the swallow a nest where she may | lay her young,\***

**by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King | and my God.**

- <sup>3</sup> Happy are they who dwell | in your house!\*
- They will always be | praising you.
- <sup>4</sup> **Happy are the people whose strength | is in you,\***  
**whose hearts are set on the | pilgrims' way.**
- <sup>5</sup> Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a | place of springs,\*  
 for the early rains have covered it with | pools of water.
- <sup>6</sup> **They will climb from | height to height,\***  
**and the God of gods will reveal him- | self in Zion.**
- <sup>7</sup> LORD God of hosts, | hear my prayer;\*
- hearken, O | God of Jacob.
- <sup>8</sup> **Behold our defend- | er, O God;\***  
**and look upon the face of | your anointed.**
- <sup>9</sup> For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in | my own room,\*  
 and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God  
 than to dwell in the tents | of the wicked.
- <sup>10</sup> **For the LORD God is both | sun and shield;\***  
**he will give | grace and glory;**
- <sup>11</sup> no good thing will the | LORD withhold\*  
 from those who walk | with integrity.
- <sup>12</sup> **O | LORD of hosts,\***  
**happy are they who put their | trust in you!**

## SECOND READING

Hebrews 2: 14-18

(back cover)

*Stand*

## VERSE

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

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

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

*Repeat alleluia*

## HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40 (back cover)

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

*At the conclusion of the Gospel.*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*

## SERMON

*Stand*

HYMN OF THE DAY

*What Child is This (ELW 296)*



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?  
Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!



**8:00 AM NICENE CREED**

*10:30 AM Continues with the prayers*

**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 in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

*A brief silence.*

God of grace, you instilled in Anna and Simeon faith, dreams, and the welcome of a child. Bless elders who embody vibrant faith and hope; bless the newly baptized, especially Hannah Louise. Energize us to share faith from generation to generation. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Bless the birds of the air, the animals of the valley, and renew our stewardship of this bountiful creation. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Strengthen our resolve to care for all children and strive for peace among nations. Refine our nation where we have failed to root out racism (*especially as we honor Black History Month*) and guide us in truth-telling and reconciliation. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**



We hold in prayer all who long for sustainable housing, secure employment, access to medical care, and for health and wellness (*especially*). God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Bless those who serve as communion servers, homebound visitors, baptismal sponsors, confirmation mentors, and as prayer support. Reveal yourself in the neighborly care we give and receive. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We thank you for Jesus' life and for his death that has destroyed death. We remember the dearly departed (*especially*), as they dwell with you in your holy courts now and forever. Join us with them at the last day. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people through your Son, Jesus Christ our 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

Organ

*Take My Life and Let It Be*

Theodore Beck

## OFFERTORY

*As with Gladness Men of Old (ELW 302) stanza 3*

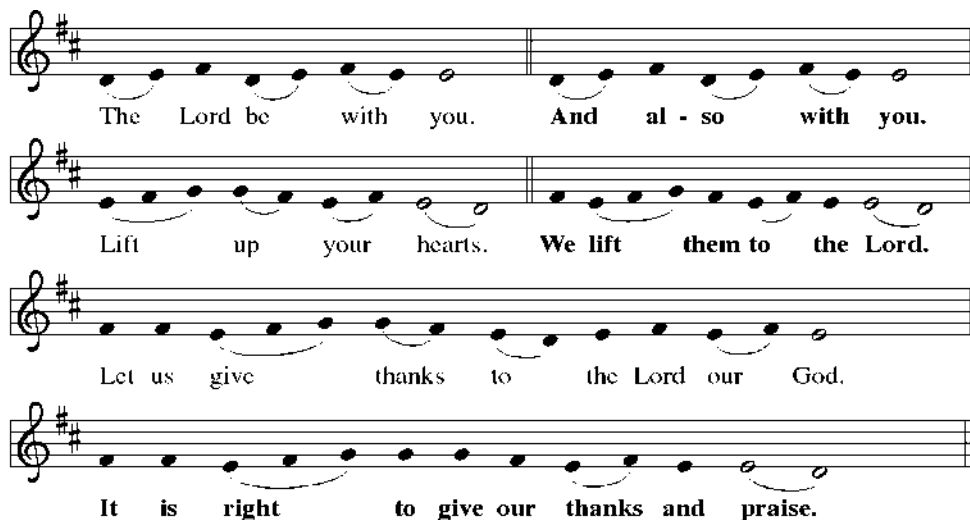
3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,  
so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,  
all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you,

