

This son
of mine
was dead
and is
**alive
again!**

LUKE 15:24

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 189 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 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.



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

stpaulsyork.org

Please switch off or silence all electronic devices.

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's Music Director

Julianna Jones

Jjones.stpaulsyork@gmail.com

Bell Choirs Director

Leah McComas

lmccomas.stpaulsyork@gmail.com

Secretary

Patee Pizzirusso

st.paulsyork@comcast.net

Sexton

Ted Weikert

tweikert.stpaulsyork@gmail.com

Preschool Director

Deb Becker

director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

March 30, 2025
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion 8:00 & 10:30 A.M.
Musical setting #9 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

PRELUDE

O God Be Merciful to Me

J. S. Bach

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

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.

RESPONSE

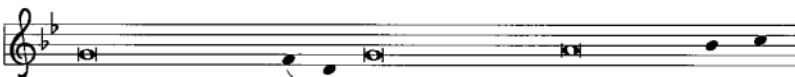


Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE

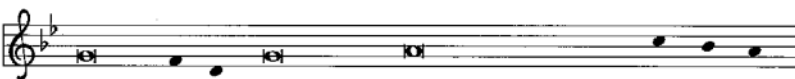


For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of



God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE



For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE



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



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray....God of all mercy, by your power to heal and to forgive, graciously cleanse us from all sin and make us strong; 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 CHOIR

Grant, O God, Your Blessing

Michael Bedford

FIRST READING

Joshua 5:9-12

*(back cover)***PSALMODY**

Psalm 32

*Sung Cantor/Congregation**The Organ introduces the tone, then it is sung unaccompanied.*

- ¹ Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,*
and whose sin is | put away!
- ² **Happy are they to whom the LORD im- | putes no guilt,*
and in whose spirit there | is no guile!**
- ³ While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,*
because of my groaning | all day long.
- ⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;*
my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.**
- ⁵ Then I acknowledged my | sin to you,*
and did not con- | ceal my guilt.
- ⁶ **I said, "I will confess my transgressions | to the LORD."*
Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.**
- ⁷ Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble;*
when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them.
- ⁸ **You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble;*
you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.**
- ⁹ "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go;*
I will guide you | with my eye.
- ¹⁰ **Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding;*
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near you."**
- ¹¹ Great are the tribulations | of the wicked;*
but mercy embraces those who trust | in the LORD.
- ¹² **Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice | in the LORD;*
shout for joy, all who are | true of heart.**

SECOND READING2 Corinthians 5:16-21 *(back cover)**Stand***VERSE**

Have mer - cy on me, O



God, ac - cord - ing to your stead - fast love.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 (*back cover*)

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

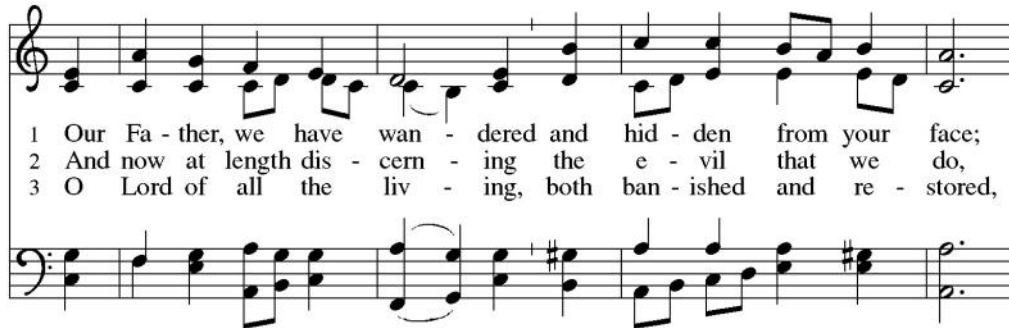
SERMON

Pastor Reep

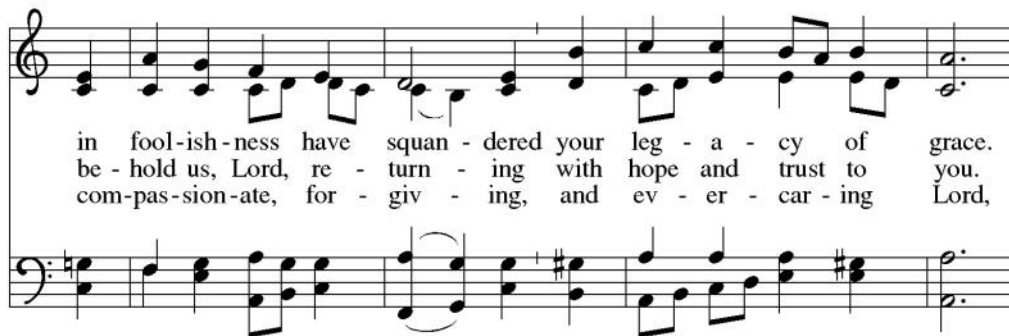
Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY


