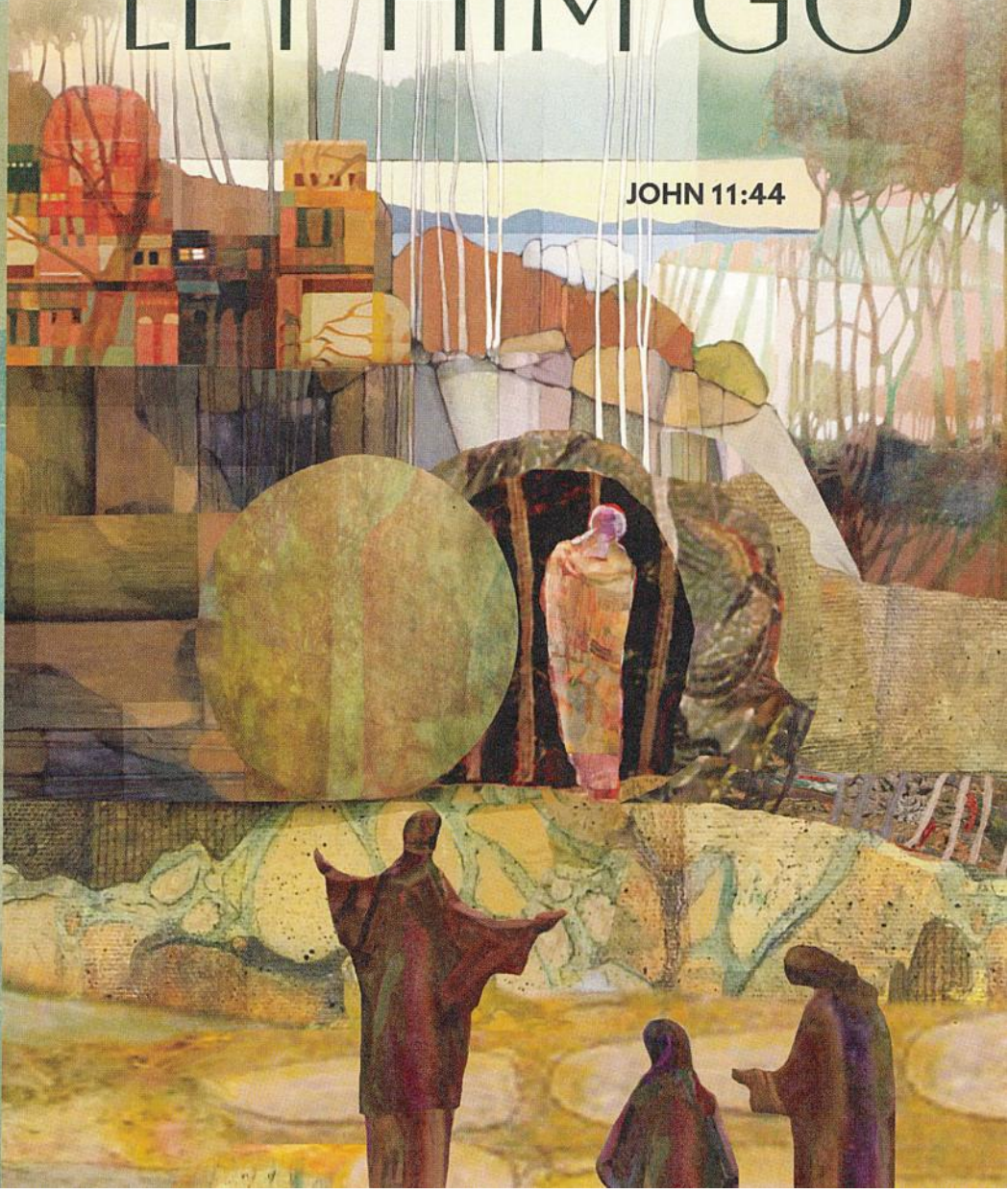


UNBIND HIM, AND LET HIM GO

JOHN 11:44



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 190 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 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

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 22, 2026
The Fifth Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion 8:30 and 10:30 AM

TEMPLE TALK

Women's Retreat, Saturday, April 18

PRELUDE Organ

Wondrous Love

Gordon Young

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,

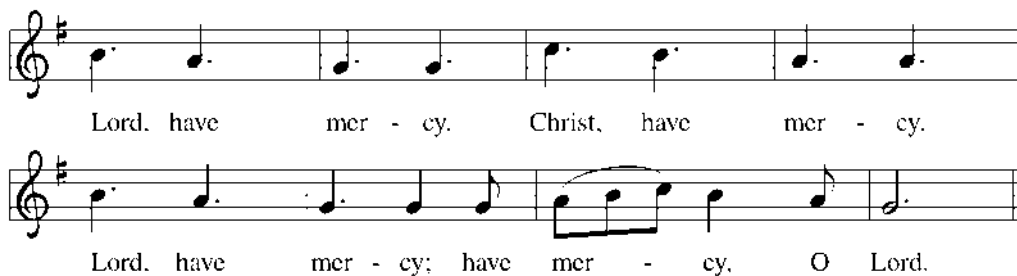
we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, 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 *sung 3 times*



Lord. have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord. have mer - cy; have mer - cy. O Lord.

