

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

"Here I am."

Genesis 22:1, NRSV



Rethinking Trials, Tests, and Temptations

First Sunday in Lent

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church | Wisconsin Rapids, WI

February 18, 2024



Welcome To Worship

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. We are happy you are here. Please fill out a Connect Card to let us know how we might continue to serve you.

It's encouraging to see parents bring their families to worship the Lord. If your child becomes restless, you can use the Family Room to calm them. Quiet bags and children's bulletins are also available to keep little ones busy. Restrooms are located in the hallways along either side of the worship space. For those with special needs, large print copies of the service folder and listening devices are available from the ushers. One of our ushers can help you find the restrooms or family room and answer any other questions.

Service Notes For This Service



"If God loves us, why doesn't he remove all the trials and tests and temptations that we face?" That question demonstrates the religious assumption that those things are bad. They aren't. In the hands of a loving God, they are tools by which he refines our faith. He uses tests as a way to compel us to be less self-reliant, and instead trust in his strength. He uses trials to teach us that this broken world is not our true home. God even takes Satan's temptations and uses them for our good.

Trials, tests, and temptations are not exceptions to God's love. That's a false assumption! These are examples of God's love. Proof is that God allowed his beloved Son Jesus to face trials and temptations, so that he might be our perfect savior and substitute.

Today's service includes a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For personal preparation, consider using the Questions for Examination on page 11 of this service folder or Christian Questions on page 295 of the blue hymnal.

Those Serving in Worship

Pastor Lucas Proeber; Accompanist Destinee Fiecko; Offering Music by Chris Williams

Acknowledgements

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The Service: Setting One

Welcome

Hymn

646 See This Wonder in the Making
Sing “them” for stanza three.

Rite of Holy Baptism

CW 151

8:00 – Shane Christianson

10:30 – Oliver James and Autumn Marie Pond Spranger

Remain seated

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Our Savior Jesus Christ commanded Baptism when he said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

All of us are born into this world with a deep need for Baptism. From our parents we inherit a sinful nature; we are without true fear of God and true faith in God and are condemned to eternal death. But while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He took away our sin by giving his life on the cross. In Baptism, he clothes us with the robe of his righteousness and gives us a new life. We recall what Baptism means for our daily lives:

Baptism means that the sinful nature in us should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and that all its evil deeds and desires be put to death. It also means that a new person should daily arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

As baptized children of God, we confess our sins:

Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit and united us to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Every day God forgives your sins, removes your guilt, and strengthens you to defeat Satan's power. His promise is for you and your children, and he will never forsake you. Your sins are forgiven. You are clothed with Christ. You are at peace with God now and forever.

Amen.

The Rite of Baptism continues at the font.

8:00

Do you believe that you were born in sin and therefore eternally lost?

Yes, I believe.

Do you believe that the triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—planned and carried out your salvation?

Yes, I believe.

Do you believe that God grants you the forgiveness of sins in Holy Baptism?

Yes, I believe.

Do you reject the devil along with all his lies and empty promises?

Yes, I do.

Do you desire to be baptized into the Christian faith?

Yes, I do.

10:30

The Gospel according to St. Mark: People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Sacrament of Baptism

[Name], I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Receive the sign of the cross on the head and heart T to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven all your sins. May he strengthen you with his grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.

8:00

Shane, you have come to believe that the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and this congregation are faithful to the Word of God. Do you desire to become a member of this congregation so that you may enjoy the blessings of the means of grace and the fellowship of believers?

Yes, I do.

With sincere joy we welcome you as a member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

10:30

As parents and godparents, it is your responsibility and privilege not only to bring these children to Baptism, but to remember them in your prayers, to remind them of their baptisms, and to bring them up in the true Christian faith. If you are willing to do so, answer: "Yes, and we ask God to help us."

Yes, and we ask God to help us.

The baptized return to their seats. Prayers for the baptized will be included as part of the Prayer of the Church.

