

Welcome in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!
St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Irvine (LCMS)

Midweek of Lent 1

Wednesday, March 12th, 2025

7:00 P.M.

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Alfonso O. Espinosa, Ph.D.

Assistant Pastor: Rev. Dr. Steven P. Mueller, Ph.D.

Organist: Gerald Dahlin

Choir Director: Mark Howard

Administrative Coordinator: Jackie Johnson

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Concordia University Irvine – Spectrum Campus

16355 Laguna Canyon Rd

Irvine, CA 92618

Mission

To foster the freedom and love we share in Christ to the community by nurturing faith in Him through tangible expressions of God's grace.

Vision

To share the Truth and Love of Christ to all ages, cultures, and backgrounds.

Service Offerings

- Sunday Divine Service at 9:30 am
 - Fellowship in Café at 10:30 am and Adult Bible Study at 11:00 am
- Wednesday Lenten Midweek Services at 7:00 pm
- Holy Thursday, April 17th at 7:00 pm
- Good Friday, April 18th at 7:00 pm
- Easter Sunday Divine Services at 8:00 am and 10:30 am
 - Easter Fellowship Breakfast in between services at 9:30 am

Welcome to Saint Paul's

We praise and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as He comes to serve and bless us through His Word and Sacraments. We follow the ancient liturgy which draws from the Word of God to order and guide our worship. Its biblical structure has been used in the Christian Church before any denominations within Christianity existed. Our worship emphasizes order, beauty, and reverence. We also celebrate the Holy Eucharist and receive the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the

forgiveness of sins. We are excited about what the Lord is doing at St. Paul's, and it is our great joy to serve you!

This is the Saving Gospel/The Good News:

God sent His Son Jesus Christ to take your sin upon Himself and Jesus gave to you His perfect righteousness and holiness. In Christ, it is a fact, and it is reality that your sins are forgiven, covered by His blood. And because Christ defeated death, you too – as you trust in Him alone – have eternal life. This is the Good News. It is so powerful because the Holy Spirit works through it to create and sustain faith in our hearts to hold to our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel costs Jesus everything but costs us nothing. It is yours. It is God's GIFT to you. Hold to it and know that you ARE (present tense) saved from sin, death, and the power of the devil; that you are saved TO (present tense) the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation! That's the Christian, a forgiven sinner who lives for God and loves their neighbor. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Prayer Before Worship

O Lord, my creator, redeemer, and comforter, as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth, I humbly pray that You would open my heart to the preaching of Your Word so that I may repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

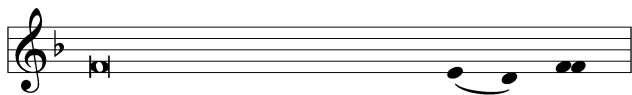
+ In the Name of Jesus +

Prelude

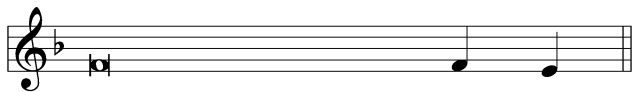
Service of Light

Stand

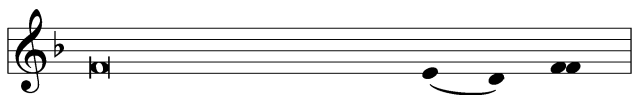
L Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,
C the light no darkness can o - ver - come.



L Stay with us, Lord, for it is eve - ning,



C and the day is almost o - ver.



L Let Your light scatter the dark - ness



C and il - lu - mine Your Church.

Phos Hilaron

LSB 244



L Joy - ous light of glo - ry:



C of the im - mor - tal Fa - ther; heav - en - ly, ho - ly,



bles - ed Je - sus Christ. We have come to the



set - ting of the sun, and we look to the eve - ning light.



We sing to God, the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it:



You are wor - thy of be - ing praised with pure voic - es for -

ev - er. O Son of God, O Giv - er of life:
 the u - ni - verse pro - claims Your glo - ry.

Thanksgiving for Light

LSB 245

L Blessèd are You, O Lord our God, king of the u - ni - verse,
 who led Your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of
 fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ;
 may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path;
 for You are mer - ci - ful, and You love Your whole cre - a - tion
 and we, Your creatures, glo - ri - fy You, Father, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it.
C A - men.

Sit

Psalmody

Psalm 141

LSB 245



C Let my prayer rise be - fore You as in - cense,



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.



I O Lord, I call to You; come to me quick - ly; hear my voice



when I cry to You. **C** Let my prayer rise be - fore You as in - cense,



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.



II Set a watch be - fore my mouth, O Lord, and guard the door of my lips.



I Let not my heart in - cline to an - y e - vil thing;



let me not be oc - cu - pied in wick - ed - ness with e - vil - do - ers.



II But my eyes are turned to You, O God; in You I take ref - uge.



Strip me not of my life. **C** Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and



to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it; as it was in
the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A-men.
Let my prayer rise be-fore You as in-cense,
the lift-ing up of my hands as the eve-ning sac-ri-fice.

L Let us pray.

Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before You, O Lord, and let Your loving-kindness descend on us that, with purified minds, we may sing Your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host and may glorify You forever.

