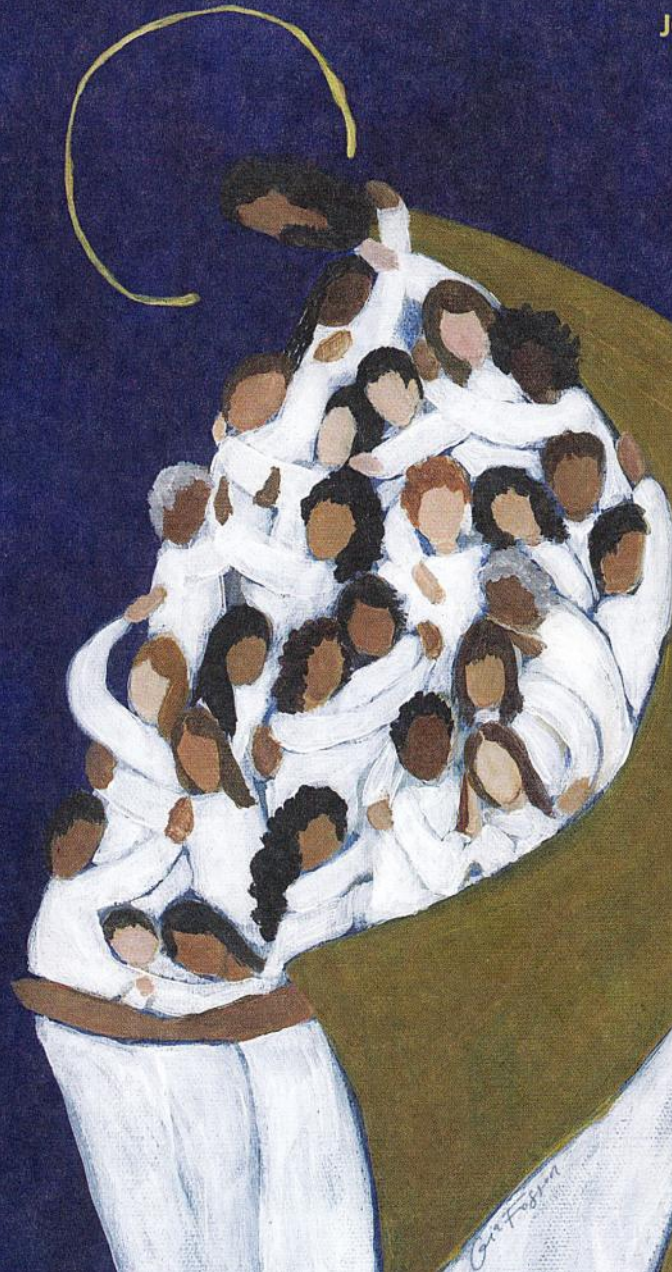


Because I live, you also will live

JOHN 14:19



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.

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

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

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

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



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

stpaulsyork.org

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 10, 2026

Holy Communion 8:30 & 10:30 AM

Musical Setting 1 Evangelical Lutheran Worship

PRELUDE

Thine is the Glory

Karl Osterland

Stand

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia

ENTRANCE HYMN

Eternal God, Before Your Throne (LBW 354)



1 E - ter - nal God, be - fore your throne we bend,
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, our Sav - ior and our friend,
3 O Ho - ly Spir - it, truth and peace di - vine,



your grace to seek, your ho - ly name to bless;
whom an - gels praise be - fore the throne on high:
de - scend to us in all your sav - ing pow'r,



our grate - ful hearts in hum - ble praise as - cend
how vast your love, to love us to the end
and kin - dle flames of love and faith to shine



to you whose ways are truth and righ - teous - ness.
and on the cru - el cross to bleed and die!
with - in our year - ning hearts this sa - cred hour!



