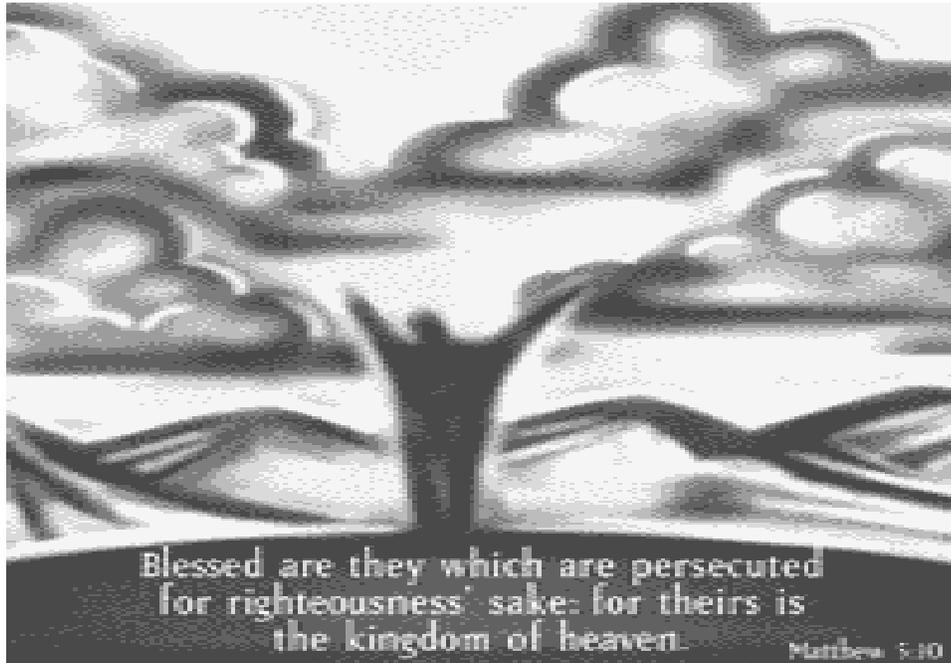




**St. Paul
Lutheran Church**
share • care • grow
La Grange, Texas

The Rev. William J. Sappenfield, *Interim Pastor*
Organist: Jean McHenry - Saturday
Organist: Sherise Davis —Sunday

**Saturday & Sunday
January 28 & 29, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Epiphany**



Next weekend's readings:

Isaiah 58: 1-12]; Psalm 112: 1-10; 1 Corinthians 2: 1-16

Matthew 5: 13-20

Visit our webpage, www.stpaulg.org, and click "**Live Worship**" to hear our services live on your smart phone or computer! You can choose to watch live or listen only. You can also view our bulletin, weekly service video, newsletters and current calendar. Visit our Facebook page to view the service live Sunday morning at 9 a.m.

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. William J. Sappenfield, Interim Pastor

Cell: 512-825-0842 Email: wsappenfield@att.net

Pastor Office Hours Mon.-Wed. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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Parish Office: 979-968-5657 Fellowship Hall: 979-968-9603

Office Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.; 2 - 5 p.m.

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Welcome!

- + Welcome to worship! All are welcome at the table of grace. We believe that Christ is truly present as we share the bread and wine. Those at home are invited to participate with appropriate elements.
- + The 9 a.m. service will be on Facebook live & audio streamed on our webpage, www.stpaullg.org. It will also be posted on our Facebook page. You may listen to last week's service on KBUK 104.9 FM on Sundays at 10 am.

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

GATHER

Prelude

Announcements

Invocation *The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.*

P: 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**

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive 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.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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**

HYMN

Let Justice Flow Like Streams

717

Greeting

P: 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 *page 138*

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

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

Lord, have mercy.

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 mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us gracious Lord. **Amen.**

Canticle of Praise *pages 139-140*

P: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.

Amen

Prayer of the Day

P: Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

The First Reading: Micah 6: 1-8

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has "wearied" Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God's service.