Our Father, We Have Wandered (733 WOV)



1 Our Fa - ther, we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;
2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,
3 O Lord of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,

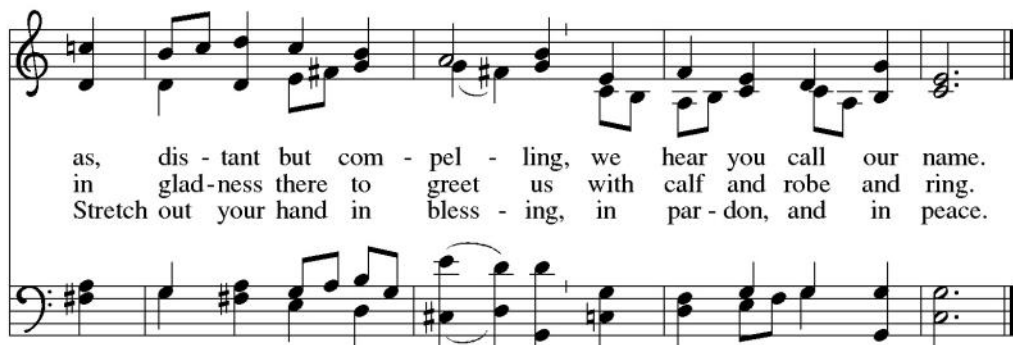


in fool - ish - ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.
be - hold us, Lord, re - turn - ing with hope and trust to you.
com - pas - sion - ate, for - giv - ing, and ev - er - car - ing Lord,



But now, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we rise with fear and shame,
In haste you come to meet us and home re - joic - ing bring,
grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.

Continued on next page...



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 Fa-
ther.**

**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.

O God, make us a new creation in Christ. Guide us in your way of reconciliation, so that through forgiveness and repentance we may bear witness to your love. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Bring healing to those who are suffering sickness or adversity (especially). Grant strength and encouragement to all care givers. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection (*especially*). We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of 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	8:00 AM	<i>My Song is Love Unknown</i>	Charles Callahan
	10:30 AM	Chancel Choir <i>Out of the Depths</i>	Alan Hovhaness

Stand

OFFERTORY *Create in Me a Clean Heart (ELW 188)*



spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

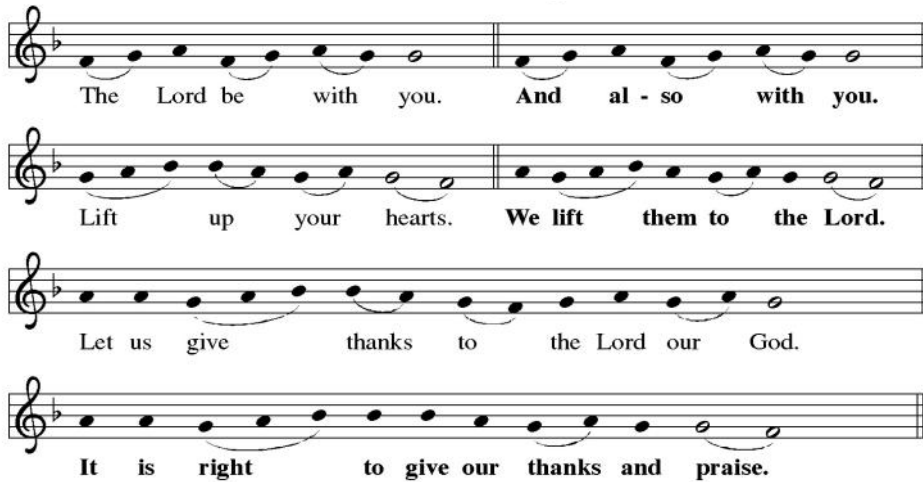
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. 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



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. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

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

san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas,
wells and springs we bless and magnify you.

You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock.
We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joined us in our desert,
pouring out his life for the world.

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 life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all
this thirsty world.

Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on all the baptized gathered for this feast:
wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.

Through him all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, both 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.**

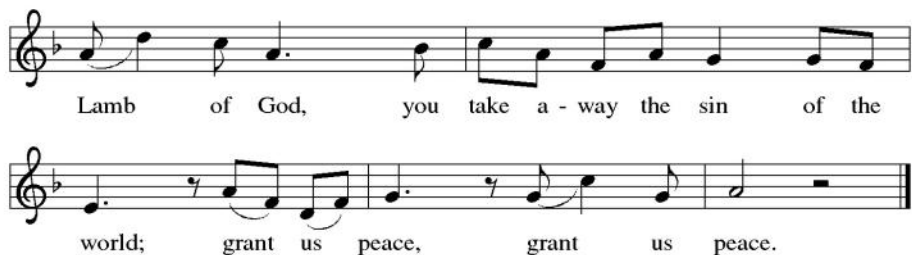
**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

FRACTION *A brief silence is kept.*

AGNUS DEI



Continued on next page...



