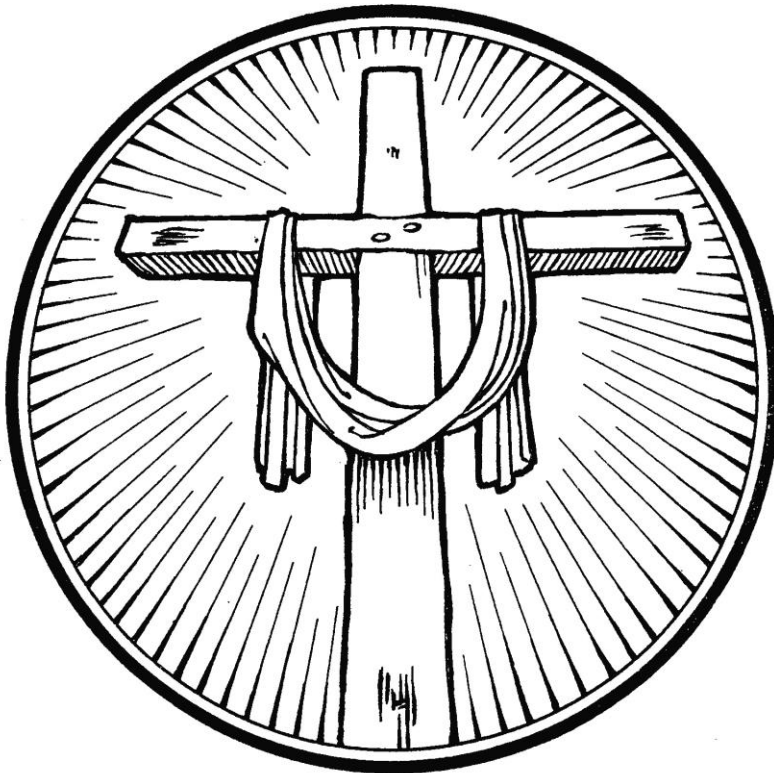


THE FUNERAL SERVICE
FOR
MERLIN “MERLIE” ORVILLE MATHEWS
DECEMBER 30, 1942 — APRIL 7, 2026

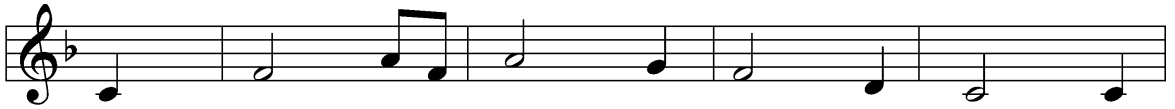


APRIL 11, 2026
ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
LESTER PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA

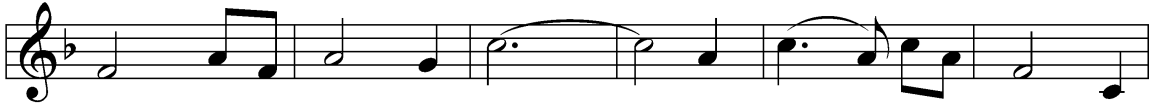
PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“AMAZING GRACE”



1 A - maz - ing grace— how sweet the sound— That
2 The Lord has prom - ised good to me, His
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail And
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but
Word my hope se - cures; He will my shield and
have al - read - y come; His grace has brought me
mor - tal life shall cease, A - maz - ing grace shall
shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to



now am found, Was blind but now I see!
por - tion be As long as life en - dures.
safe thus far, His grace will lead me home.
then pre - vail In heav - en's joy and peace.
sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.

Text and tune: Public domain

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

P Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

P Blessed be the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.

C He comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

Merlin was covered with Christ's righteousness
in Holy Baptism on January 31, 1943.

- P** In Holy Baptism, Merlin was clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness that covered all his sin. St. Paul says: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?"
- C** **We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.**

PSALM 23 [spoken in unison]

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Amen.

SALUTATION & COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray

O God of grace and mercy, we give thanks for Your loving-kindness shown to Merlin and to all Your servants who, having finished their course in faith, now rest from their labors. Grant that we also may be faithful unto death and receive the crown of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT

ISAIAH 43:1-3A, 25

¹ But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. ³ For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. ²⁵ "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

MERLIN'S CONFIRMATION VERSE

MATTHEW 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 11:25-30

²⁵ At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

P God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.