G Amen.

Office Hymn:

752 Be Still, My Soul

(all stanzas)

Readings

First Reading

Amos 5:14-15; 5:24; 9:11-15

L A reading from Amos,

¹⁴Seek good, and not evil,
that you may live;
and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you,
as you have said.

¹⁵Hate evil, and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

²⁴But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

¹¹In that day I will raise up
the booth of David that is fallen
and repair its breaches,
and raise up its ruins
and rebuild it as in the days of old,
¹²that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations who are called by my name,"
declares the LORD who does this.
¹³"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD,
"when the plowman shall overtake the reaper
and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed;
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,
and all the hills shall flow with it.
¹⁴I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,
and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine,
and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.
¹⁵I will plant them on their land,
and they shall never again be uprooted
out of the land that I have given them,"
says the LORD your God.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Obadiah 1:3–4; 10; 15; 17a

L A reading from Obadiah, chapter 1.

³The pride of your heart has deceived you,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,
in your lofty dwelling,
who say in your heart,

"Who will bring me down to the ground?"

⁴Though you soar aloft like the eagle,
though your nest is set among the stars,
from there I will bring you down,
declares the LORD.

¹⁰Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob,
shame shall cover you,
and you shall be cut off forever.

¹⁵For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations.
As you have done, it shall be done to you;
your deeds shall return on your own head.

¹⁷But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape,
and it shall be holy.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

L In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C **But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.**

Sermon

Spiritual Renewal through Amos and Obadiah: Justice and Humility
(part 2 of 6 of our Lenten series on Spiritual Renewal through the 12
Minor Prophets)

Pastor Espinosa

Introduction last Wednesday, part 1 of 6 on Hosea and Joel: A call to
Return.

But...Amos Chapter 4: Five Times the LORD says to Israel: "yet you did not
return to me." There is terrible danger in not returning to the LORD. Why
wouldn't we?

- A. Because we try to suppress our sin into our subconscious
- B. Because we keep our sin in the primary position
- C. Because we deny the presence of personal sin
- D. Because we try to work sin off through our own effort

E. Instead of doing what God says to do: 1) Repent of sin; 2) Receive
Christ; and 3) Remain in His Word and Sacraments

Part 1: Amos was a prophet assigned to the Southern Kingdom of Judah,
but he begins his prophecy about everyone else, the other nations:

A. It is easy to do so. We do it: the problem is Ukraine, no the problem is Russia, the problem is Israel, no the problem is Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon; the problem is North Korea, no the problem is China (though in actuality North Korea calls the United States their worst enemy)

B. Amos went so far as to pronounce judgement on Judah's closest neighbor Israel. Like us saying the problem is Mexico, no the problem is Canada.

C. Amos saves the best for last: Judah herself. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, September 10, 1813: "We have met the enemy and they are ours."

D. Look in the mirror Judah, God's blessed kingdom, home of Zion, Jerusalem the city of David, the place of the Holy Temple where God meets His people. YOUR Kingdom. "YOU are your own worst enemy."

Part 2: The above a macrocosm for our microcosm:

Judging Others

7 "Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

How do we know we are susceptible to this? As long as we do not believe that we are the worst of sinners as St. Paul thought of Himself (1 Tim 1:15), then it must be that we believe we are better than someone else, anyone else, or everyone else...and as long as this is the case, we are blind.

Part 3: Solution: get busy with Justice.

- A. Faith the Clings to the Flesh will not give occasion for sin to brew.
- B. We crucify the flesh (Gal. 5:24): discuss in connection to the fruits of the Spirit
- C. So, what do we do? We live out faith through new lives and our new lives love God by loving the neighbor...and what does our neighbor need? Answer: Justice
- D. Mishpat...Here is what it means here in Amos:

"To seek good and not evil means to hate, detest, all that is evil (v. 15) and to love all that is good, all that God, who is Good (Ps. 34:8; 73:1; 100:5), commands to man (Ps. 19:7ff.; Prov. 3:1ff.), namely, to establish, uphold, in the gate (see v. 10), judgement, justice, such as is in keeping with God's norm, His holy Law proclaimed by Him in His covenant." (Laetsh, p. 162)

We get off our posteriors and live our faith by bringing justice to the land. To be the salt and light that God calls us to be: primarily by sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but secondarily and as the result of the Great Commission, we love and therefore seek the well-being of our nature in the land and for this to be true we can't be about "me, myself, and I." Amos 3:13-15: What are we living for?

Part 4: But we will not pursue justice, if we are not humbled. And humility is the work of the Holy Spirit. We must pray to the LORD to make us low.