**O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

## DIALOGUE *Stand*



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

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

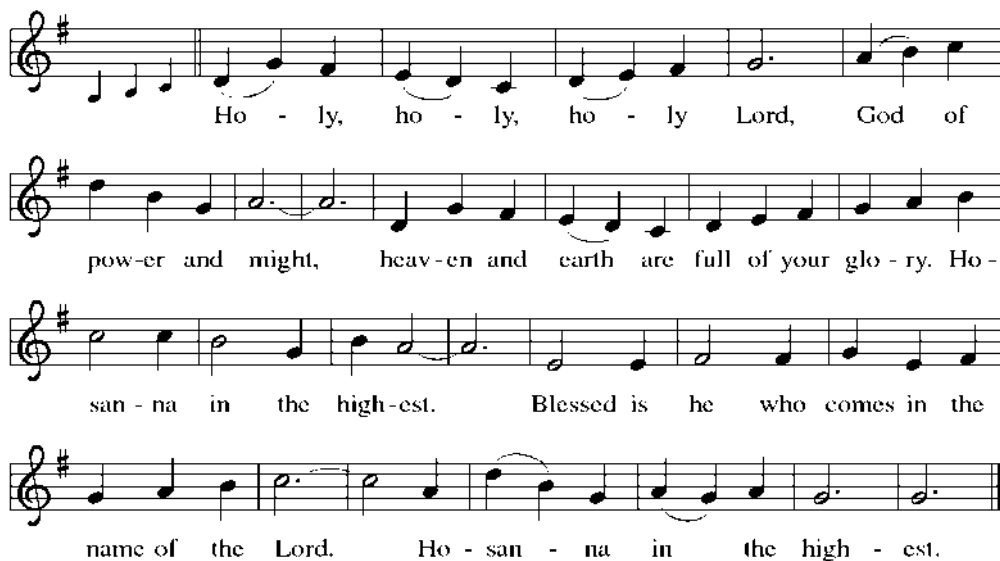
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE

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, through Christ our Lord. Sharing our life, he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, 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.

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God; you are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, that whoever believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

Having come into the world, he fulfilled for us your holy will and accomplished our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving Passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and his promise to come again, we give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, not as we ought, but as we are able;

and we implore you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving, and, with your Word and Holy Spirit, to bless us, your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine; that we and all who share in the body and blood of your Son may be filled with heavenly peace and joy, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be sanctified in soul and body, and have our portion with all your saints.

All honor and glory are yours, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, now and forever. **Amen**

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

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

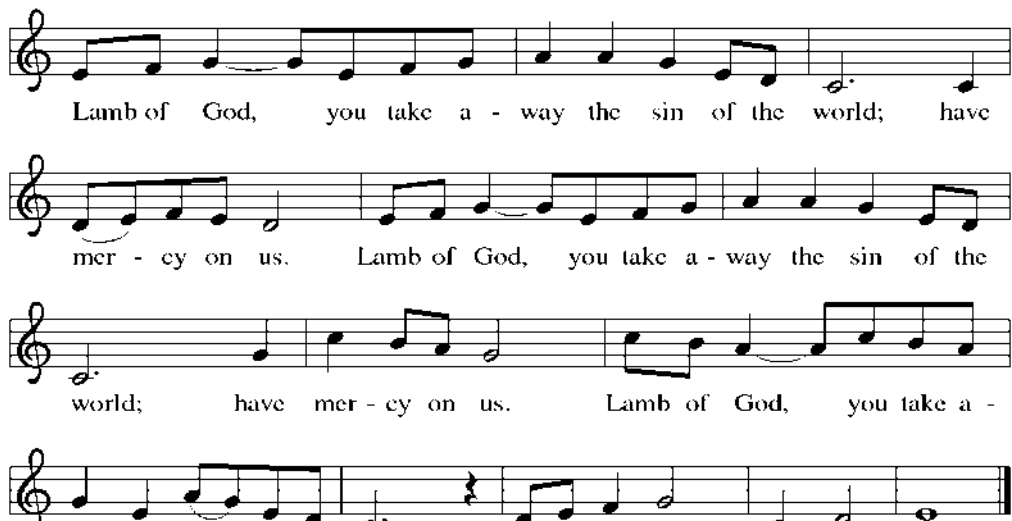
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**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** *A brief silence is kept.*