SERMON HYMN "ON EAGLES' WINGS"



1 You who dwell in the shel-ter of the Lord, Who a -
 2 snare of the fowl - er will nev - er cap - ture you, And
 3 You need not fear the ter - ror of the night, Nor the
 4 For to His an - gels He's giv - en a com - mand To



bide in His shad - ow for life,
 fam - ine will bring you no fear;
 ar - row that flies by day; Though
 guard you in all of your ways; Up -



Say to the Lord: "My ref - uge, My
 Un - der His wings your ref - uge, His
 thou - sands fall a - bout you,
 on their hands they will bear you up, Lest you

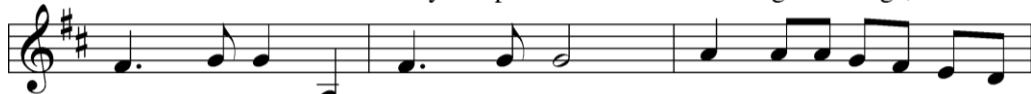


rock in whom I trust!"
 faith - ful - ness your shield.
 Near you it shall not come.
 dash your foot a - gainst a stone.

Refrain



And He will raise you up on ea - gles' wings,



Bear you on the breath of dawn, Make you to shine like the



sun, And hold you in the palm of His hand. 2 The

SERMON

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Lord, in your Mercy,

C Hear our Prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

NUNC DIMITTIS

P "I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord. "He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."

C Lord, now You let your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P "I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord. "He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."

CONCLUDING COLLECT

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Lord God, our shepherd, You gather the lambs of Your flock into the arms of Your mercy and bring them home. Comfort us with the certain hope of the resurrection to everlasting life and a joyful reunion with Merlin and those we love who have died in the faith; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Merlin's family thanks you for the outpouring of your love, support, and presence this morning. Following today's service, all are invited to the committal at St. Paul's Cemetery. Afterwards, we will come back to church and head downstairs for a fellowship meal.

BENEDICAMUS & BENEDICTION

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. **C** Amen.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

"I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES"



1 I know that my Re - deem - er lives; What com - fort
2 He lives tri - um - phant from the grave; He lives e -
3 He lives to bless me with His love; He lives to
4 He lives to grant me rich sup - ply; He lives to



this sweet sen - tence gives! He lives, He lives, who
ter - nal - ly to save; He lives all - glo - rious
plead for me a - bove; He lives my hun - gry
guide me with His eye; He lives to com - fort

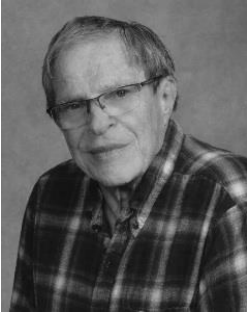


once was dead; He lives, my ev - er - liv - ing head.
in the sky; He lives ex - alt - ed there on high.
soul to feed; He lives to help in time of need.
me when faint; He lives to hear my soul's com - plaint.

- 5 He lives to silence all my fears;
He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart;
He lives all blessings to impart.
- 6 He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
He lives and loves me to the end;
He lives, and while He lives, I'll sing;
He lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.
- 7 He lives and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives my mansion to prepare;
He lives to bring me safely there.
- 8 He lives, all glory to His name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same;
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives!

Text and tune: Public domain

POSTLUDE



Merlin “Merlie” Orville Mathews was born on December 30, 1942, in Bergen Township, McLeod County, Minnesota. He was the son of Orville and Gloria (Dohman) Mathews. Merlin was baptized as an infant on January 31, 1943, and later confirmed in his faith as a youth on May 19, 1957, at First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Glencoe, Minnesota. He received his education through the 11th Grade in Glencoe, Minnesota.

On November 12, 1966, Merlin was united in marriage to Janice Neubarth at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Plato, Minnesota. The couple was blessed with four children: Wayne, Tammy, Jason, and Jeremy. They made their family home in Lester Prairie, Minnesota. Merlin and Janice shared over 59 years of marriage.

Merlin was the owner/operator of Mathew’s Lawn Service for over 20 years. Years prior, he was employed at MN Rubber in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, and Mathew’s Drainage in Glencoe with his brothers, Bob and Ken. Merlin was an active member at St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lester Prairie and served as an usher there for many years. Merlin served on the Lester Prairie Fire Department for 20 years. He was also a member of the Lester Prairie City Council for 12 years and a member of the Jaycees.

Merlin enjoyed the time spent outdoors, whether he was camping, riding motorcycle, hunting, fishing, or mowing the lawn. He enjoyed getting together with the morning coffee group at Big Don’s in Lester Prairie to catch up, even though he didn’t drink coffee. He also enjoyed playing cards. Merlin looked forward to babysitting his grandchildren and grand dogs and cherished the time he spent with his family and his friends.

Merlin passed away on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at GlenFields Living with Care in Glencoe, at the age of 83 years, 3 months, and 8 days. Blessed be his memory.

Officiant: Reverend Joseph J. Barlau
Organist: Lynn Mueller