

**St. Paul Lutheran Church**

**Pontiac, IL**

**March 21, 2021**

**Fifth Sunday in Lent**

**We gather to worship, reach out, and serve the Lord.**

**Welcome**

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church. Whether you have worshipped with us many times, or this is your first time, there is a place for you here. Your presence among us is a gift.

God’s Peace be with you.

**Introduction to the day**

**Introduction**

God promises Jeremiah that a “new covenant” will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God’s heart through Christ and draws God’s love and truth into our hearts. We join together in worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God’s love with all the world.

**Prelude**

**GATHERING**

### Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

The keeper of the covenant,

The source of steadfast love,

Our rock and our redeemer.

**A: Amen.**

L: God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who

is full of compassion.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

L: Fountain of living water,

**A: Pour out your mercy over us.**

**Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free.**

**Rebuild what we have ruined**

**And mend what we have torn.**

**Wash us in your cleansing flood.**

**Make us alive in the Spirit**

**To follow in the way of Jesus,**

**As healers and restorers of the world you so love.**

**Amen.**

L: Beloved, God’s word never fails.

The promise rests on grace:

By the saving love of Jesus Christ,

The wisdom and power of God,

Your sins are ☩ forgiven, and God remembers them no more.

Journey in the way of Jesus.

**A: Amen.**

**Greeting**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the

Holy Spirit be with you all**.**

**A: And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

L: O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy, you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**A: Amen**.

**Children’s Message**

**WORD**

**First Reading –** **Jeremiah 31: 31-34**

L: A reading from Jeremiah.

L: 31The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

L:Word of God, word of life.

A**: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm Reading- Psalm 51: 1-12**

L: A reading from Psalm.

  1Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
  in your great compassion blot out my offenses.  
 2**Wash me through and through from my wickedness,**  
  **and cleanse me from my sin.**  
 3For I know my offenses,  
  and my sin is ever before me.  
 4**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;**  
  **so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**  
 5Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,  
  a sinner from my mother’s womb.  
 6**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,**  
  **and would have me know wisdom deep within.**  
 7Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
  wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.  
 8**Let me hear joy and gladness;**  
  **that the body you have broken may rejoice.**  
 9Hide your face from my sins,  
  and blot out all my wickedness.  
 10**Create in me a clean heart, O God,**  
  **and renew a right spirit within me.**  
 11Cast me not away from your presence,  
  and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
 12**Restore to me the joy of your salvation**  
  **and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

L: Holy Wisdom. Holy word.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading – Hebrews 5: 5-10**

L: A reading from Hebrews.

5Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,  
 “You are my Son,  
  today I have begotten you”;  
6as he says also in another place,  
 “You are a priest forever,  
  according to the order of Melchizedek.”  
  7In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. 8Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; 9and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, 10having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

L: Word of God, word of life.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

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*Please rise as you are able for the reading of the Holy Gospel.*

**Gospel Acclamation**

(spoken responsively)

L: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies,

**A: it remains a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit.**

**Gospel–John 12: 20-33**

L: The Holy Gospel according to John.

**A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

20Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” 22Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.  
  
  27“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” 29The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” 30Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. 31Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. 32And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

L: The gospel of the Lord.

**A: Praise to you, O, Christ.**

**Sermon Rev. Christine McNeal**

**Hymn of the Day**

**Apostle’s Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen.

**Prayers of Intercession**

Throughout our prayers, we will use words from today’s Psalm. Each petition ends “Hear us, O God.”. The congregation is invited to respond, **“Your mercy is great.”**

**Sharing the Peace**

L: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**A: And also with you.**

*You are invited to share a sign of God’s peace with your neighbors by saying or typing, “Peace be with you.”*

**MEAL**

**Offering**

*Offerings can also be placed in the offering box at the back of the sanctuary, made by mail or online. You can send a check to St. Paul Lutheran Church 210 Deerfield Rd Pontiac, IL 61764 or give online at* [*stpaulpontiac.org*](http://www.stpaulpontiac.org/)

**Offertory Music**

**Offering Prayer**

L: Faithful God,

You walk beside us in desert places,

And you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven.

Accompany us in this meal,

That we may pass over from death to life

With Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**A: Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

L: The Lord be with you.

**A: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**A: We lift them to the Lord.**

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

**A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Preface**

L: 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.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts

and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,

that, renewed in the gift of baptism,

we may come to the fullness of your grace.

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 saying

**A: Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**Lord God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory**

**Hosanna in the highest,**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

L: Blessed are you O God,

for you made the earth and all that is, and declared it good.

Blessed are you,

for in Christ you entered into creation,

into our humanity, into our vulnerability, into our mortality.

You stayed with us through conflict, through suffering, through death.

Blessed are you for raising Jesus from the dead,

in him promising new life to us 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Come, Lord, Jesus, in this meal,

and make us alive again.

By your Spirit,

bind us to that holy communion of saints in every time and place,

and make us your body in the world,

bringing light and healing to all.

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us,

**A: 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.**

**Invitation to Communion**

L: Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

**Communion Hymn**

**Prayer After Communion**

*a blessing is given, a prayer follows*

L: God of steadfast love,

at this table you gather your people

into one body for the sake of the world.

Send us in the power of your Spirit,

That our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new

In Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Announcements**

**SENDING**

**Blessing**

L: You are what God made you to be:

Created in Christ Jesus for good works,

Chosen as holy and beloved,

Freed to serve your neighbor.

God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing,

In the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

**A: Amen.**

**Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Share the good news.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

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Thank you to all those who contributed to today’s service: Worship Slides: Julie Mehlberg, Lector: Sara Solberg, Ushers: Brad Solberg, Musician:, , Livestream: Louis Kehinde, Sound: John Mehlberg