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

You Are Mine (ELW 491)

8:00 Cheryl Reifsteck, violin

10:30 AM Andrew Jones, violin

1 "I will come to you in the si - lence,
2 "I am hope for all who are hope - less,
3 "I am strength for all the de - spair - ing,
(4) am the Word that leads all to free - dom, I

I will lift you from all your fear.
I am eyes for all who long to see. (2) In the
heal - ing for the ones who dwell in shame.
am the peace the world can - not give.

You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice. Be
shad - ows of the night, I will be your light.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and
I will call your name, em - brac - ing all your pain. Stand

still and know I am here.
Come and rest in me.
all will know my name.
up, now walk and live!

*To stanza 2
To refrain
To refrain
To refrain*

Refrain

Do not be a-fraid, I am with you. I have called you each by

name. Come and fol-low me, I will bring you home; I

love you and you are mine."

To stanzas 3 and 4

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. Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

BLESSING

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

HYMN *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (ELW 631) (next page)*

DISMISSAL

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

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

Sit

POSTLUDE

Chief of Sinners Though I Be

Kristina Langlois

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Love Divine, All Loves Excelling



1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, Joy of heav'n, to
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-'ry
3 Come, Al-might-y, to de-liv-er; let us all thy
4 Fin-ish then thy new cre-a-tion, pure and spot-less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum-ble dwell-ing, all thy
trou-bled breast; let us all in thee in-her-it; let us
life re-ceive; sud-den-ly re-turn, and nev-er, nev-er-
let us be; let us see thy great sal-va-tion per-fect-



faith-ful mer-cies crown. Je-sus, thou art all com-pas-sion,
find thy prom-ised rest. Take a-way the love of sin-ning;
more thy tem-ples leave. Thee we would be al-ways bless-ing,
ly re-stored in thee! Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry,



pure, un-bound-ed love thou art; vis-it us with
Al-pha and O-me-ga be; end of faith, as
serve thee as thy hosts a-bove, pray, and praise thee
till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-'ry trem-bling heart.
its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.
with-out ceas-ing, glo-ry in thy per-fect love.
crowns be-fore thee, lost in won-der, love, and praise!

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—by April 30. Request the online application from Patee in the office or use the green application form available in the Springettsbury Entrance. Remember, you may support local, regional, national, or international ministry opportunities. Each applicant should have a connection to the project or ministry. Call Pastor Snyder with any questions, 717-880-0350.

Music and Create—Age 3 through Grade 6—Tuesday evenings 6:00 PM—7:15 PM

We provide this opportunity for our families with young children to engage in music and art while also having the opportunity to connect with other families.

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, 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.

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Bread Bakers	Greeters	Ushers -	Altar Early: Set-up Late: Clean -up
3/30	8:00 AM	Jennifer Ports	Ken Hinkle	Laura Livingston	Norma Shue	Nancy Banta, Tom Martin	Team 3E: Sammy Barnes, Norma Shue, Cliff Beck, Sheridan Palmer	Kirsten & Sammy Barnes
3/30	10:30 AM	Larry Moore	Tonya Cave	George Fitch	Abby Jacobs	Tristan & Jessica Ericson	Team 3L: Dan Garber, Joe Guarriello, Larry Becker	Sandy Dickensheets, Tonya Cave

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, March 30

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages
 9:15 AM The 1,700 Anniversary of the Nicene Creed - Christ Hall
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist— Live-Stream
 3:00 PM Spring Garden Band Concert
 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Room

Monday, March 31

7:00 PM Worship & Arts mtg. Good Shepherd Rm

Tuesday, April 1

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

Wednesday, April 2

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

Wednesday continued

6:00 PM Lenten Supper
 7:00 PM Lenten Vespers

Thursday, April 3

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

Sunday, April 6 Preschool Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:15 AM Sunday School for all ages
 9:15 AM Zach Weiss, Lutheran Camping Christ Hall
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist— Live-Stream
 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Room

Certain story lines work. Writers employ them, producers find them, directors cast them, and we experience them; books, theatre, movies, TV shows. These are stories of: sibling rivalry, being lost, returning home, parental love. The parable Jesus tells is like that. It always works. Jesus draws us in. His stories employ common, ordinary things and common, ordinary situations that end in extraordinary ways. The extraordinary ending *“You were dead and now you are alive. You were lost and now you are found.”*

Imagine a spectacular vineyard under the Tuscan sun. Rolling hillsides and rows of vines bearing pods of ripening fruit sweep across the vista. Cypress trees dot the road. A villa of elegant proportion and restrained ornamentation sits basking in the sunlight while taking in the view. A father and his younger son are in earnest conversation. The son, for all of his education and fine upbringing, makes a request for advancement on his inheritance. The effect is as though he simply told his father to *“drop dead.”* This son’s request, that his father give him his share of the inheritance so that he can get on with life, is unthinkable and illegitimate. Inheritance comes when there is death.

