

COME GROW SERVE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2026

Season of Creation: River and Stream Sunday

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!

This Sunday we worship among the rivers. The streams and waterways bring life to the land and all creatures, and give witness to times of abundance as well as to lack. Fish splash, frogs sing, rocks form shorelines, water flows and redefines and energizes, reminding us of Christ, the water of life. All creation joins in the vibrant joy experienced at the rivers.

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord – Isaiah 40:3

*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

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Barcarolle

Felix Mendelssohn

The assembly is invited to stand.

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: In the name of the Creator, the fountain of life, in the name of Christ ✠, the pulse of life, and in the name of the Spirit, the breath of life. Amen.

All: Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with God's presence.

P: Christ, we come into your presence today to worship in this sanctuary called Earth,

All: a planet filled with your presence: majestic in the forests, potent in the land, steadfast through the wilderness, resplendent with the rivers.

P: God, reveal yourself to us in this place, and show us your face in all creation.

All: Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with God's presence.

P: We invite the rivers to worship with us:

All: The Mississippi, the Colorado, the Chicago and all the rivers that flow to the sea.

P: We invite the creeks to sing:

All: wilderness creeks and flowing brooks, trout streams and gurgling springs.

P: We invite the fauna to praise God with us:

All: lively river otters and stately osprey, dragonflies and turtles.

P: We join with the waters in praising God:

All: waterfalls singing upstream and ripples dancing at the river mouth.

P: We celebrate the song of the river!

All: Sing, river, sing!

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the fountain of living water, our light and our salvation.

All: Amen.

P: We give you thanks, holy and gracious God, for you created the waters of the earth: We praise you for the local waters who sustain us in this place called home,

All: wide oceans, rushing streams, clear lakes, mighty rivers, the Des Plaines River, Lake Michigan and the Skokie Lagoons.

P: You led your people through the sea and called them to life in covenant with you.

Your Son was baptized in the river Jordan to begin his mission among us.

You pour out your Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth.

Through this water remind us of the gift of baptism.

All: You bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. You satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

P: Renew us in your promise so that we may serve this world in all its need; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Crashing Waters At Creation

ELW 455

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A: Let us pray.

Creating God, your name is written on every leaf, every bird, every river, every stone, every living being. We praise and worship you for the magnificence of your creation.

Make us attentive to the wounds of the earth and willing to work for the healing of the whole creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

All: Amen.

The assembly is invited to be seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Ezekial 47:9-12

A reading from the Prophet Ezekial.

Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 104:25-33 [Read responsively; congregation in bold]

²⁵ Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too many to number, living things both small and great.

²⁶ **There go the ships to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the sport of it.**

²⁷ All of them look to you to give them their food | in due season.

²⁸ **You give it to them; they | gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.**

²⁹ When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

³⁰ **You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.**

³¹ May the glory of the Lord endure forever; O Lord, rejoice in | all your works.

³² **You look at the earth and it trembles; you touch the mountains and they smoke.**

³³ I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.

SECOND READING: Revelation 22:1-5

A reading from the Revelation to John.

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴ they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God.

The assembly is invited to stand for the reading of the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *Repeat alleluia*

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: John 7:37-38

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

³⁷ On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, ³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pr. Peg Otte

Please stand as you are able

HYMN OF THE DAY

Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty

ELW 777, v. 1-4

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

P: Let us affirm our faith together:

All: We believe that God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things.

We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God’s presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a part of Earth, a human being called Jesus the Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation, reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation and filling the universe.

We believe the Spirit renews life in creation, groans in empathy with a suffering creation, and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise, and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. The water that God called into being is at the heart of all that lives. Mindful of the many ways water affects our lives, let us pray for our waters and for the life of the world around us.

We pray for all people of faith, and for the transformations in their lives that are marked by the sacredness of water: in the Jordan River, in ritual baths, in the washing of feet, and in Holy Baptism. God, Giver of life

All: hear our prayer.

PM: We pray for wisdom to create solutions to conflicts over water in the dry places of our planet, and for justice and peace in desert lands. God, Giver of life

All: hear our prayer.

A: We pray for all afflicted with too much water from flood, storm or ice; and for those people and creatures who suffer as glaciers and ice floes melt and shrink, especially in Nepal. God, Giver of life.

All: hear our prayer.

A: We pray for peace, relief and reconciliation among the nations, especially in Iran, Gaza, Yemen, South Sudan, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, and Myanmar. God, Giver of life

All: hear our prayer.

PM: We pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way, especially those on our prayer list and those we name now, either silently or aloud (*pause*). Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence. God, Giver of life,

All: hear our prayer.

A: We pray for all who have died and for all who mourn, that their tears of grief may be turned to wellsprings of joy. God, Giver of life,

All: hear our prayer.

PM: Gracious God, the air sings with songs of glory, water flashes silver with creation, and the forests bloom with leaves for healing nations. May your light and love fill our hearts and souls and minds, that we may share your abundant grace with the world.

PEACE

PM: The God of heaven has made a home on earth.

All: Christ dwells among us and is one with us.

PM: The peace of Christ be always with you.

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

Deep River

arr. Kurt Westerberg

MacKenzie Manguillo, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano

The assembly is invited to stand as able.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

God, our Creator, through your love you have given us these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks and our concern for all in need, including our fellow creatures on Earth.

All: **With all creation, we bless our Creator. 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 your eternal Word, the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things: our Savior, Jesus Christ. You laid the foundations of the world and enclosed the sea when it burst out of the womb. You brought forth all creatures of the earth and gave breath to humankind.

Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing; all you create is a sign of hope for our journey. And so as the morning stars sing your praises, with the heavenly beings and all creation, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: O God, how majestic is your name in all the earth. Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home, a fragile tree of life. Here by your wisdom are both life and death, growth and decay, the nest and the hunt, sunshine and storm, darkness and light. Sustained by these wonders, we creatures of dust join in the ancient song: The earth is full of your glory.

All: The earth is full of your glory.

P: O God, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer. In Christ you bring life from death; we remember his cross, we laud his resurrection. Broken like bread, he enlivens our body. Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness. Receiving this mystery, we mortals sing our song: The earth is full of your glory.

All: The earth is full of your glory.

P: We praise you for the heart of Jesus, so filled with your love for this earth. 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.

Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song: The earth is full of your glory.

All: The earth is full of your glory.

P: O God triune, you create the worlds, you uphold the living, you embrace the dead. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. Strengthen us for our journey with this meal, the body and blood of Christ. Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth. Empowered by your promises, we rise from our deaths to praise you again: The earth is full of your glory.

All: The earth is full of your glory.

P: Amen, and amen.

All: Amen, and amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNE

P: The gifts of creation for God's beloved creatures. Come and share.



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.

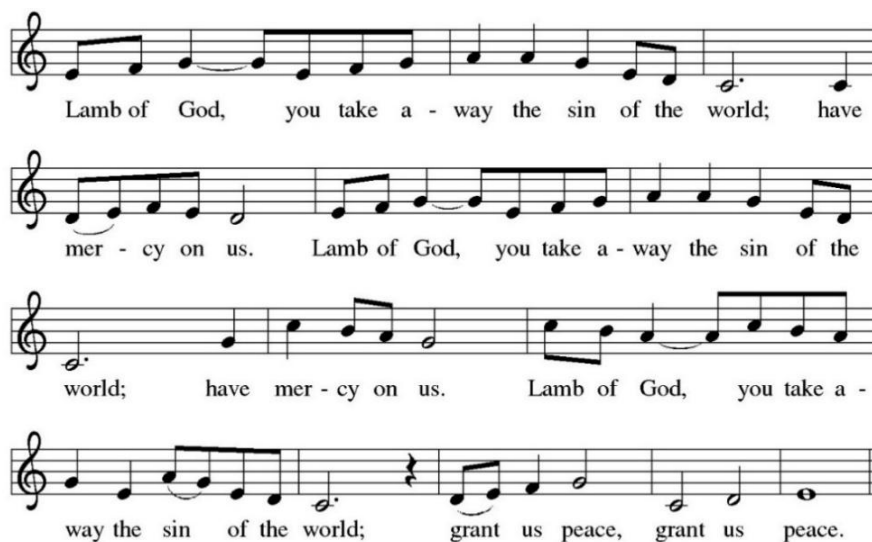
You may choose a cup of red wine or white grape juice.

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. Child-ren will be offered communion unless otherwise indicated by parents. The wine is red and grape juice is white.

LAMB OF GOD



COMMUNION HYMN

Baptized and Set Free

ELW 453

Please stand as you are able.

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

Please be seated for the announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly is invited to stand.

SENDING BLESSING

P: God of the galaxies, God of the starburst and sunlit morning, God of the forest and ocean, God of the blooming desert and rolling grasslands, shine on us today and bless us ☩ with your presence.

All: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Sent Forth By God's Blessing

ELW 547

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Flourish with creation.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Sarabande

Alejandro Core

AT THE RIVER CLARION

I don't know who God is exactly.
But I'll tell you this.
I was sitting in the river named Clarion, on a
water splashed stone
and all afternoon I listened to the voices
of the river talking.
Whenever the water struck the stone it had
something to say,
and the water itself, and even the mosses trailing
under the water.
And slowly, very slowly, it became clear to me
what they were saying.
Said the river: I am part of holiness.
And I too, said the stone. And I too, whispered
the moss beneath the water.
~Mary Oliver

THANK YOU

To our musicians, MacKenzie Manguillo, soprano and Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano.

To Altar Guild for donating Altar flowers

To David Foster & Melissa Wynne for hosting coffee fellowship.

PRAYER REQUESTS

For Joan Brandt.

For Jan Rock, as she recovers from stenoses.

For Bill Kastilahn, recovering from eye interaction with medication.

For Joe Berube, husband of Sue Murphy (director of Interfaith Action), as he undergoes cancer treatment.

For Deborah Green, friend of LuAnne Origer, as she recovers from brain surgery.

For the family of Sue Salisbury as they mourn the death of her uncle, Gernard "Bud" Drayer.

For the family of Diane DiFrancesco, as they mourn the death of her cousin, Vince Della Sola.



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@stpaulevanston.org."



WELCOME BACK
PASTOR PEG OTTE

PASTORAL FELLOW: PEG OTTE

We are thrilled to have Pastor Peg return a second time to St. Paul's this year as Pastoral Fellow. She will lead us through the Season of Creation (some new twists this year!) and be with us from September 13 through October 11.

Pr. Peg is well-known and greatly loved at St. Paul's, having led us as pastoral fellow multiple times over the years. Most recently, she led us through the Epiphany season. She has previously led us as fellow for Lent-Easter (2025), Eastertide (2024), and for Season of Creation (2023). Prior to that, she served as our interim pastor during 2019 after Pr. Tim McKenzie moved to North Carolina.

Pr. Peg and her husband Randy are long-time Evanston residents who raised their three now-adult children here. Pr. Peg previously served at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Prospect Heights and St. John's Lutheran Church in Wilmette, has served as an interim minister in this synod, and for many years, served during winter at Shepherd by the Sea. She is delighted to return to St. Paul's this year for the beloved Season of Creation.