Stand

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, our redeemer, in our weakness we have failed to be your messengers of forgiveness and hope in the world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, that we may follow your commands and proclaim your reign of love; 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 Ezekiel 37:1-14

¹ The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³ He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." ⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵ Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’”¹² Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.¹³ And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people.¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 130

spoken antiphonally pulpit side -odd verses/font side-even verses

¹ Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD; LORD, | hear my voice;*
let your ears consider well the voice of my | supplication.

² If you, LORD, were to note what is | done amiss,*
O LORD, | who could stand?

³ For there is forgive- | ness with you;*
therefore you | shall be feared.

⁴ I wait for the LORD; my soul | waits for him;*
in his word | is my hope.

⁵ My soul waits for the LORD, more than watchmen | for the morning,*
more than watchmen | for the morning.

⁶ O Israel, wait | for the LORD,*
for with the LORD | there is mercy;

⁷ with him there is plen- | teous redemption,*
and he shall redeem Israel from | all their sins.

SECOND READING Romans 8:6-11

⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law—indeed, it cannot,⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

VERSE



Let your stead - fast love come to us, O Lord.
Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 11:1-45 *(back cover)*

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

At the conclusion of the Gospel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

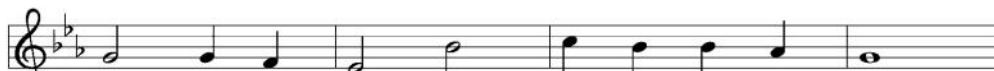
SERMON

Pastor Reep

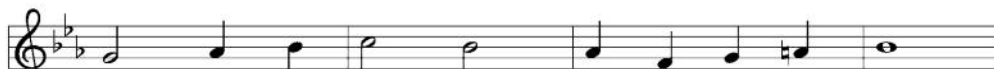
Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

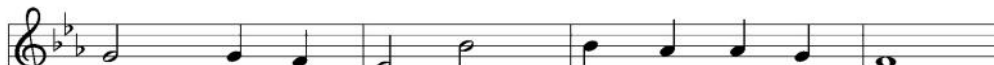
Abide with Me (ELW 629)



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
3 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.
earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;
what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
change and de - cay in all a - round I see;
Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me.
O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.
Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bide with me.
I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me!
in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;

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

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

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

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Breathe life and peace into all who gather in your name so that we may share your message of forgiveness, hope, and love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for creation. Renew landscapes that have dried up, prosper the work of those who restore homes and habitats after natural disasters, and sustain places where biodiversity thrives. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the nations. Unbind leaders trapped by fear to act boldly for justice, free all who live in places of war and violence, and guide refugees and asylum seekers to safety. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all people in need. Take away the stone of poverty that weighs down so many. Console all who weep and heal those who are sick (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Continued on next page...

We pray for this assembly. Ready the hearts and spirits of all preparing to be baptized (*especially Juliann and Sylvia*). Deepen our wonder at the mystery of your resurrection and life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We offer our thanksgiving for Jonathan Edwards and all people who have died in faith. Give us faith to trust in your power to redeem and save, and bring us up from our graves to life in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **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

8:30 AM Organ

Abide with Us, Our Savior

Paul Kickstat

10:30 AM Chancel Choir

Out of the Deep from Requiem

John Rutter

Justin Miller, cello

OFFERTORY

Return to the Lord (LBW setting II)



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

Stand

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

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -



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

THANKSGIVING

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, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for 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.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask 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, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory 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 in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. 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.

Sit

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.

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 bread 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

10:30 AM *The Word of God is Source and Seed (ELW 506)*



1 The Word of God is source and seed; it comes to
2 The Word of God is breath and life; it comes to
3 The Word of God is flesh and grace, who comes to



die and sprout and grow. So make your dark earth
heal and wake and save. So let the Spir - it
sing, to laugh and cry. So dare to be as



wel - come warm; root deep the grain God bent to sow.
touch and mend and rouse your dry bones from their grave.
Je - sus was, who came to live and love and die.