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Mighty God and Father, our Lord Jesus walked into the wilderness to face the devil's temptations, but he did not succumb to Satan's lies or falter in his resolve to save the world from the prison of hell. Bolster our faith by his mighty victory that we may battle against the forces of evil with courage and confidence; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Genesis 22:1–18

Abraham is tested by God to demonstrate his love and trust in God.

¹ Some time later God tested Abraham. He called to him, "Abraham!"

Abraham answered, "I am here."

² God said, "Now take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains there, the one to which I direct you."

³ Abraham got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, along with Isaac his son. Abraham split the wood for the burnt offering. Then he set out to go to the place that God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

⁵ Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go on over there. We will worship, and then we will come back to you." ⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and loaded it on Isaac his son. He took the firepot and the knife in his hand. The two of them went on together.

⁷ Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father?"

He said, "I am here, my son."

He said, "Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So the two of them went on together. ⁹ They came to the place that God had told him about. Abraham built the altar there. He arranged the wood, tied up Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

¹¹ The Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!"

Abraham said, "I am here."

¹² He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy. Do not do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."

¹³ Abraham looked around and saw that behind him there was a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ Abraham called the name of that place "The LORD Will Provide." So it is said to this day, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

¹⁵ The Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, "I have sworn by myself, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will bless you greatly, and I will multiply your descendants greatly, like the stars of the sky and like the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the city gates of their enemies. ¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice." (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

863 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

This hymn is Martin Luther's version of Psalm 46. It also pairs well with the Gospel, where Jesus defeats Satan's temptations for us.

Second Reading

Romans 8:31–39

The ultimate proof of God's love is not removing trouble; it is that he gave us his Son.

³¹ What then will we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

³² Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?

³³ Who will bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies! ³⁴ Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died and, more than that, was raised to life, is the one who is at God's right hand and who is also interceding for us! ³⁵ What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ Just as it is written: "For your sake we are being put to death all day long. We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Hebrews 4:15

Glory, praise, and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

We do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses;

we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

Glory, praise, and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

Mark 1:12–15

Jesus, our Substitute, perfectly overcame all of Satan's temptations for us.

¹² The Spirit immediately sent Jesus out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels were serving him.

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ "The time is fulfilled," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near! Repent, and believe in the gospel." (EHV®)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day

404 Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing

Sermon

God Is for Us

Stand

Nicene Creed

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 in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Today, the prayer will be offered by individual petitions. Each petition will end this way:

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

The final petition will end this way:

...who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Special Prayers This Week

- † For Shane, Oliver, and Autumn, who have all been born again through baptism
- † For Joyce Camacho's sister Joan, who suffered a stroke and is recovering at home
- † For Mary Venus' father, Pastor Herbert Lichtenberg, who has been placed on hospice
- † For Pat Schade who will soon be taken to her heavenly home.
- † For Curtis & Erin Meister's family. Erin's father passed away.
- † For Micah Biesterfeld and Michelle Korth who have been called to teach in our school

Connect Card and Offering

Please take a moment to fill out a Connect Card. After a few moments, the ushers will come forward to collect the offering. You may place your Connect Card and any offering you brought in the plate as it is passed. Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



Musical Offering

Jesus, Firm Foundation

Questions for Examination

- † Do I believe that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness?
- † Do I believe that Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness for me?
- † Do I believe that Jesus offers his true body and blood with the bread and wine in this sacrament?
- † Do I believe this sacrament strengthens my faith and strengthens me to live a God-pleasing life?
- † Am I a member of a church that belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)?
- † If you answered "no" to any of these questions, please hold off on communing with us today. Following worship, one of the pastors would be happy to explain why we ask you to do this.

