

A colorful poster for an Easter service and egg hunt. The background is a teal color with a pattern of small, colorful Easter eggs in the top corners. In the center, the text "Easter Service & Egg Hunt" is written in a playful, rounded font. Below this, a paragraph of text describes the event. A central box contains the church's name and address. At the bottom, there is an illustration of a brown rabbit sitting in a basket surrounded by various colorful Easter eggs and greenery.

Easter Service & Egg Hunt

Celebrate Easter with us! Join our uplifting Sunday service, followed by an Easter egg hunt for the whole family. If there is poor weather, we will have the egg hunt indoors.

5 April
St. Paul Lutheran Church
1701 16th Ave, Sterling IL

WORSHIP @9:00 AM



Over his head they put the charge against him, which read,
“**This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.**”
MATTHEW 27:37

**Sunday, March 29, 2026
9:00 a.m.**

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church

It is a joy to gather together for worship!

St. Paul Purpose Statement

Living Christ centered lives so we may love all, serve our community, and share the Word.

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. In-person worship with Holy Communion

10:15 a.m. In-person Sunday School – September – May

Communion

We celebrate Jesus' presence each week in Holy Communion. This is the Lord's Supper and Jesus invites us: whether you are a lifelong Lutheran, or just considering Christianity; if you are an infant or elderly; if your family has been in the United States for generations, or has only recently arrived; if you are LGBTQIA+ or straight; if you live with disabilities, chronic illness, or are able-bodied and currently healthy; if you are home-blessed or homeless; ... YOU are welcome at God's meal of grace at St. Paul.

Accessibility

Handicap parking, entrance, wheelchair, and restrooms are available. Sound amplifiers and large print bulletins are available. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Children's Offering

The March Children's offering will go to towards The Buddy Bag program. Be assured that every penny donated goes only to the cost of purchasing the food. All administrative costs are covered separately.

Pastor Mark Luepke, Part-time Interim

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

1701 16th Ave. Sterling, IL 61081

815-625-3069

Church email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net

www.stpaulsterling.com

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Passion/Palm Sunday

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 today 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.

Prelude

"Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

arr. J. Wayne Kerr

Welcome/Announcements

Processional Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11

P: When (*Jesus and his disciples*) 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." ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

⁵"Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

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,

All: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

P: ¹⁰When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" ¹¹The crowds were saying,

All: "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Gathering Hymn

“All Glory, Laud and Honor”

ELW #344, verse 1

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,
now in the Lord's name com - ing, our King and Bless - ed One.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

Children’s Message (Part 1)

Gathering Hymn

“All Glory, Laud and Honor”

ELW #344, verses 2-5

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.
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,
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.

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, c. 760–821; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1584–1635

Children’s Message (Part 2)

Baptism of Elsie Grace Platz

ELW (red book) Page 227

All: We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world.

Second Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

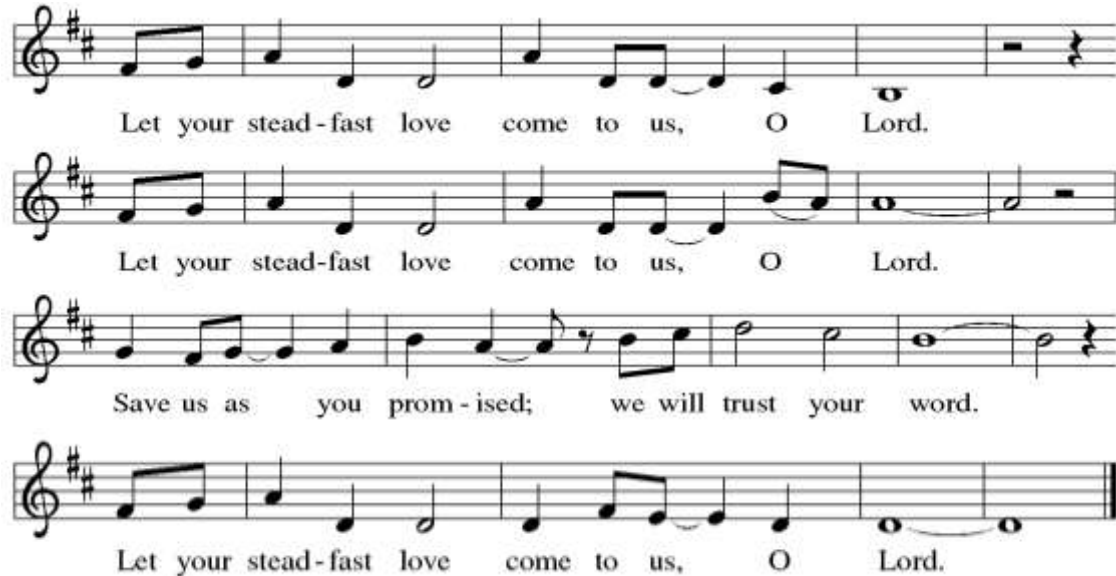
⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 27:11-54