## AGNUS DEI



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 *Sit*

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. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.*
- 3. Take your place along the chancel step.*
- 4. The ministers will bring the host and wine to you.*
- 5. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.*
- 6. Return to your pew using the side aisle*

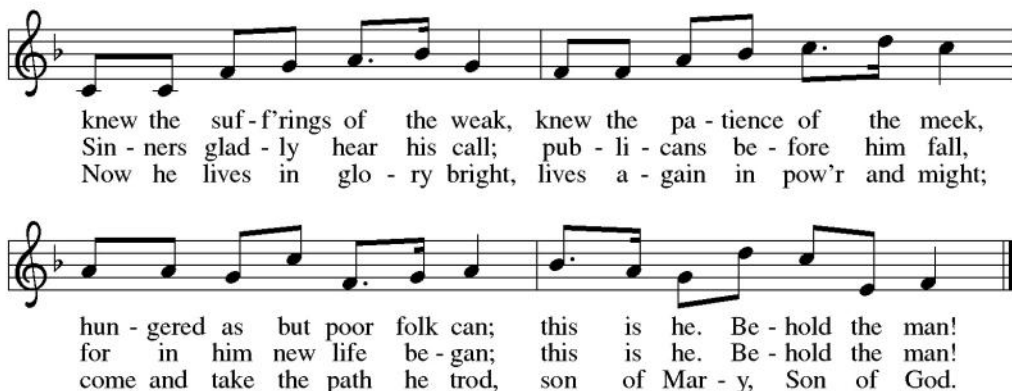
## COMMUNION HYMN *In a Lowly Manger Born (ELW 718)*



1 In a low - ly man - ger born, hum - ble life be - gun in scorn;  
2 Vis - it - ing the lone and lost, stead - y - ing the tem - pest-tossed,  
3 Then, to res - cue you and me, Je - sus died up - on the tree.

un - der Jo - seph's watch - ful eye, Je - sus grew as you and I;  
giv - ing of him - self in love, call - ing minds to things a - bove.  
See in him God's love re - vealed; by his pas - sion we are healed.





knew the suf-f'rings of the weak, knew the pa-tience of the meek,  
 Sin-ners glad-ly hear his call; pub-li-cans be-fore him fall,  
 Now he lives in glo-ry bright, lives a-gain in pow'r and might;


hun-gered as but poor folk can; this is he. Be-hold the man!  
 for in him new life be-gan; this is he. Be-hold the man!  
 come and take the path he trod, son of Mar-y, Son of God.

**Stand**

## POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

## 8:00 AM POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful-  
 filled. My own eyes have seen the sal-va-tion which you have pre-pared in the  
 sight of ev-'ry peo-ple: a light to re-veal you to the na-tions  
 and the glo-ry of your peo-ple Is-ra-el.

Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace.

**10:30 AM Chancel Choir** *Nunc Dimittis*

George Dyson

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

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

DISMISSAL

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

*The congregation remains standing until the minsters and servers have left the chancel.*

POSTLUDE

*Chaconne*

Louis Couperin

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This Week at St. Paul’s

Church office open Mon—Thurs, 8:00 AM—4:00 PM, Friday 8:00 AM—11:30 AM

Sunday, February 2

Handbell Choir

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist  
9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages  
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream  
Holy Baptism  
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Room

Monday, February 3

7:00 PM Preschool Meeting—ZOOM

Tuesday, February 4

9:30 AM Pantry  
6:00 PM Create for Preschool thru Grade 6

Wednesday, February 5

10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor—Nave  
10:30 AM Bible Study—Christ Hall

Thursday, February 6

10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor—Nave  
6:00 PM English Class— Community Rm  
6:30 PM Handbell Choir  
7:30 PM Chancel Choir

Sunday, February 9

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist  
9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages  
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist– Live-Stream  
11:45 AM Second Sunday Sandwiches  
12:00 Noon Benevolence Comm—Christ Hall  
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Room