With all the host of heav - en we a - dore
O blest Re - deem - er, hear your chil - dren pray;
Make plain the Fa - ther's will, the Sav - ior's love,



your match - less ho - ly love for - ev - er - more!
O Lamb of God, take all our sins a - way!
and fit us all to dwell with you a - bove.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

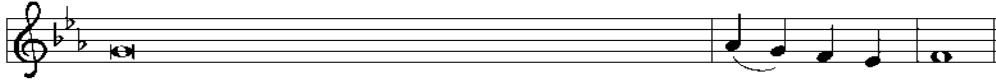
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



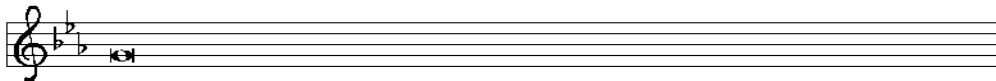
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

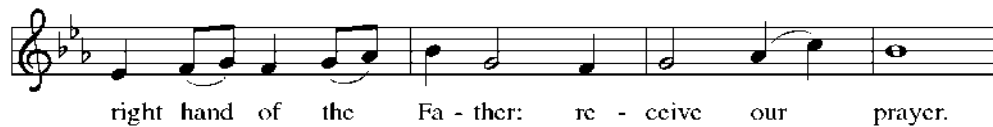
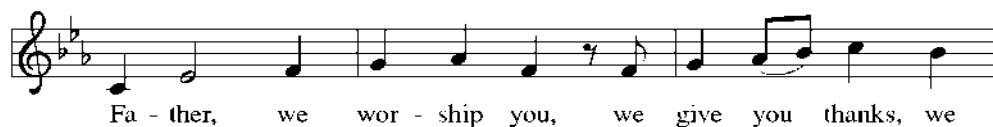


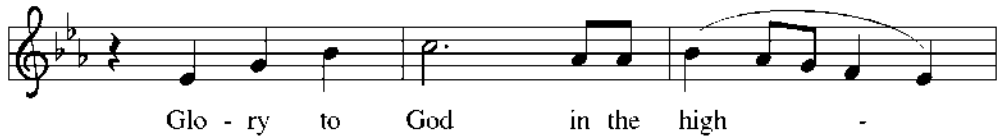
Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. . . O God, from whom all good things come: Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to think those things which are right, and by your goodness help us to do them; 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

PSALM Psalm 66:7-18

sung unaccompanied cantor/**congregation**

- ⁷ Bless our | God, you peoples;*
make the voice of his praise | to be heard,
⁸ **who holds our | souls in life,***
and will not allow our | feet to slip.
⁹ For you, O | God, have proved us;*
you have tried us just as sil- | ver is tried.
¹⁰ **You brought us in- | to the snare;*
you laid heavy burdens up- | on our backs.**
¹¹ You let enemies ride over our heads; we went through | fire and water,*
but you brought us out into a place | of refreshment.
¹² **I will enter your house with burnt-offerings and will pay | you my vows,*
which I promised with my lips and spoke with my mouth when I | was in
trouble.**
¹³ I will offer you sacrifices of fat beasts with the | smoke of rams;*
I will give you ox- | en and goats.
¹⁴ **Come and listen, all you | who fear God,*
and I will tell you what he has | done for me.**
¹⁵ I called out to him | with my mouth,*
and his praise was | on my tongue.
¹⁶ **If I had found evil | in my heart,*
the Lord would | not have heard me;**
¹⁷ but in truth | God has heard me;*
he has attended to the voice | of my prayer.
¹⁸ **Blessed be God, who has not reject- | ed my prayer,*
nor withheld his | love from me.**

READING 1 Peter 3:13-22 (*back cover*)

Stand

ALLELUIA



Repeat alleluia



HOLY GOSPEL**John 14:15-21***(back cover)*

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

Glory to you, O Lord.**Praise to you, O Christ.***Sit***SERMON**

Pastor Stanley Reep

*Stand***NICENE CREED**

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

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

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

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

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

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

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

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

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

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

Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world,
let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silence.