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 27th chapter.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: The Gospel of the Lord,

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

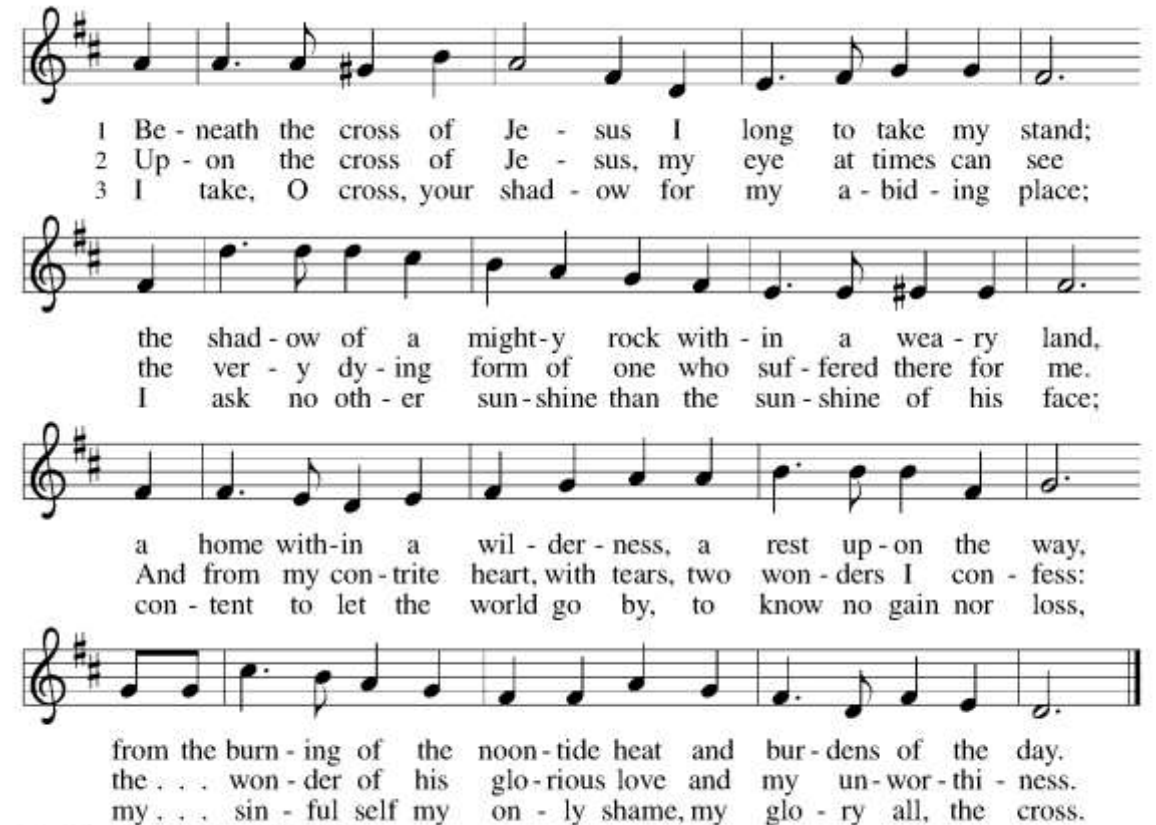
Sermon

“Passion Sunday and Passionate Love”

Hymn of the Day

“*Beneath the Cross of Jesus*”