¹Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ²Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. ³"O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! ⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. ⁵O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD." ⁶"With

what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" ⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

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

Psalm: Psalm 15

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

²**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

⁴**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD.
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes
against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

The Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 18-31

According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. ²⁶Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is

written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

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

Gospel Acclamation *ELW 142*

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

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

The Gospel: Matthew 5: 1-12

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Children's Word

Sermon

Hymn

Rise Up, O Saints of God!

#669

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the

forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Cultivate humility in your church. In gatherings of every size, teach us to boast only in the cross. Shape your church to be people of kindness, generosity, and justice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The foundations of the earth bear witness to your faithfulness; the mountains and hills echo with your holiness. Lead us to care for your creation and inspire us with reverent awe to honor all you have made. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You make foolish the wisdom of the world. Raise up honorable leaders who seek justice, love mercy, and pursue peace. Frustrate plans that are corrupt, wicked, and self-seeking. Prosper the work of peacemakers. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Bless all whom the world rejects. Accompany those who are regarded as foolish, weak, low, and despised; reveal your power and presence at work where it is least expected. Give your life, strength, and wisdom to all in need, we especially remember those we name aloud or silently. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Bless our Call Committee as they continue to bring our next pastor to us. Give them wisdom and patience. Be with our next pastor, whomever that may be. Give him or her joy in serving and faith in your call. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Praise to you for your blessed saints in every time and place. Trusting that you accompanied them in poverty, persecution, and in every trial, we trust you abide with your people always. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified. **Amen.**

The Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering *The offering plates will be passed.*

Offering Song *ELW 186*

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

Offering Prayer

P: God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

MEAL

The Great Thanksgiving *ELW 144*

P: 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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

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.

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

Agnus Dei *page 146*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

Communion

All are welcome to the Lord's table. White grape juice is in the center of the tray of cups. If you are physically unable to come forward for communion, please tell an usher and communion will be brought to you. You may also remain in your pew and use a prepackaged kit.

Prayer after Communion

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

SENDING

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

Sending Song

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

#551

Dismissal

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

THIS Weekend:

5:00 pm **USHERS:** John D. & Kay Marburger
LECTOR: John D. Marburger
ALTAR GUILD: Sharon Elias
9:00 am **USHERS:** Frank & Sandra Tekyl
LECTOR: Ann Raborn
ALTAR GUILD: Ashleigh Parks
FELLOWSHIP REFRESHMENTS: Ken & Linda Diers
FLOWERS: In Memory of Atlan Citzler, Sr.

NEXT Weekend: 3/4 & 3/5

5:00 pm **USHERS:** Billy & Christy Nietsche
LECTOR: Annette Citzler
ALTAR GUILD: Faye Bresan
9:00 am **USHERS:** Ken & Linda Diers
LECTOR: Praise Band
ALTAR GUILD: Faye Bresan
FELLOWSHIP REFRESHMENTS : Annette Citzler

SATURDAY: 5:00 pm Worship
SUNDAY: 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School
MONDAY: 9:00 am Quilters 5:00 pm Confirmation
WEDNESDAY: 6:00 pm Hand Bells 7:00 pm Choir 8:00 pm Praise Band 6:30 pm LYO
SATURDAY: 5:00 pm Worship
SUNDAY: 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School

ANNUAL MEETING - Thank you to all who attended the Annual Meeting. Congratulations to the newest Church Council members that were elected: Bamba Scott and Todd Oehlke. And many thanks to Frank Macaulay and Ginger Friemel for their years of dedication and service as their terms on the Council end.

And thank you to the cooking crew for the delicious meal and all those attending for the wonderful choices of dessert.

Fishers of Men are on their annual retreat this weekend. Prayers for a restful time of renewal to them.

REMINDER—Christ in Our Home devotionals are available on the ushers counter in the Narthex and on the porch of the office.

Special envelopes for Memorial donations are available at the ushers counter in the Narthex. They are in the plexiglass slots on the top of the counter.