God of new life, you call us through the waters of baptism to be in relationship with you and one another. Guide the church and its leaders to proclaim Christ's righteousness throughout the world. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You create the world and all that is in it. Shelter budding plants and young animals, provide unpolluted habitats and clean water, and raise up stewards for the environment. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You set civil servants in the places where we live. Instill truth and equity among judges and lawyers, gentleness and courage among first responders, and peace among leaders of towns and nations. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You provide comfort in times of trouble. Heal those who are sick, shelter any who are unhoused, feed those undernourished, and accompany and console all who are lonely, bereaved, anxious, or ill (*especially*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You are love and you desire that we love one another. As a mother hen cares for her chicks, bless all who provide motherly care in our lives, and inspire us to care for one another. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of new life, your steadfast love endures forever. Inspire us by the example of the faithful departed, who clung to your promises of life, forgiveness of sins, and salvation. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils that surround them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray trusting in your mercy 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 OF OUR GIFTS

8:30 AM

Organ

Ricercare

Jean Langlais

10:30 AM

Chancel Choir

Praise be to God

Alan Bullard

Stand

OFFERTORY

This is Christ's Body (ACS 967)

This is Christ's bod - y, bro - ken and blest. Feed us with

mer-cy and love.
with mer - cy and love. We are Christ's bod - y,

bro - ken and blest. Heal us and make us one.

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

Sung by Pastor and congregation

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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

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

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING

You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all holiness;
you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence.

We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us.

We thank you for the new world to come and for the love that will rule all in all.

We praise you for the grace shown to Israel, your chosen, the people of your promise:
the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land,
the memory of the fathers, the homecoming from exile,
and the prophets' words that will not be in vain.

In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son,
who fulfilled and will fulfill all your promises.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

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

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

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

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

We remember the sacrifice of his life:

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

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

his ascension to the seat of power,

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

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

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we and all who share in this bread and cup
may be united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, may enter the fullness of the
kingdom of heaven, and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

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

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

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father 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 RITE

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

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

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

AGNUS DEI



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. We receive communion by intinction today.

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 CANTICLE

This is the Feast

Refrain

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.

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

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

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

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

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

3 For the Lamb who was slain has be -

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

10:30 AM COMMUNION HYMN *Come Down, O Love Divine (ELW 804)*



1 Come down, O Love di - vine; seek thou this soul of mine
2 Oh, let it free - ly burn, till world - ly pas - sions turn
3 Let ho - ly char - i - ty mine out - ward ves - ture be,
4 And so the yearn - ing strong, with which the soul will long,



and vis - it it with thine own ar - dor glow - ing;
to dust and ash - es in its heat con - sum - ing;
and low - li - ness be - come mine in - ner cloth - ing—
shall far out - pass the pow'r of hu - man tell - ing;



O Com - fort - er, draw near; with - in my heart ap - pear
and let thy glo - rious light shine ev - er on my sight,
true low - li - ness of heart, which takes the hum - bler part,
no soul can guess Love's grace till it be - come the place



and kin - dle it, thy ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.
and clothe me round, the while my path il - lum - ing.
and o'er its own short - com - ings weeps with loath - ing.
where - in the Ho - ly Spir - it makes a dwell - ing.

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

BLESSING

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

HYMN

Children of the Heavenly Father (ELW 781)

Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra,
 1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
 2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish.
 3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
 4 Though he giv - eth or he tak - eth, God his chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth;

stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - geln ej i kän - da näs - tet.
 nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
 From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
 un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
 his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

He is Risen, indeed. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Dear Christians One and All Rejoice

James Melby

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We extend our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Robert Little. A memorial service will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Thursday, June 4, at 11:00 AM.

**Please note there will be no Second Sunday Sandwiches today due to Mother's Day.
Happy Mother's Day!**



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, May 10—Mother's Day

8:30 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist —Live Stream
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

Monday, May 11

7:00 PM Finance Committee—Zoom

Tuesday, May 12—Council Reports due to Secretary

9:30 AM Pantry

Wednesday, May 13

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

Thursday, May 14

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

Friday, May 15—Newsletter Deadline

Sunday, May 17

8:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Dentler Baptism
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist —Live Stream
3:00 PM Saxton & Stump Will Planning Seminar
6:30 PM AA Meeting—Community Rm

*The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God
in honor of all of our Mothers past and present on this Mothers Day
by Mike & Becky Bingham
And in loving memory of my mother, Laura Ann Krebs Ely by her
daughter Norma Spencer*



Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Greeters	Ushers -	Early: Altar Set-up Late: Altar Clean - up	Bread Bakers
5/10	8:30 AM	Bob Reed	James Palmer	Harrison Palmer	John & Kathy Monk	Team 3E: Norma Shue, Cliff Beck, Sheridan Palmer	Pat Scarborough, Kathleen Lemke	Norma Shue
5/10	10:30 AM	Tom Gibson	Janet Fitch	Emily Reep	Pat Rudacille, Gerry Briggs	Team 3L: Dan Garber, Joe Guarriello, Larry Becker	Janet & Larry Moore	Norma Shue

Vacation Bible School is June 7-11. The sessions take place in the evening from 5:30 – 7:30 PM. Registrations forms are available at the entrances to the church and were in the newsletter. As always, helpers are needed. Please contact the office to volunteer.



**Church Picnic in conjunction with Vacation Bible School
Thursday, June 11, 5:30 PM Kain Park**

The last evening of vacation Bible School a picnic will be held at Kain Park. The Witness Committee members are providing the appetizers and desserts. The Men’s group is providing the main course (hot dogs, hamburgers and pulled pork are all in their notes about the event). Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. If you would like to bring a side dish to share that would be incredibly helpful.



Altar Flowers beautify our worship space. Please consider providing flowers for an upcoming Sunday. The chart is posted on the Springettsbury Ave. Bulletin board. The cost is \$40 per vase.



Spring cleaning closets? Consider **donating clothing to help Union Lutheran Church** with their clothes closet. Bring items to St. Paul’s and we will deliver them for you. Or contact Union Lutheran and they will arrange a time for you to take them directly to their closet.

**Summer Sunday Fellowship Time
Weekly Following the 9:30 AM liturgy**

Summer Sunday Fellowship is taking a page from the *Great British Baking Show*. We are featuring; Bread week, cupcake week, coffee cake week and so forth to try and keep us from getting in a rut. A sign-up sheet is on the stand in the Good Shepherd Room.



The **Summer Worship Schedule** begins on Memorial Day weekend (May 24, 2026). One liturgy at 9:30 AM with fellowship time to follow.



**Food
Pantry
Needs**

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!

**OUR FOOD PANTRY
NEEDS CEREAL DONATIONS!
HELP US FILL THE CEREAL BOX
IN THE GOOD SHEPHERD ROOM.
COLLECTION RUNS THROUGH MAY.**



It is not too late to **volunteer to share your musical talent** during the summer months. A sign-up sheet is available on the stand in the Good Shepherd Room. The Worship and Arts Committee has already begun their work of arranging for instrumentalists and ensembles for Sundays while Victor is on sabbatical.

Will and Estate Planning Seminar

Next Sunday, May 17, 3:00 PM.—by Saxton & Stump

Members of St. Paul's who attend the seminar will have the opportunity for Saxton and Stump to prepare a Will, Durable Power of Attorney, and Living Will at no cost to them through the generosity of St. Paul's Benevolence Fund. A sign-up sheet is in the Good Shepherd Room.



**The Lutheran Camping Corporation
of Central Pennsylvania**

Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, & The Wittel Farm

Summer Church Camp for Nawakwa and Kirchenwald are posted online.

Check out the fabulous offerings. Scholarships are available through St. Paul's Church. See Miss Kelly for details.



**NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE**

Please note that the Newsletter Deadline is May 15 for the June/July Double Issue.

Last month, the astronauts of NASA's Artemis II mission splashed down in the Pacific Ocean, bringing their journey around the moon to a close. The NPR radio show, "The Daily" asked children to send in questions that they would like to ask the crew. Rachel Abrams, host of the show, confessed that the show received more questions from children than from any other topic during her time at the show. She invited the astronauts to join her for a lively conversation as the three Americans and one Canadian sat down to answer all their questions. The Artemis II astronauts: Victor Glover, Jeremy Hansen, Christina Kock and Reid Wiseman, weighed in on the children's queries.

The number one question from the children was not really a surprise. They all wanted to know about bathroom functions, going potty, is there privacy, how does it all work when there isn't any gravity to keep it going the right direction; down!

That was followed by a round of questions related to meals and eating and variety and can you have soda pop. Yes, to variety, everything from Nutella to broccoli, beans to tortillas. And no to the soda pop question. The carbonation doesn't work in zero gravity.

