

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

Midweek of Lent 4

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

7:00 P.M.

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

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

Guest Organist: Herbert G. Geisler, Ph.D.

Choir Director: Mark Howard

Administrative Coordinator: Jackie Johnson

Office: 12-4 M-F; 949-599-4760

Website: www.saintpaulsirvine.com

Email: office@saintpaulsirvine.com

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 +

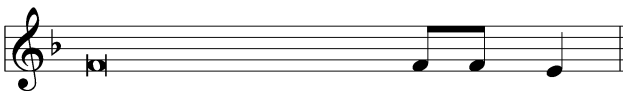
Prelude

Service of Light

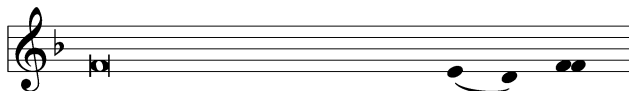
Stand



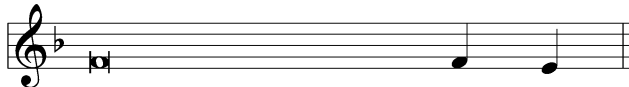
L Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,



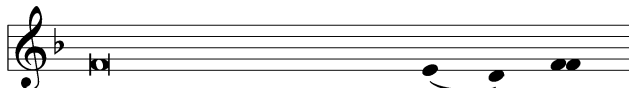
C the light no darkness can o - ver - come.



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 Hymns:

704 Renew Me, O Eternal Light

(all stanzas)

Readings

Reading

Zephaniah 3

L A reading from Zephaniah, chapter 3.

¹Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled,
the oppressing city!

²She listens to no voice;
she accepts no correction.

She does not trust in the LORD;
she does not draw near to her God.

³Her officials within her
are roaring lions;
her judges are evening wolves
that leave nothing till the morning.

⁴Her prophets are fickle, treacherous men;
her priests profane what is holy;
they do violence to the law.

⁵The LORD within her is righteous;
he does no injustice;
every morning he shows forth his justice;
each dawn he does not fail;
but the unjust knows no shame.

⁶"I have cut off nations;
their battlements are in ruins;
I have laid waste their streets
so that no one walks in them;
their cities have been made desolate,
without a man, without an inhabitant.

⁷I said, 'Surely you will fear me;
you will accept correction.
Then your dwelling would not be cut off
according to all that I have appointed against you.'
But all the more they were eager
to make all their deeds corrupt.

⁸"Therefore wait for me," declares the LORD,
"for the day when I rise up to seize the prey.
For my decision is to gather nations,
to assemble kingdoms,
to pour out upon them my indignation,
all my burning anger;
for in the fire of my jealousy
all the earth shall be consumed.

⁹"For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples
to a pure speech,
that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD
and serve him with one accord.

¹⁰From beyond the rivers of Cush
my worshipers, the daughter of my dispersed ones,
shall bring my offering.

¹¹"On that day you shall not be put to shame
because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me;
for then I will remove from your midst
your proudly exultant ones,
and you shall no longer be haughty
in my holy mountain.

¹²But I will leave in your midst
a people humble and lowly.
They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD,

¹³those who are left in Israel;
they shall do no injustice
and speak no lies,

nor shall there be found in their mouth
a deceitful tongue.

For they shall graze and lie down,
and none shall make them afraid.”

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you;
he has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall never again fear evil.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
“Fear not, O Zion;

let not your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;

he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing.

¹⁸I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival,
so that you will no longer suffer reproach.

¹⁹Behold, at that time I will deal
with all your oppressors.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you in,
at the time when I gather you together;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes,” says the LORD.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Reading

Haggai 2:1–9

L A reading from Haggai, chapter 2.

¹In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, ²“Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say, ³“Who is left among

you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? ⁴Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts, ⁵according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not. ⁶For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. ⁷And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. ⁸The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts. ⁹The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts.”

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

"Zephaniah and Haggai: Renewing Our Devotion"

(Part 5 of 6 of Spiritual Renewal from the Minor Prophets)

Pastor Espinosa

Part 1: Hosea & Joel: A Call to Return: Repentance is a constant returning to the LORD. This is key to our constant spiritual renewal.

Part 2: Amos & Obadiah: Repentance that is REAL must bear FRUIT. *Mishpat* serves the neighbor!