ELW #338



1 Be - neath the cross of Je - sus I long to take my stand;
2 Up - on the cross of Je - sus, my eye at times can see
3 I take, O cross, your shad - ow for my a - bid - ing place;

the shad - ow of a might-y rock with - in a wea - ry land,
the ver - y dy - ing form of one who suf - fered there for me.
I ask no oth - er sun - shine than the sun - shine of his face;

a home with - in a wil - der - ness, a rest up - on the way,
And from my con - trite heart, with tears, two won - ders I con - fess:
con - tent to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,

from the burn - ing of the noon - tide heat and bur - dens of the day.
the . . . won - der of his glo - rious love and my un - wor - thi - ness.
my . . . sin - ful self my on - ly shame, my glo - ry all, the cross.

Text: Elizabeth C. Clephane, 1830–1869

Music: ST. CHRISTOPHER, Frederick C. Maker, 1844–1927

Prayers of Intercession

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

A brief silence.

P: Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

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

All: Amen.

Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you!

P: Let us share a sign of Christ's peace in whatever way you are comfortable.

Offering

"Borning Cry"

stg. Robert A. Hobby

Offering Prayer

P: 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.

The 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"



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

The Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

Communion

"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, Lamb of God.

Communion Music

"O Sacred Head Now Wounded"

arr. Jim Lucas

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

All: Amen.

P: 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.

P: I invite you to rise in body or spirit to receive a blessing.

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 Song

“Christ, the Life of All the Living”

ELW #339



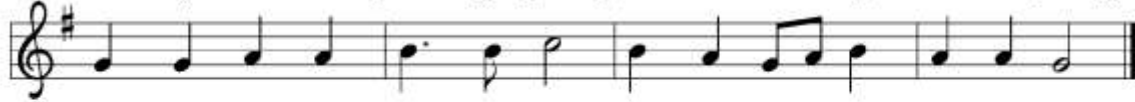
1 Christ, the life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the death of death, our foe,
2 You have suf - fered great af - flic - tion and have borne it pa - tient - ly,
3 Then, for all that bought my par - don, for the sor - rows deep and sore,



Christ, your - self for me once giv - ing to the dark - est depths of woe:
e - ven death by cru - ci - fix - ion, ful - ly to a - tone for me;
for the an - guish in the gar - den, I will thank you ev - er - more;



through your suf - f'ring, death, and mer - it life e - ter - nal I in - her - it.
for you chose to be tor - ment - ed that my doom should be pre - vent - ed.
thank you for the groan - ing, sigh - ing, for the bleed - ing and the dy - ing,



Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks are due, dear - est Je - sus, un - to you.
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks are due, dear - est Je - sus, un - to you.
for that last tri - um - phant cry, praise you ev - er - more on high.

Text: Ernst Christoph Homburg, 1605–1681; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: JESU, MEINES LEBENS LEBEN, *Das grosse Cantional*, Darmstadt, 1687

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Jesus, Still Lead On”

arr. Paul Manz

We Remember in Prayer; those on our Home Visitation list and those on our prayer list: Brad Wussung, Brock Woessner, Lori Dewey, Maggie N., the Woodworth family, Michelle Klinger, Matt Friel, Sandy Julifs, Mike, Dylan Wescott, Phyllis Jacobson, and Betty Steinke

Placing our confidence in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection of our loved ones, we extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Rod Janssen. Rod passed away on March 20.

We also extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Carolyn Reppe. Carolyn passed away on March 25 and is a sister to Susan Kuehl.

May God's presence bring you comfort and peace.

Baptized today is Elsie Grace Platz, daughter of Shawn & Ashley Platz. Elsie was born June 12, 2025. Her baptismal sponsors are: Grace Valentine and Oscar Duarte.

Coffee Fellowship will be served following worship in the Fellowship Hall hosted by Jennifer Pillars and Chad Joynt. All are welcome!

Worship Assistants:

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Stacey Avelar

Acolytes – Avelar family

Greeters – Donna Kendall, Nancy Beck

Ushers – Dan Dir, Mel Johnson

Reader – Marilyn Geiger

Sound – David Carrillo

Communion Assistant – Nancy Beck

Altar Guild – Ann Beswick, JoAnn Garcia

Musicians:

Dawn Zeigler

Greg Zeigler

Good Friday, April 3

6:30 p.m.

