

LWR Personal Health Kits

During the month of April we will be gathering the items listed below for the **Personal Care Kits**. We will have the towels, please just shop for the other items.

We have monies from Thrivent from Patty Arians to buy towels.

The **Personal Care Kits** will be taken to the ingathering along with the quilts. Thank you.

There is a container in the back of the church to place the items.

These kits go all over the world when natural disaster strikes or political conflict flares. These families often have little chance to gather their belongings before fleeing the danger. They arrive in a refugee camp, or other place of safety, scared, vulnerable and dirty from travel.

The simple items included in a **Personal Care Kit** allow them to wash away dirt and sweat with the fresh scent of soap and the softness of a towel to remind them that they are cared for. So let us do God's Work with Our Hands and share God's grace by providing that simple comfort to those who do not have. Questions please ask Debbie O'Brien, 815-441-0257.

Here is the list of the items needed:

1-dark-colored bath towel

Thanks to a Thrivent grant from Patty Arians, you will NOT need to purchase a towel this year.

2 or 3-Bath size bars of soap (**8oz or more total**). Please KEEP in original packaging. Any brand welcome.

1-Adult size toothbrush .Please KEEP in original packaging or a business size envelope.

1-Sturdy comb (no picks or fine toothed combs).

1-metal nail clipper with or without a file.



**Sunday, April 26, 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 April Children's offering will go towards the LWR Personal Care Kits.

Pastor Mark Luepke, Part-time Interim

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

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815-625-3069

Church email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net

www.stpaulsterling.com

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

Prelude

"Come, Thou Fount"

arr. Joseph M. Martin

Welcome/Announcements

Thanksgiving for Baptism

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

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

All: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

All: Amen.

P: Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us.

P: Blessed are you.

All: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you.

All: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace.

Blessed are you.

All: You guide us to springs of the water of life.

P: Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!”

ELW #382



1 Christ is ris-en! Al - le - lu - ia! Ris - en our vic - to - rious head!
2 Christ is ris-en! All the sad-ness of our Lent-en fast is o'er;
3 Christ is ris-en! All the sor-row that last eve-ning round him lay
4 Christ is ris-en! Hence-forth nev - er death or hell shall us en - thrall.



Sing his prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia! Christ is ris - en from the dead!
through the o - pen gates of glad-ness he re-turs to life once more;
now has found a glo-rious mor-row in the ris-ing of to - day.
We are Christ's, in him for - ev - er we have tri-umphed o - ver all.



Grate-ful - ly our hearts a - dore him as his light once more ap - pears;
death and hell be - fore him bend-ing see him rise, the vic - tor now,
See the grave its first-fruits giv - ing, spring-ing up from ho - ly ground;
All the doubt-ing and de - jec - tion of our trem-bling hearts have ceased;



bow - ing down in joy be-fore him, ris - ing up from griefs and tears.
an - gels on his steps at-tend-ing, glo - ry round his wound-ed brow.
Christ was dead, but now is liv - ing; he was lost, but he is found.
hail the day of res - ur - rec - tion! Let us rise and keep the feast.



Christ is ris - en! Al - le - lu - ia! Ris - en our vic - to - rious head!



Sing his prais-es! Al - le - lu - ia! Christ is ris - en from the dead!

Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt.
Music: MORGENLIED, Frederick C. Maker, 1844–1927

GREETING

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

All: And also with you.

Hymn of Praise



This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be



peo-ple of God. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and



hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. This is the feast of



vic-t'ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al -



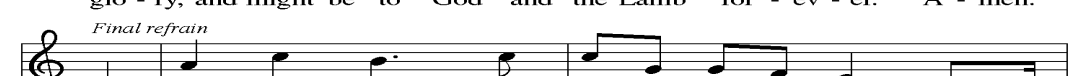
le - lu - ia. 2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and



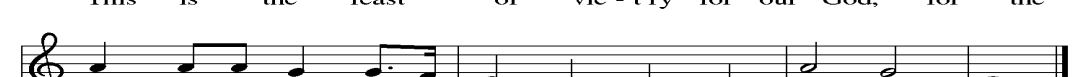
join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,



glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray together:

All: O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47

⁴² [The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 23

R: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

All: The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

R: You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

All: Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

R: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:19-25

¹⁹ It is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al-le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.
Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: John 10:1-10

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 1st chapter.