Part 3: Jonah & Micah: But then we SEE our neighbor with all their faults and unattractive issues, we want to run! But repentance stays abiding in *Hesed*!

Part 4: Nahum & Habakkuk: What are we to respect for the long haul as we abide in the fruit of repentance? Answer: frustration! But the LORD knows what He is doing.

Part 5: Zephaniah & Haggai: But we don't sit idle. We are called to renew our devotion to the LORD.

Introduction: Full-circle...repentance is returning to the LORD, showing fruit toward the neighbor, AND an ongoing devotion toward God.

- A. Word and Prayer
- B. Spiritual Discipline
- C. Divine Service not "Worship"

Part I: Devotion drowns the old Adam every day:

- A. "She listens to no voice; she accepts no correction. She does not trust in the LORD; she does not draw near to God." (Zeph 3:2)
- B. Judah thought the prophet was still speaking about the Gentile nations. Nope. He is describing Judah, God's people.
- C. So, nothing in our old Adam, sinful nature, flesh is improved upon after conversion.
- D. It always demonstrates the same attitude: it is incorrigible.

Part II: God must be the faithful one for us. He grants devotion.

- A. "each dawn he does not fail" (Zeph 3:5b)
- B. So, what do we do? Zeph 3:8: "Therefore wait for me," declares the LORD. What is Christian *waiting*?
- C. God gives us "pure speech" (Zeph 3:9)

Excursus on the Second Commandment: "You shall not misuse the Name of the LORD your God." What does this mean? Answer: "We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks."

- D. We bring an offering to God (Zeph 3:10)
- E. Haughtiness is taken from us (Zeph 3:11)
- F. Lowliness comes in devotion (Zeph 3:12)
- G. "Rejoice and exult with all your heart." (Zeph 3:14)

Part III: God addresses the exiles who have returned to Jerusalem through Haggai: They needed renewal through real devotion!

- A. The people returned to Judah from exile and the old temple was wiped out.
- B. They grew lazy. What could be done about it?

- C. This is how we see our lethargy as we try to convince ourselves that we cannot increase our devotion and spiritual discipline.
- D. God inspires them to get to rebuilding the temple!
- E. We are God's temple today, and even your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, making you a living stone of the new temple.
- F. Be in devotion in your temple in the temple (body and church).
- G. Haggai 2:4c: "Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts....". *Work* = sacrifices to God. This happens in devotion.
- H. Haggai 2:5b: "My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not."
- I. Haggai 2:7: "and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts."
- J. Haggai 2:9: "And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts."

Conclusion: In devotion while we live out repentance, the LORD keeps us spiritually renewed.

- A. Without it, living the fruit of repentance only in respect to serving and loving your neighbor, you will run out of gas.
- B. So, be fed and nourished! Drink deeply of God's Word and prayer through spiritual devotion.
- C. Be fed and nourished and yearn for confession and absolution. This is devotion.
- D. Be fed and nourished and run every Sunday for the Supper. This is devotion.
- E. "It is better to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)," but this is in regards our relationship with our neighbors. Towards God, we MUST receive, or there can be no giving.

Canticle

Stand

434 Lamb of God, Pure and Holy

(all stanzas)

Sit

Offering

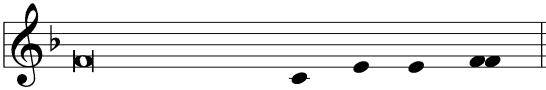
Prayer

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:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

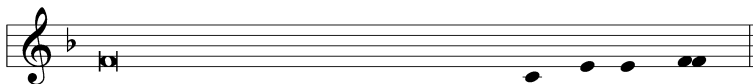
L For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

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

G **Lord, have mercy.**

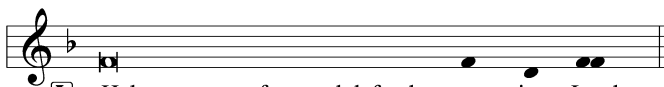
The prayers then continue:



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

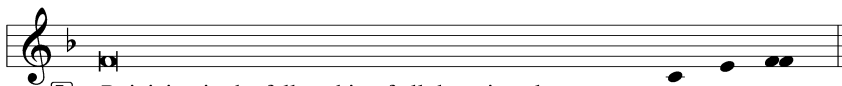


G **Thanks be to God.**



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.