Worship Assistants

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Greg Zeigler

Greeter/Usher – Bill & Carolyn Duncan

Sound – David Carrillo

Altar Guild – Debbie O'Brien, Diane Yoeckel

Next Week – April 5

Easter Sunday

Worship Assistants

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Mary Ordean

Acolytes – Ordean family

Greeters – Bartel family

Ushers – Dan Bartel, Diane Yoeckel

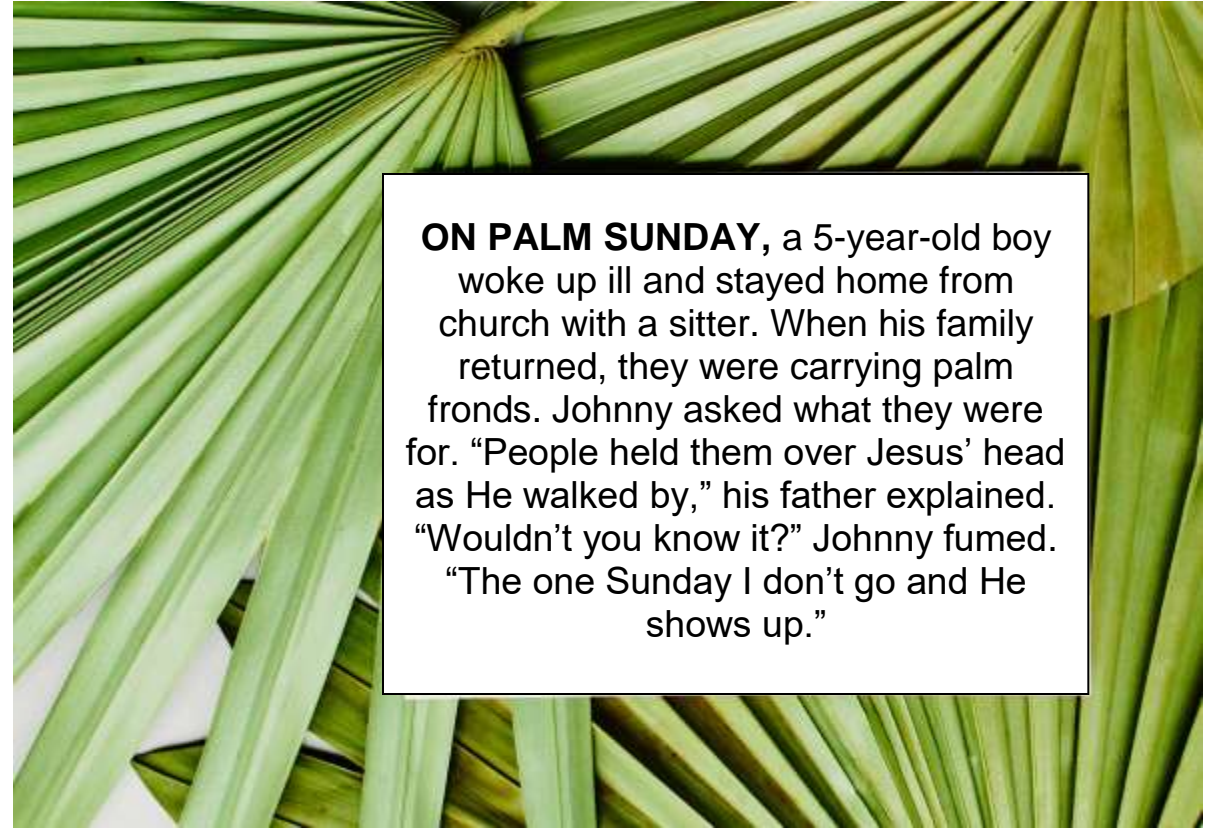
Reader – Ann Beswick

Sound – Bradyn Arians

Communion Assistant – Ann Beswick

Altar Guild – Debbie O'Brien, Diane Yoeckel

Coffee Fellowship – *Volunteer needed*



ON PALM SUNDAY, a 5-year-old boy woke up ill and stayed home from church with a sitter. When his family returned, they were carrying palm fronds. Johnny asked what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father explained. "Wouldn't you know it?" Johnny fumed. "The one Sunday I don't go and He shows up."