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

[Jesus said:] ¹“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord,

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

Children’s Message

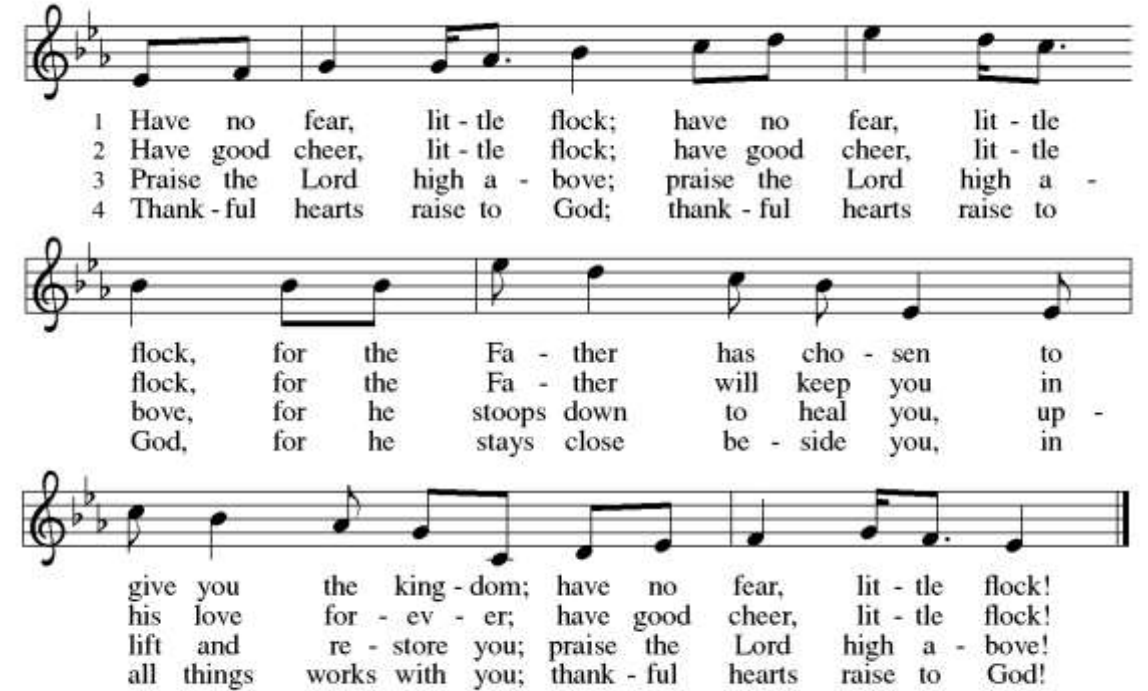
Sermon

“The Twenty-Third Psalm”

Hymn of the Day

“Have No Fear, Little Flock”

ELW #764



1 Have no fear, lit - tle flock; have no fear, lit - tle flock;
2 Have good cheer, lit - tle flock; have good cheer, lit - tle flock;
3 Praise the Lord high a - bove; praise the Lord high a - bove,
4 Thank - ful hearts raise to God; thank - ful hearts raise to

flock, for the Fa - ther has cho - sen to
flock, for the Fa - ther will keep you in
bove, for he stoops down to heal you, up -
God, for he stays close be - side you, in

give you the king - dom; have no fear, lit - tle flock!
his love for - ev - er; have good cheer, lit - tle flock!
lift and re - store you; praise the Lord high a - bove!
all things works with you; thank - ful hearts raise to God!

Text: Luke 12:32, st. 1: Marjorie Jillson, b. 1931, sts. 2-4
Music: LITTLE FLOCK, Heinz Werner Zimmermann, b. 1930
Text and music © 1973 Concordia Publishing House.

Nicene Creed

P: Trusting in Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, let us profess our faith through the words of the Nicene Creed:

All: **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silence.

P: Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

P: God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

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

"Untitled Hymn (Come to Jesus)"

Chris Rice

Offering Prayer

P: Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus,

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.

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, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, 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 of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

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

“Psalm 23”

Words and Music by
Stuart Townend

VERSE



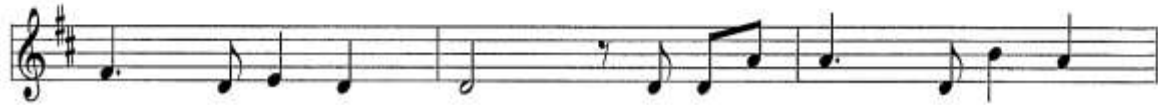
1. The Lord's my Shep - herd, I'll not want. He makes me lie in pas - tures
2. He guides my ways in right - eous - ness, and He a - noints my head with
3. And though I walk the dark - est path, I will not fear the e - vil



green. He leads me by the still, still wa - ters, His
oil; And my cup, it o - ver - flows with joy, I
one; For You are with me, and Your rod and staff are the



good - ness re - stores my soul. And I will
feast on His pure de - lights.
com - fort I need to know.



trust in You a - lone, and I will trust in You a -



-lone; For Your end - less mer - cy



fol - lows me, Your good - ness will lead me home.

CCLI Song # 1585970

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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.

Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus,

All: Amen.

Blessing

P: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever.

All: Amen.

Sending Song

“What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine”

ELW #774



1 What a fel - low - ship, what a joy di - vine, lean - ing on the ev - er -
2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil - grim way, lean - ing on the ev - er -
3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean - ing on the ev - er -



last - ing arms; what a bless - ed - ness, what a peace is mine,
last - ing arms; oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
last - ing arms? I have bless - ed peace with my Lord so near,



lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.
lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.
lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.

Refrain



Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se - cure from all a - larms;



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.

Text: Elisha A. Hoffman, 1839–1929

Music: SHOWALTER, Anthony J. Showalter, 1858–1924

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Postlude

“Alleluia!”

R.M. Stults

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

Coffee Fellowship will be served this morning following worship in the Social Hall hosted by Carolyn Duncan and Bev Graunke

Worship Assistants:

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Dawn Waite

Acolytes – Altar Guild

Greeters – Bob & Judy Bartel

Ushers – Donna Kendall, Gary Fields

Reader – Greg Zeigler

Sound – Greg Zeigler

Communion Assistant – Gary Fields

Altar Guild – Debbie O’Brien, Diane Yoeckel

Musicians:

Julie Woessner DeJonge

Dawn Zeigler

Next Week – May 3

Worship Assistants

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – *Volunteer needed*

Acolytes – Arians family

Greeters – Audrey & Cathy Cox

Ushers – Bill & Carolyn Duncan

Reader – Bill Duncan

Sound – Bradyn Arians

Communion Assistant – Cathy Cox

Altar Guild – Janie Billings, Susan Kuehl

Coffee Fellowship – *Volunteer needed*