With such rudeness and disrespect one would anticipate a father’s anger and outrage. Distance often widens when a relationship confronts outlandish requests or inappropriate decorum. The father doesn’t retreat. The distance between them does not widen nor does the father’s voice change in tone. Surprisingly the son’s request is granted by the father. He in essence divides his life with his sons. The elder son is not in the villa, he is working in the fields, going about his duty.

The young son, thrilled with the opportunity to explore beyond the rolling hills, to take a chance, to apply his own understanding of economics, makes his way down the road dotted with cypress trees. Having his own way and making his own way with the generosity of his father’s wealth, it doesn’t take long for it to be squandered.

When he gets to a place of deep need, chronic despair, what to do seems to be a haunting question. In this case, he had exhausted his options, all except one. That was to return home. That option was really not an option because it would bring tremendous shame; shame to him, to his father, to his brother and to the entire community. Shame is to be avoided at all cost. In his desperation, he stumbles in with a pig farmer. Telling his tale of pleasure seeking delight, and how it wrought only pain, sorrow and hunger, he wished he were a lowly pig. Pigs had something to eat.

And then the young man came to his senses. He devised a plan. It might not be the greatest or best plan but it was a plan. Knowing that his father had many hired hands and that all of them had bread enough and to spare, he figured that he would go back home, he would face the music. The plan would entail earning restored status by working, being a hired hand and paying back what was owed to his father. *“Give me a second chance. I’ll earn it back and repay you. I’m not worthy to be called your son, but I will be, if you give me a chance.”* The

words went round and round, over and over in his head as he began the journey to the rolling hills and the road to the villa dotted with Cyprus trees.

His father spent his days watching, waiting, looking, and longing, for his son to return. Each day as people traveled the village road to work in the fields, go to the market, visit family, he watched the road. He knew that if his younger son returned to the village he would be treated with contempt. Resolute to reach the boy first he fixed his eyes on the road dotted with cypress trees. And then one day, seemingly out of know where, a figure appeared creeping ever so slowly over the hill and up the lane. It was his younger son. Without hesitation the father got up, and ran out to meet his son. Hugging him and kissing him, the son, cannot recite his confession. The father calls the servants to fetch a robe, the finest, and a ring and sandals. And prepare a feast, *“let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!”* And they began to celebrate.

Now the older brother, the eldest, hears the music and comes in from the field. Asking one of the servants what’s going on he is stopped in his tracks when he hears the reply *“Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.”* Anger welled up deep within. He refused to go to the party, couldn’t bear to see his brother or the fuss that was being made over his return. His father arriving on the terrace entertains him to join in the celebration. The father pleads with him to come. *“Listen,”* says the eldest son. *“For all these years I have been working like a slave for you and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.”* Rehashing details of all that he believes his younger brother did and bringing his rant to an end with his objection to the lavish party on the villa terrace, his father responds *“Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”*

Both sons insult their father and break the relationship. Each in his own way seeks to manipulate their father. Each seeks something other, a different kind of life other than what is offered at home a different community apart from their father. The younger son looks for a community in a faraway country and the elder brother seeks his community with his “friends.” Both are welcomed with open arms and generous invitation by grace: the younger son who broke the law and the eldest son who kept the law. The father’s speech to each brother concludes with the same words: *“This son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!”* *“This brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”*

Jesus’ story manages to get everybody stirred up. It struck a nerve with the scribes and Pharisees, they were grumbling over who was welcomed at Jesus’ table. It brought comfort and hope to the tax collectors and sinners who were glad to be welcomed to anything because they spent the majority of their lives being kept out. Sibling rivalry, being lost, returning home, parental love; is part of our story. Our loving heavenly Father extends an invitation. His desire is for you to celebrate with him *“You were dead and now you are alive. You were lost and now you are found.”* Amen.



EASTER FLOWER ORDER

Indicate the total number of flowers desired:

_____ Hyacinth _____ Lilies
_____ Tulips _____ Daffodils

Flowers are \$15.00

Please make check payable to St. Paul's
Lutheran Church

I desire that my plant(s) be listed: (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

From _____

Amount Paid: Cash _____ Check _____

Orders are due Sunday, March 30, 2025

Plants may be picked up after the
Easter Service on April 20

FIRST READING: Joshua 5:9-12

The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹²The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Psalms 32**SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus]. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³So he told them this parable:

^{11b}"There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled

to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' ²⁰So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²²But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

²⁵"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' ²⁸Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' ³¹Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8.

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