Refrain



Gau - de - a - mus Do - mi - no, gau - de - a - mus Do - mi - no,
In the Lord let us re - joice, in the Lord let us re - joice,



gau - de - a - mus Do mi - no!
in the Lord let us re - joice!

Stand

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

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.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Out of the Depths, I Cry to You

Max Drischner

St. Paul's Women's Retreat, April 18, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM. Come for a day of rest, a time to get away from the business of daily life, to renew old friendships and build new ones, and to deepen your relationship with God. Sign up by completing the registration form you received in the mail. Forms are also located near church exits. Registration deadline is Monday, April 6, the day after Easter. Get your registration in soon before the busy time of Holy Week and Easter. Contact anyone from the planning committee with questions: Janet Fitch, Julianna Jones, Kat Lemke, Patty Snyder. Or call the church office.

Becoming the Neighbors the World Needs—Sunday 9:30 AM Christ Hall

This new curriculum was prepared for Bridge of Hope. Co-author, Rev. William Snyder will be introducing two stories from the biblical witness which were selected to foster greater neighborhood involvement, understanding, and active participation working to end homelessness. The stories highlighted over the 5 Sundays in Lent are based on Luke 10:25-37 (the Good Samaritan) and four chapters in the book of Ruth 1:16-18, Ruth 2:8-13, Ruth 3:9-11, and Ruth 4:13-17. These two narratives will provide a lens through which we can better understand ourselves, God, and our neighbors. We pray that together we are becoming the neighbors the world needs.

This week we will hold the last Lenten Supper for the season. Join us at 6:00 PM for the meal and 7:00 PM for Vespers

TODAY The York College class Cultures and Identities of the French-Speaking World will be serving baked goods at the coffee hour. The class has decided to collect a good will offering and give the proceeds to:

1. The Makaya Foundation - an orphanage in the Congo founded by a York College graduate in memory of his mother
2. Cooking Up Connection - a program teaching cooking, and promoting belonging, leadership, and healing, for downtown York youth at York College's Center for Community Engagement (formerly the Lafayette Club).

St. Paul's Food Pantry Needs: Peanut Butter, Cereal, plastic and paper shopping bags, and monetary donations. Monetary donations can be placed in a special envelope marked "Pantry". Contact Teresa Rohrbaugh to volunteer for Tuesday distribution days. Contact Patty Snyder to volunteer for Thursday delivery days or Sunday stocking days or contact the church office. Thank you to all who help!

2026 Flower Chart—The 2026 flower chart is posted on the Springettsbury vestibule bulletin board. **The cost of each vase is \$40 per vase.** Simply complete the flower form, make a check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and mark it altar flowers, and slip it under the office window. You can also contact the office to reserve a date, and to provide all of the correct information for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin. All information for the bulletin needs to be received by Wednesday morning of the previous week. This is a great way to honor someone, celebrate a milestone in life, or remember a loved one. The flowers may be taken home with you at the conclusion of the 10:30 AM liturgy or you may have them given to someone who is sick, shut it, or hospitalized. *Please note that there are no flowers during the season of Lent.*

Experimental Trial Worship Time

If there was something that you could do to increase involvement in the life of the congregation, would you do it? Would you try it? Would you give it a chance?

That was the question posed to the participants at the annual retreat held in January by committee chairpersons and congregation council members. The desire is to continue with an early worship service opportunity and one that will permit greater participation. By adjusting the Sunday schedule, from 8:00 to 8:30 AM, it is hoped that we can accomplish several things:

- Increase attendance by moving from 8:00 AM and starting at 8:30 AM. This may be appealing to families who regularly move out the door shortly after 8:00 AM during the week. This eliminates a half hour wait between Sunday worship and Sunday school. While the education time is scheduled at 9:15 AM the reality is that folks arrive at 9:30 AM. Worshipers can move directly from worship to Christian Education.
- Increase available parking for the 10:30 AM liturgy. By making the early worship time a bit more appealing for schedules this has the potential of freeing up parking spaces for those who arrive later in the morning. The 10:30 AM liturgy is often the time when we experience individuals and families visiting St. Paul's having more parking options would be beneficial. Currently 8:00 AM averages 35 and 10:30 AM averages 125.
- By evening out the participants across two service times, we increase the potential number of people available to serve. This will ease the burden currently experienced at the early service time.
- When there are 70 or more people in the church nave the energy in the room changes. This is most noticeable for the preaching task, both the one preaching and those who listen. The acoustics in the room change.