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Lent Bread	Greeters	Ushers -	Altar Early: Set-up
2/2 Presen-	8:00 AM	Harold Sargeant	Denise Rider	Bob Reed		John & Kathy Monk	Team 1E: Jeff Riese, John Monk, Alex Bastian	Pat Scarborough, Kat Lemke
2/2 Presen- tation	10:30 AM	Tristan Ericson	Larry Becker	Christ Lipp		Gail Kerchner, Tina Llorente	Team 1L: Dave Kopp, Chris- tian Kopp, Darren Smith, Kass Keleta	Janet Fitch, Deb Becker

### **Tanzania, Konde Diocese and St. Paul's recent trip**

On Sunday, February 23 at Advent Lutheran Church, E. Market St., York, the Synod Konde Committee is sponsoring an event to deepen relationships with our companion congregations. Attendees will be able to make a bright colored sign in Swahili (like those pictured in the July 2025 calendar), hear a presentation from St. Paul's members who travelled to Tanzania summer 2024, learn about women in ministry in Konde Dioceses, prepare for a 5K fundraiser for Mbeya Hospital Sunday, April 27 and find out how you could participate in a future mission trip. The event is scheduled from 2:00-4:00 PM.



**Communion Bread Bakers**—Please check the up-coming server schedule to see if you are designated to bake bread for Holy Communion. Questions should be directed to Pastor Reep

**Call for Benevolence Applications**—Please have applications to the office by April 30. You can request the online application from Patee in the office or use the green application form available in the Springettsbury Entrance. The application has a place for the year the funding is requested. Remember, you may support local, regional, national, or international ministry opportunities. Each applicant should have a connection to the project or ministry. Join the exciting ministry of showing the world that God is love. Pick up an application today. Feel free to call Pastor Snyder with any questions, 717-880-0350.

### **Valentines Dinner—Friday February 14**

The response received from participants at last year's Valentine's Dinner moved the Witness Committee to offer something similar again this year. So once again an evening for our young singles and families in recognition of Valentine's Day is slated for Friday, February 14 from 5:30 – 7:30 PM. Invitations will be sent out via texts/emails. RSVP due by February 9.



**Calling all Women! February 16th from 11:30-?. Preparing “Meals of Blessings”.** Come to help chop and cook for as much of the day as you are able. These meals will be kept in the freezer at church and be available to take to those suffering from sickness, recovering from hospitalization, or other needs.

### **January Adult Education, Sundays, Christ Hall 9:15 AM**

**“Lessons from Dietrich Bonhoeffer”** continues through February 16. A new curriculum written by Dr. Lori Brandt Hale, President of the International Bonhoeffer Society is the text for the class. Join others in learning. The class meets in Christ Hall.

**Food Pantry Needs:** Plastic and paper grocery bags. Peanut butter.

Monetary donations can be placed in a “special” envelope marked “Pantry”.

Volunteers on: Tuesday (distribution day), Thursdays (food delivery days) and some Sundays (pantry stocking days) Contact Teresa Rohrbaugh, Patty Snyder, Ken Hinkle, or the church office (717-843-8155) with questions.

The “Pantry Grocery Cart” in the Good Shepherd Room is for bags and food donations only.

## **The Presentation of Our Lord, 2025**

**Malachi 3:1-4**

**Hebrews 2:14-18**

**Luke 2:22-40**

Rendezvous, when you hear the word you may think of a secret liaison. You may even think of romantic affairs of the heart, Valentine's Day is quickly approaching. A rendezvous brings people together and brings about something new. We just experienced that with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism for Hannah Louise. Holy Baptism has brought all of us together and God has united this new sister with the entire community of faith. Sometimes it takes a lot of choreography to have a rendezvous. How on earth will persons from differing locations, schedules, and energy levels meet up to bring something, an idea, a hope, to fruition?

The Synod Konde Committee has planned an educational event for the last Sunday of this month at Advent Lutheran Church here in York. As part of the event members from St. Paul's will present a power point of the mission trip from last summer. Miss Kelly and I will assist participants in making a brightly colored Swahili sign to take home. Others will meet to discuss issues in Tanzania facing women in ministry. Another group will respond to questions about travelling to visit a sister congregation and to find out if there is interest to travel in 2026. While there are many aspects of the event, the idea to have a 5K walk/run to raise money and awareness for the new hospital in Mbeya, became part of the planning. The 5K would take place in the spring, the Sunday after Easter. A small group would of course be needed to work out the details, leverage support, secure volunteers, and develop merch (the free items used to promote the event and to take home as a sort of prize. I have learned that merch is really important!)

