

COME GROW SERVE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026

Palm/Passion Sunday

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!

Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

*Words printed in **bold** are spoken by all. Visitors are invited to sign the guest registry in the Narthex or fill out a pew card and place it in the offering plate.*

THIS SERVICE IS LIVE STREAMED. TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

GATHERING

Depending on the weather, the assembly gathers in front of the church or in the narthex.

WELCOME

PM: Welcome to those who are joining us online. Welcome to worship at St. Paul's!

GREETING

PM: Hosanna to the Son of David, the King of Israel.

All: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A: Let us pray.

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

READING: Matthew 21: 1-3, 6-11

A reading from Matthew.

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately."

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹ The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God.

BLESSING OF THE PALMS

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

We praise and bless you, ever-living God, for the acts of love by which you redeem the world through Jesus Christ our Lord. This day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem and was proclaimed Messiah and King by those who spread their garments and palm branches along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them may always walk the way of his suffering and cross; that, dying and rising with him, we may enter into your kingdom. Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

As music begins, all move into the church, and find a place in the pews, holding palms aloft and singing:

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Refrain

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to you, re - deem - er, king,

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho - san - nas ring.

1 You are the king of Is - rael and Da - vid's roy - al Son,
 2 The com - pa - ny of an - gels are prais - ing you on high;
 3 The mul - ti - tude of pil - grims with palms be - fore you went;
 4 To you, be - fore your pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise.
 5 Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

Refrain

now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.
 cre - a - tion and all mor - tals in cho - rus make re - ply.
 our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore you we pre - sent.
 To you, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 great au - thor of all good - ness, O good and gra - cious King.

The assembly is invited to be seated.

HOMILY

Pr. Elizabeth Palmer

The assembly is invited to remain seated during the reading of the Passion story and to read aloud in unison the part of the People (which is in bold type and marked by a red cross symbol).

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD

See booklet

The reading will be paused three times for the singing of the following:

- after "But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" (p. 6 of booklet): *Go to Dark Gethsemane* **ELW 347 – v. 1**
- after "Hail, King of the Jews!" (p. 9 of booklet): *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* **ELW 351 – v. 1**
- after "Truly this man was God's son!" - *Ab, Holy Jesus* **ELW 349 – v. 2**

HYMN OF THE DAY

Were You There

ELW 353, v. 1, 4, 5

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

PM: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

PM: O God, you announce words of grace and truth. Give wisdom to all preachers in your church both globally and locally. Open our hearts to encounter the infinite life you offer in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

A: You hold the whole universe. Gather sun and moon, clouds and stars, land and sea, and plants and animals around the cross, so that all creation bears witness to your saving love. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

PM: Your power is sure. Destroy inequity and division in every place, and build your beloved community among all people. Guide judges, attorneys, and juries so that they act with justice and fairness. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

A: Your heart breaks open at our pain. Send healing and vindication to all who, like Jesus, know the sting of betrayal, denial, abuse, or false accusations. Be with those experiencing pain or loss this day, especially those on our prayer list and those we pray for either silently or aloud (*pause*). Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

PM: Your ways show compassion. Let this same mind be in us as we enter Holy Week. Bless those here who will lead worship and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

A: O God, your embrace is eternal. Praise and thanks to you for all the faithful departed who rest in your mercy. Deliver us all from death's power and raise us to life in you. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

PM: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

All: Amen.

PEACE

PM: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

The assembly is invited to be seated.

MEAL

THE OFFERING

An offering is gathered and the Table is set.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Sanctus from Messe Basse

Gabriel Fauré

Rachel Blaustein, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: 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, whose suffering and death gave salvation to all. You gather your people around the tree of the cross, transforming death into life. 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

ELW 190

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever

All: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Together as one body, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

All: 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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNE

P: Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.



DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We will commune one side of the church at a time. Please come forward to receive the bread first. Gluten free wafers are available.

You may choose a cup of red wine or white grape juice.

Move to the side eat and drink.

Place your empty cup in the tray provided.

All are welcome at Christ's Table. We believe Jesus is the host and the gifts of God are for everyone. Children will be offered communion unless otherwise indicated by parents. The wine is red and grape juice is white.

The assembly is invited to be seated.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION ANTHEM *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) from *Messe Basse* **Gabriel Fauré**
Rachel Blaustein, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano

The assembly is invited to stand

TABLE BLESSING

P: Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into your heart, your mind, and your body to heal your wounds and, through your healing to all the earth. In Jesus' name,

All: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray.

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: Amen.

SENDING

The assembly is invited to be seated for the announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly is invited to stand.

SENDING BLESSING

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always.

All: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Lamb of God

ELW 336, v. 1-2

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Movement IV ("Wild") from Viola Sonata, Op. 25, No. 1
Diane Mues, viola

Paul Hindemith

During Lent, you are kindly requested to refrain from applause after the postlude, ending the service in silence.

THANK YOU

To our musicians: Rachel Blaustein, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano; Diane Mues, viola; Stefan Westerberg, cello.

To Diane DiFrancesco and Mark Pinguey for dusting & waxing our gorgeous altar and Last Supper carving.

To Mary Williamson and Jen Buehn for all their Altar Guild work during this Lenten season.

PRAYER REQUESTS

For Jan Rock, as she recovers from stenoses

For Paul Lucci, friend of LuAnne Origer, recovering from thyroid cancer surgery.

For the family of Joan Brandt, as they mourn the death of her sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Ellie and John Grant.



To donate via Zelle, aim your device's camera at the code on the left, click on the link and follow the instructions. Or you can go to your bank's website, go to Zelle payments and look for "office@stpaulvanston.org."

St. Paul's will not be holding an Easter Vigil this year. For those wishing to attend, we recommend going to Immanuel Lutheran Church. Service will begin at 7:00 p.m.



**WELCOME BACK
PR. ELIZABETH**

We are delighted to be welcoming back our good friend, Rev. Elizabeth Palmer, as our Pastoral Fellow. Pr. Elizabeth has led us many times over the years, most recently last year as our February Pastoral Fellow. We are thrilled and grateful to have her returning again to St. Paul's, this year for the entirety of the Lent through Holy Week season. Pr. Elizabeth is currently senior editor at the *Christian Century* magazine. Prior to that call, she served as the Lutheran Campus Pastor at the University of Chicago for eight years. She has also worked as a hospital chaplain. She holds a Ph.D. in theology from the University of Chicago Divinity School and is the author of *Faith in a Hidden God: Luther, Kierkegaard, and the Binding of Isaac* (Fortress Press).

Pr. Elizabeth lives in Skokie with her husband Liam, their 15-year-old daughter Anna, and their 11-year-old daughter Miriam.