After significant deliberation the Council decided on **an experimental trial worship time of 8:30 AM (moving the 8:00 AM liturgy one half hour) from March 1st through May 17th.** This will provide a time to hear responses, see if we are moving toward the desired hopes, and have time to plan accordingly for the 2026-2027 academic year. **The start time of the second liturgy will remain at 10:30 AM.**

For additional information or questions regarding this decision, please contact any member of the Congregation Council.



Visit from the Bishop

The Rev. Stephen Herr, Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA, will be with us on Sunday, April 12, 2026 for both liturgies and a Forum at 9:15 AM in Christ Hall. A reception will follow the 10:30 AM service. We are delighted to have him as our guest.

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Greeters	Ushers -	Altar Guild	Bread Bakers
3/22	8:30 AM	Lois Ann Schroeder	Kathy Monk	Harrison Palmer	Michael & Kristen McKee	Team 3E: Norma Shue, Cliff Beck, Sheridan Palmer	Lois Ann Schroeder, Kathy Monk	Pat Rudacille
	10:30 AM	Tristan Ericson	Larry Becker	Carolyn Kapoun	Keith & Christine Kates	Team 3L: Dan Garber, Joe Guarriello, Larry Becker	Larry & Janet Moore	Pat Rudacille

This Week at St. Paul's

Church office open Mon–Thurs 8:00 AM—4:00 PM Fri 8:00 AM—11:30 AM

Sunday, March 22

8:30 AM Holy Eucharist
 9:30 AM Sunday School for All Ages
 9:30 AM New Members Class—Community Rm
 Lower level
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist —Live Stream
 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Monday, March 23

5:30 PM Bridge of Hope—Christ Hall
 6:00 PM Christian Ed Mtg—Youth Rm
 7:00 PM Mutual Ministry

Tuesday, March 24

9:30 AM Pantry
 6:00 PM Create—Preschool thru Grade
 6:00 PM Bible Study
 6:00 PM Property Committee

Wednesday, March 25

10:00 AM Preschool with Pastor—Nave
 10:30 AM Bible Study— Christ hall
 4:30 PM Lenten Watercolors with Pastor Reep
 6:00 PM Lenten Dinner
 7:00 PM Lenten Vespers

Thursday, March 26

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

Sunday, March 29 Palm Sunday

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist —Live Stream
 Combined liturgy
 6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Sunday, April 19 York College Symphony Orchestra and Choirs 3:00 PM

The York College Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Matthew Inkster and the York College Chorale and Chamber Singers under the direction of Dr. Erin Lippard will present a concert with selections celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence.

Sunday, May 3 Matinee Musical Club of York piano recital 3:00 PM

Come and hear some of York's finest young pianists ages 8-18 perform in concert on the church's magnificent Steinway Concert grand piano. This is the annual Piano Competition and the caliber of playing is extraordinary.



Greeters will be needed for these concerts. You will **not** be required to set up or clean up before or after the event. Your duties are to guide people to the nave and/or restrooms, etc... You will need to arrive 1/2 hour prior to the event and stay until all the guests have left. If you are interested in representing our church as part of the Hospitality Team please contact Patee at the church office.

Lent 5A John 11:1-45

The old man sat in his favorite chair surrounded by his wife and closest friends. On his lap was a gift, a present in ordinary wrapping. This was not an occasion for which American Greeting or Hallmark captures the sentiment for a card. Kathy, former co-worker, presented the gift to him. Pulling on the ribbon and loosening the tape the ordinary wrapping paper fell to the floor allowing the contents to be revealed. It was a navy-blue crewneck sweatshirt with embroidery across the chest in simple block letters “JOHN 11:1-45.” A smile came across the old man’s face.

What precipitated the gift is a longer story. Longer even than the Gospel reading this morning. The old man had a fall that left him unconscious. He dropped off into a sleep, a coma of sorts. At the time it dumbfounded the medical professionals. Days passed. Then weeks were added end to end stringing together months. Along about the fourth month he woke up. He came out of sleep. He recognized his wife and the chain of faithful visitors who kept coming to the hospital to check on him. His eagerness to return home was finally granted with a discharge slip and the assurance to follow up with his physician.

Upon arrival at his home, he took a good long look around surveying the place where life had been lived and shared for decades. “A religious nut must live here” he exclaimed. Icons and crosses, religious pictures and carvings, statues and votive lamps tucked here and there along with family photos and paintings of local sites and foreign lands. Each of them told a story of faith and life. Life changed through gracious love.

The old man wore the navy-blue crewneck sweatshirt with JOHN 11:1-45 embroidered on it most of the time. It became his favorite shirt. It was all his wife could do to get it off him to slip it into the wash!