This sounds relatively simple and straight forward but the choreography to have a rendezvous has been complicated. Zoom meetings, emails, texts, confirmation of date and time and place, only to be postponed by circumstances. Add into the mix an old fashioned phone call. All of this in order for Zach Weise, camp director, and me to meet up, to rendezvous, to make a way forward for the Mbeya hospital synod fundraiser.

There are many moving parts. There are some things that bring about the rendezvous beyond the obvious; Zoom, email, text and phone:

Commitment to the cause,

Faithfulness in living for others,

The importance of relationships and friendships,

Devoted to the mission,

Supportive of others,

Vibrant hope for the future,

And the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The result of the choreography is a rendezvous which makes God's love in Christ known to the world. You might miss all of this when you see and hear announcements for Mbeya Hospital 5K walk/run, but what appears to be simple and ordinary is actually quite extraordinary.



We hear of the extraordinary choreography resulting in the rendezvous at the temple 40 days after Jesus was born. Commitment, faithfulness, relationships, devotion, and vibrant hope brought together Mary, Joseph, Jesus, Simeon and Anna. This rendezvous is not the result of God coercing the participants to come together, but in the obedience of the human actors who by their actions bring about God's divine purpose. The mission of God's love for the world as made known through his only Son is advancing. The mission is advancing because of commitment, obedience, duty, faithfulness, responsibility, worship and prayer. And it is collective; in other words, it is not just the commitment, obedience, duty, faithfulness, responsibility, and prayer of one person, but of each of them; Mary and Joseph, Simeon and Anna, each bring something when they gather at the temple on that day of the presentation of Jesus.

Mary and Joseph take their new born son and go to the temple because of their obedience to the Law of Moses, their devout faith, their knowledge of the scriptures, and their responsibility as parents and members of a faith community. Simeon is at the temple serving. He is priest and prophet; he is patient, obedient, and guided by the Spirit. Ann is at the temple because she is a prophet and as an aged widow, she has no place else to be, and she has devoted her life to prayer. And she embodies vibrant hope! And Jesus, a first born male child, Holy to the Lord, is presented and through the rendezvous the divine purpose of God is revealed, that Jesus is the Lord's Messiah. He is the one to bring about consolation for Israel. Simeon sings, Joseph and Mary are amazed, Anna praised God and began to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

You may not be looking for the redemption of Jerusalem, you may not long for consolation, and you may not have any notion of why the Lord's Messiah is at the heart of this rendezvous. But as human actors we gather together guided by the Holy Spirit, as members of a faith community, devoted to Christ Jesus, shaped and formed through the scriptures, liturgy and song to bear witness to his consoling and redeeming word for the world. What looks to many like folks meeting up at the corner of South George Street and Springettsbury Avenue to while away an hour or so of their morning for no good reason, has everything to do with God's divine purpose and the Lord's Messiah being made known. *In his Temple Now Behold Him* we sang at the beginning of this liturgy. The Lord's Messiah, the Christ Child of Bethlehem, Jesus, son of Mary has brought us together presenting us to God. He comes among us forgiving our grievous sin, redeeming us from our wrongs and consoling us in our grief and despair. The choreography making all of this possible began with a triumphant entry into a holy city with shouts of hosanna and garments and branches of palm strewn on the path, the path that lead to arrest, unjust sentencing, and carrying a cross to a hill upon which he was crucified.

This is the extraordinary story of God extending love to you, love that will not let you go, love that brings redemption, consolation, and vibrant hope. Such redemption, consolation and vibrant hope filled the temple on the 40<sup>th</sup> day when Joseph and Mary presented their first born son Jesus at the temple. Such redemption, consolation and vibrant hope are manifest here this morning in the presence of the Lord, Christ Jesus. Today he makes himself known to us in the sacramental word at the font and altar. This rendezvous has brought us together to share in God's gracious forgiveness and abundant mercy so that we can, as Simeon sang, "go in peace." And as we peacefully go, the light of Christ is brightening the way for all people. Amen.

**FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4**

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup>he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

**Psalm 84****or Psalm 24:7-10****SECOND READING: Hebrews 2:14-18**

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, [Jesus] himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup>and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. <sup>16</sup>For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. <sup>17</sup>Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup>Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

**GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice

according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,

according to your word;

<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

**Next Sunday's Readings:** Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]; Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11.

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