- A. Here is an example of those who did not seek justice, especially for God's chosen nation. Edom had opportunity to help and support Israel, but not only did they not help, but they preyed upon Judah when she was desperate.
- B. From 15 is very important: "As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head." This is **lex talionis** = ""**an eye for an eye**" or "**you reap what you sow.**"

- C. When we do not live for justice and mercy towards those around us, and live only for ourselves, God will make low those not returning to Him in faith.
- D. Jesus is clear about this in Matthew 25: "Whatever you did...to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me" (v 40) OR "as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it for me" (v 45). Verse 46: "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
- E. And this should rock us during Lent. How often have we failed to love Jesus by not loving those in our lives and if we are permitted to get what we deserve, then all is lost.
- F. Let this humble you and I need it to humble me.
- G. Let this bring us low and then let us hear of Christ for us.
- H. Then let Christ for us, releasing us from all condemnation, raise us to rejoice and then ACT: and seek justice...and to live out our faith during this season of Lent by striving to make this life better for those in our lives. Do good. Let us in Christ, be brought low each day, that we may be so thankful for our forgiveness in Christ that we gladly live for others.

Stand

Canticle

434 Lamb of God, Pure and Holy

(all stanzas)

Sit

Offering

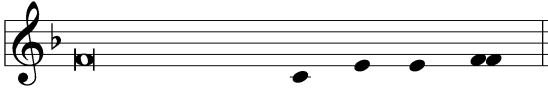
Prayer

Stand

Litany (Lent)

LSB 249

The congregation's response may begin just as the leader's petition ends so that the word "Lord" is sung simultaneously by both leader and congregation.



L In peace let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mer - cy.

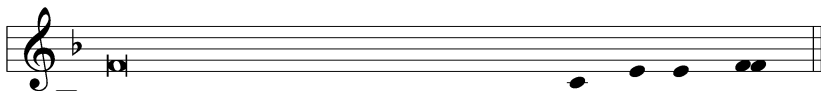
- L** For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For [*names of synodical and district presidents*], for all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For [*name of president or monarch*], for all public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

G Lord, have mercy.

L For . . . [additional bids for prayer may be inserted here] . . . let us pray to the Lord:

G Lord, have mercy.

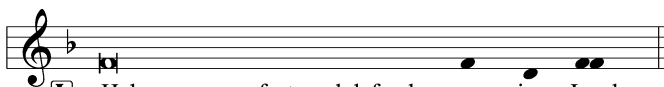
The prayers then continue:



L For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:

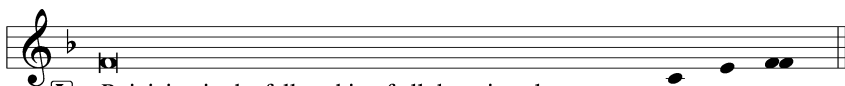


G Thanks be to God.



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

Silence for individual prayer may follow.



L Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord:



G To You, O Lord.

Collect for Peace

L O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and

quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 251

L Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **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.

Stand

Benedicamus

LSB 252



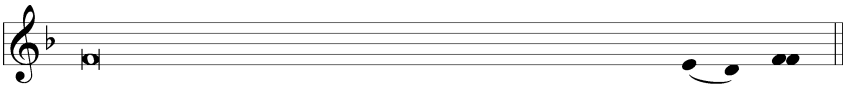
L Let us bless the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

LSB 252



P The almighty and merciful Lord,
the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and pre - serve you.



C A - men.

Closing Hymn:

884 Lord, Support Us All Day Long

(all stanzas)

Postlude

Acknowledgments

Evening Prayer from Lutheran Service Book

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Announcements:

Spiritual Renewal According to the 12 Minor Prophets Wednesdays at 7:00 PM | March 5 – April 9

Join us for a six-week sermon series exploring the timeless messages of the 12 Minor Prophets. Each week, we will uncover how these prophetic voices call us to deeper faith and spiritual renewal.

Series Schedule:

Date	Prophets & Theme
March 19	Jonah & Micah: Mercy & Obedience
March 26	Nahum & Habakkuk: Trusting God's Plan
April 2	Zephaniah & Haggai: Renewing Our Devotion
April 9	Zechariah & Malachi: Hope & Restoration

Come and be refreshed through the Word as we seek renewal in our walk with God.

"Lux et Veritas K-8 Classical Lutheran Academy"

This is a very exciting time as we are commencing our partnership with Lutheran Church Extension Fund and their professionally crafted feasibility study to put us in a position for success if the congregation agrees to take the next steps towards a classical school. LCEF is preparing to send us a tailor-made process. In the meantime, I will be traveling with our representative to Henderson, Nevada to learn about a new lcms classical school there. We will also be conducting a meeting with Grace Presbyterian classical school in Laguna Hills together more information. We are also amassing a list of all of our educators,

current and past educators here at St. Paul's to have a very important kickoff rally meeting at the beginning of June (We are doing it early in June so that our educators can finish the school year and so that we can catch them hopefully before extended vacations). This meeting will be a very important part of the feasibility study phase. Please keep this ministry in your prayers. This is for the Great Commission!"

Congregational Voters' Meeting

We invite you to join us for a Congregational Voters' Meeting on **Sunday, March 30th** after Divine Service to discuss an important proposal. The topic for this meeting will be the approval of funding for the installation of an air wall between the sanctuary and the adjacent classroom.

This air wall will help improve the functionality of our space, providing greater flexibility for both worship and community activities.

Your input and participation are vital in making this decision, so we encourage all eligible voters to attend.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in the life of our church!