

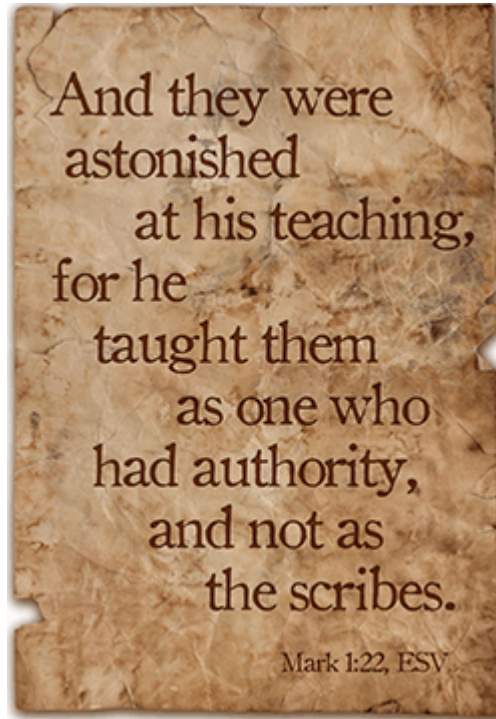


St. Paul Lutheran Church

share • care • grow
La Grange, Texas

Rev. Stan Larson, Interim Pastor
Praise Band

Sunday, 10:00 a.m.
January 28, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Epiphany



Next weekend's readings:

Isaiah 40: 21-31; Psalm 147: 1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9: 16-23

Mark 1: 29-39

LISTEN TO ST. PAUL SERVICES!

Visit our webpage, www.stpaulg.org, and click "**Listen**" to hear our services live on your smart phone or computer! 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. Stan Larson, Interim Pastor

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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.
- + Everyone is invited for coffee and snacks in the Fellowship Hall following Sunday morning's service.

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

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**
God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

HYMN

(See Overhead Screen)

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.**

Prayer of the Day

P: Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

The First Reading: Deuteronomy 18: 15-20

Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable.

²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

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

Psalm: Psalm 111

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

²**Great are your works, O LORD,
pondered by all who delight in them.**

³Majesty and splendor mark your deeds,
and your righteousness endures forever.

⁴**You cause your wonders to be remembered;
you are gracious and full of compassion.**

⁵You give food to those who fear you,
remembering forever your covenant.

⁶**You have shown your people the power of your works**

in giving them the lands of the nations.

⁷The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice;
all of your precepts are sure.

⁸**They stand fast forever and ever,
because they are done in truth and equity.**

⁹You sent redemption to your people and commanded your covenant
forever;
holy and awesome is your name.

¹⁰**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise
endures forever.**

The Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8: 1-13

Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.

¹Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸“Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

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

Gospel Acclamation

(See Overhead Screen)

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

The Gospel: Mark 1: 21-28

Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit,²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

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

Children's Word

Sermon

Hymn

(See Overhead Screen)

P: 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

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives especially, Thomas Aquinas, whom we commemorate today. We trust that all who have died rest in your loving care. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

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 (See Overhead Screen)

Offering Prayer

P: Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you. In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. **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.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

And so, with all the choir of angels,
With the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
We praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(see Overhead Screen)

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

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: Giver of every gift, Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

P: God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, bless you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Sending *(See Overhead Screen)*

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. You are God's Beloved. **Thanks be to God.**

This Weekend: 1/28

10:00 am **USHERS:** David & Patty Ehler
Frank & Sandra Teykl

LECTOR: Praise Band

ALTAR GUILD: Ashleigh Parks

FLOWERS: Annette Citzler

Next Weekend: 2/4

9:00 am **USHERS:**

LECTOR:

ALTAR GUILD:

FELLOWSHIP REFRESHMENTS: Open

FLOWERS: Open

SUNDAY (1/28) : 10:00 am Worship

11:15 Meal in Fellowship Hall

11:45 Annual Meeting Begins

TUESDAY: 8:30 am St. Paul at

Second Chance thru 2/5/23

WEDNESDAY: 8:30 am Bible Study

5:00 pm Confirmation

6:00 pm Handbells

6:30 pm LYO

7:00 pm Choir

8:00 pm Praise Band

SUNDAY (2/4) : 9:00 am Worship

10:30 am Sunday School

The Annual Meeting of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church is today. After services please join us for the meal in the Fellowship Hall. The Annual Meeting will start at 11:45. Please bring your copy of the Annual Report to the meeting.