G **A - men.**

Lord's Prayer

LSB 251

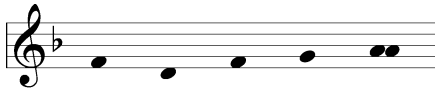
L Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

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



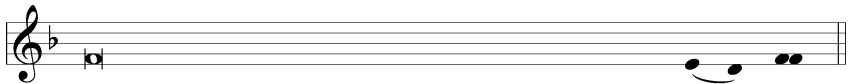
L Let us bless the Lord.



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:

919 Abide, O Dearest Jesus

(all stanzas)

Postlude

Acknowledgments

Evening Prayer from Lutheran Service Book

This week:

Spiritual Renewal According to the 12 Minor Prophets Final Service in the Series

Next Wednesday at 7:00 PM – 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
April 9	Zechariah & Malachi: Hope & Restoration

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

General Announcements

Easter Egg Hunt – Candy Donations Needed!

We're preparing for a joyful Easter celebration, and we need your help! Our annual **Easter Egg Hunt** is coming up, and we're collecting **individually wrapped candy donations** to fill the eggs for our children's event.

If you'd like to contribute, please bring your candy donations to the church by **April 16**.

Prefer to give online? You can make a donation through our **Amplify Giving Portal** at:

 <https://giving.myamplify.io/app/giving/saintpaulirvine>

Thank you for helping us make this Easter a fun and memorable experience for our church family!

If you have any questions **or would like to volunteer**, please contact **Traci Espinosa** at **281-627-2646**.

Quilting Team Needs Your Help!

The **Quilting Team at St. Paul's** is in need of **cardboard boxes** for storing and shipping quilts. If you have any boxes to donate, we would greatly appreciate your support!

Additionally, if you're interested in joining our **quilting team**, we would love to have you. No experience is necessary—just a heart for giving and a willingness to learn!

For donations or more information, please contact **Myra Taylor** at **949-636-3431**.

Thank you for supporting this meaningful ministry!

"Lux et Veritas K-8 Classical Lutheran Academy"

We now have working (for the time being) mission and vision statements for *Lux et Veritas* K-8 Classical Lutheran Academy:

Mission:

"Proclaiming the Light and Truth of Jesus Christ through classical Lutheran education, fostering academic excellence and nurturing holistic growth."

Vision:

"Lux et Veritas' transformative classical Lutheran education cultivates rigorous minds, promotes the faith, and prepares students for purposeful lives."

The 25 K we raised + the 10 K grant we received from the district will cover the entire cost of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund feasibility study. We've been blessed!

Our in-house feasibility committee will continue meeting as are covering appropriate actions complementary to what LCEF is leading us to do.

Big announcement: **we are asking all educators (whether in teaching or administration)** in the congregation active and retired to **meet with the LCEF consultant for a two-day meeting Monday, June 9th and Tuesday, June 10th**.

We will be getting exact times to you in the near future. Please put this on your calendar and further help this exciting vision.

In Your Service and To Christ's Glory,

Pastor Espinosa

Women's Retreat Update

Laura Miller and Pastor Espinosa recently met to discuss the next steps for our 2025 Women's Retreat. We are planning a one-day event on **Saturday, August 9**, at an affordable location in Dana Point.

Pastor Espinosa will present on the topic **"The Power of Confession"**, which is the same theme he will cover at the Men's Retreat from September 19-21. His presentation will be divided into three parts:

1. Confession of **Sin**
2. Confession of **Faith**
3. Confession of **Praise**

If you are interested in attending this one-day retreat, please inform Laura Miller 949-441-8606 or Pastor Espinosa.

Paul Ackley Memorial Service

Paul's service will be held at Pacific View Memorial Park and Mortuary in Corona Del Mar at **11 am on Saturday, April 12th**– If you knew Paul, especially those

who were members in Laguna Beach, the family would like to invite you to the service and the reception immediately following. If you would like to attend, please let Pastor Espinosa know.

Please continue to keep his family and friends in your prayers.

Circle of Friends

The most effective way for a church to grow in the Kingdom of God is to be faithful in the Word and Sacrament of Christ and to truly love people. One way to do that is to allow us to pray for those you know who need Christ and/or a church home. Please submit the names of family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and others to us through our ministry called Circle of Friends.

Thank you! Pastor Espinosa.

*For those we care about to come to saving faith and have a church home.
Have a friend who needs prayer or would like a meeting with pastor? Use
this QR code to let us know!*