Most of us might not instantly recognize a scripture quotation. Familiar ones like JOHN 3:16 or PSALM 23 or even Psalm 130 “Out of the depths have I called unto you O Lord.” But in our tradition, the chapter and verse stuff is often left to the scholars and clergy. Today we recognize the gospel reading and the many layers of theological ribbon and paper in which it is neatly wrapped. The Lazarus story is familiar as a unit, but the details, the way in which John has intricately embroidered it together with what was familiar and promised, are overwhelming. What we know from the story; life is changed, not taken away. Given back, not removed.

Sometimes we are aware of how God changes life, but not always. Sometimes we are ready for a change, and it doesn’t seem to materialize. God is at work. Life in God’s grace is cloaked in mystery. That certainly seems to be the case as Jesus heads off to Bethany to the village of Mary and Martha and his good friend Lazarus. It is as though he had all the time in the world to reach Bethany. Lazarus had died. His sisters Mary and Martha can’t fathom Jesus’ delay. But Jesus takes time to be with them, converse with them and at the end of the day resuscitates his friend Lazarus. He calls to him “come out.”

“Come out.” These words we hear often in the Biblical witness. They are a part of our heritage as God’s people. Multitudes “come out” to be baptized by John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Things that defile a person “come out” of a person’s mouth. Demons are

commanded to “come out” of one who was being convulsed. The loving father “comes out” to welcome home his returning son. The Chief priests, elders, and officers of the temple “come out” to the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus as if he were a robber. When the bridegroom comes, we will “come out” to meet him with our lamps trimmed and burning. But perhaps the most powerful use of the phrase “come out” is the climax of this morning’s gospel reading from St. John. Jesus says to his dear dead friend Lazarus after being in the tomb for four days where family and friends gathered to mourn and grieve and weep and wail, “Come out” says Jesus. Two common words become life giving words. And everything has changed.

The multitudes come out to the Jordan River repenting and turning their lives around. Jesus teaches that it isn’t what we eat that defiles us, but the words that come out of our mouths. Jesus commands demons to come out of a person allowing life to be lived freely in community. The loving father comes out of his grief and mourning when his eyes behold his returning son. Religious people who can’t make sense of Jesus come out to arrest him hoping that by silencing him their insecurities will abate. We hear of God’s glorious return beckoning the church to come out to greet the returning Savior prepared and ready. Chapter 11 of the Gospel of John allows us to hear these two little words in a whole new way.

“Come out” Jesus says to Lazarus. Lazarus has been dead for four days. He was buried according to Jewish custom on the day that he died. When Jesus cried out “come out” Lazarus’ life was changed, restored, given back to him. We didn’t hear anything from him about what he had experienced. The story only solidifies that God’s call is to give life now and in the future. That was why the old man loved to wear the navy-blue crew neck sweatshirt with JOHN 11:1-45 embroidered on the chest. It drew stares, sometimes inquiries, it made people curious, take note, was this old man really a “religious nut” or did he know something of Jesus’ call to “come out.” Did he know firsthand about being restored, about life given back, about a changed life, abundant life?

We are surrounded by sisters and brothers, people with whom we have lived and worked and moved and had our being. We have been given the gift of Holy Baptism, poured over our heads graciously like a gift neatly wrapped, tied with ribbon and placed into our laps by our loving generous God. We have been marked with Christ’s cross and in many ways, we are “religious nuts.” Our world view has changed. We are people who know something about: Icons and crosses, religious pictures and carvings, statues and votive lamps and family photos and pictures of local sites and foreign lands, each of them telling a story of faith and life. Life changed through gracious love. Your life changed, my life changed. The lives of others changed. While we don’t mention it much in our rather quiet don’t make a fuss Lutheran tradition, I think that each of us could tell our own story paralleling today’s Gospel reading of JOHN 11. We know the power and the importance of life being restored, of life given back, of life changed. It may not be embroidered on a sweatshirt, but it is part of who and whose we are. The ministry of our congregation has been centered on Christ’s transforming power to change lives. God’s call is to give life now and in the future. God makes that known to us in Christ Jesus, the one who called out to Lazarus, the one who calls out to us! Come out, and experience life in the love of Christ Jesus, who unbinds us and sets us free. Amen.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 37:1-14 [not printed]

Psalms 130

SECOND READING: Romans 8:6-11 [not printed]

GOSPEL: John 11:1-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." ⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. ¹⁰But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." ¹¹After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." ¹²The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." ¹³Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." ²³Jesus said to her,

"Your brother will rise again." ²⁴Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

²⁸When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." ²⁹And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" ³⁷But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

⁴⁵Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in him.

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14—27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54.

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