There were questions about being lonely, afraid, and the vast distance that separated them from the Earth and everyone that they loved. Since this mission took humankind farther away from the earth than any other previous space mission those questions all seemed to be fitting.

Then there was the round of questions probing the astronauts about preparation, what traits do you need if you want to become an astronaut; observing nature was one response, teamwork was another, and yet others chimed in with persistence, goals, and curiosity.

Then one little girl, who identified herself as living in California but wishing that she lived in New Jersey, asked about what the most beautiful part of the mission was. The team responded unanimously, "*seeing the earth.*" "*We know that that sounds rather trite, but it is the truth.*" Their responses made me listen with greater clarity. "*When you see the earth, you know that it is alive*" said one astronaut. "*It is teeming with life.*" Then the astronaut went on telling how the atmosphere is always swirling around, the intensity of color, greens and blues. How it gives clarity and definition to the global reality, that all life, all that we know is living, inhabits one planet.

That global perspective is one that should help us make sense of the love that Jesus is discussing with his disciples. He is going to send them the Spirit, the Advocate to be with them. He is pouring forth, giving to, filling the Earth, with the Spirit. This is the future being made present. Not any future, but the future that is promised to us through Christ Jesus (Baptism).

There were lots of questions swirling around during the time when the gospel of St. John was written. There were questions about nature, teamwork, persistence, goals

and curiosity. There were questions about truth, and beauty, and life, eternal life, life that anchors those who believe in the Word become flesh in Jesus. Such belief differentiated them from the rest of the citizenry. Life in the Spirit does and will shape the world in the way of love. God's love. Love made known through his only Son, Christ Jesus.

There were questions about being lonely asked by the disciples and other followers of Jesus. There were questions about being afraid and the vast distance that separated them from God's only Son Jesus. His mission to the Earth brought him closer to humankind, he became one with us. Jesus is encouraging them and comforting them with the one he sends, the Advocate to be with them, to abide with them.

In the days of the 12 disciples, it was their obedience to Jesus that identified their love, love for one another and love for God. The future promised was presently being made known. *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."* Jesus is not identifying a short list of things for which his followers can check off so that they know that they are exhibiting love. He is guiding them into life revealed in the Father and the love for all humanity. It will provide the inhabitants of the Earth with a lens through which to view everything. Through Christ we see the Earth as teeming with life, the place where God chooses to be present even when humanity is hostile, mean spirited and violent.

Jesus knows humankind so very well. He knows that we aren't nice people. He experienced our vile hatred when we shouted "crucify, crucify him" and put him to death on a cross. But his love for us is deeper than we can comprehend. His love goes beyond; our righteous indignation, our violent prejudice, and our prevailing greed. This morning Jesus calls us to a love that gives life to the world. He reminds us that loving him is keeping his commandments. His mission, one that goes farther than any of us can imagine, is to give life so that all may know the love of the Father.

Such love is bound to raise questions, with children and adults. There will be questions by believers and nonbelievers. Questions that will cover basic daily aspects of life, and deeper far-reaching questions of how loving as a global reality will shape daily decision making. In all of these we rely on the gift of the Spirit of truth, the one who abides with you and who is with you now. This is the one who sustains us through our fears and doubts and disappointments and draws us together in the Father's love. *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever."*

Jesus' mission to the world continues to draw people together. His mission is not static or fixed but is living and breathing bestowing life. His mission reveals his love for the whole Earth so that all people will have life, abundant life, everlasting life. It is like the astronaut's observation of the Earth as viewed from the distance of the moon *"When you see the earth, you know that it is alive. It is teeming with life."* That is the way of God at work through his only Son, the one who gives us the Advocate to be with us forever. In Christ you know that you are alive and the Spirit is dwelling in you. Amen.

FIRST READING: Acts 17:22-31

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live; ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we, too, are his offspring.'

²⁹"Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

Psalms 66:8-20**SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:13-22**

Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready

to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and respect. Maintain a good conscience so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. ¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight lives, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

GOSPEL: John 14:15-21

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me, and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

Next Sunday's Readings: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11.

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