The Sacrament

Stand

Preface

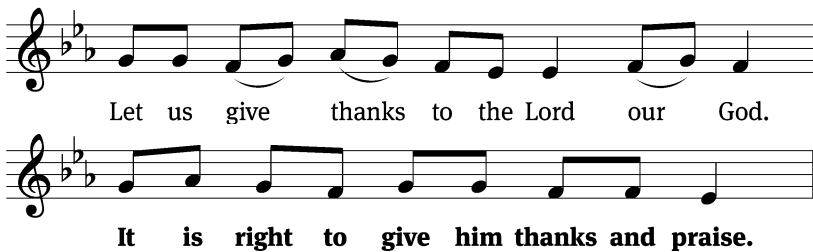
CW 165

The Lord be with you.

And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts.

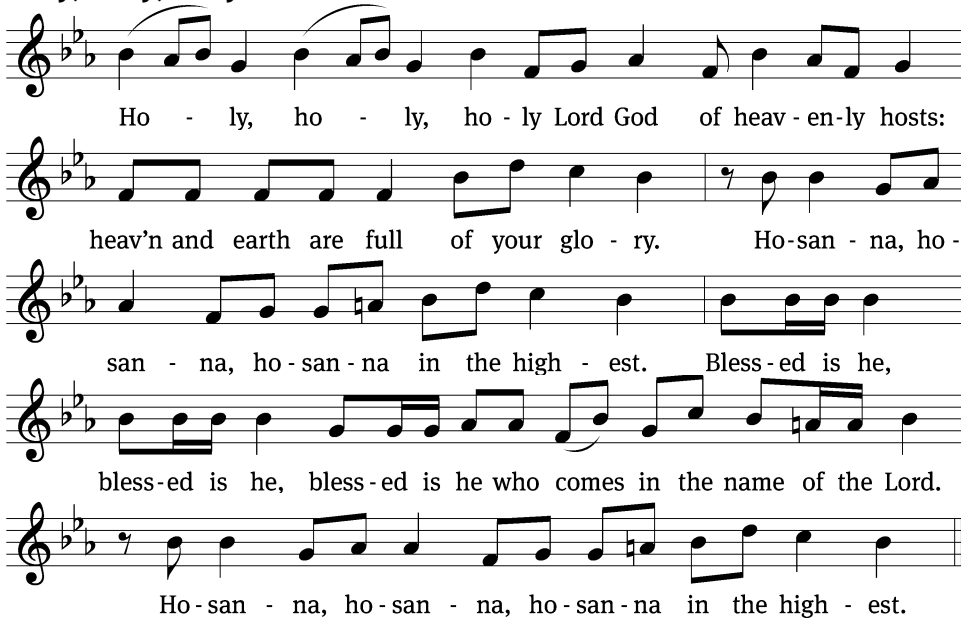
We lift them up to the Lord.



It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167



Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my **T** body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my **T** blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;". The second staff continues: "have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,". The third staff continues: "you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.". The fourth staff continues: "O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;". The fifth staff concludes with: "grant us your peace. A - men.".

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

Be seated

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

667 Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and \mathbb{T} give you peace.

Amen.

Be seated

Hymn

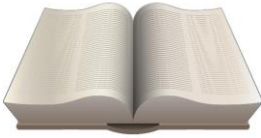
842 Jesus, Still Lead On



Take Home Questions

1. Multiple sections of the New Testament refer to Abraham's faith and trust in God. Read Romans 4:1-5; Hebrews 6:13-20; and Hebrews 11:8-19. What insights are added to Genesis 22 from these three sections?
2. Isaac seems to make a fitting "type of Christ" in that he points ahead to Jesus--he was the only son whom Abraham loved, he carried his own wood, he seemed to willingly obey his father. However, which "character" in Genesis 22 is even more Christlike?
3. Even though Mark's account of Jesus' temptation is not very detailed, what comfort do you have in knowing that Jesus went through the same temptations you go through (as Hebrews 4:15 reminds us) and came out victorious?
4. Looking at Romans 8:35, discuss/ponder how each potential "separator" can actually lead us closer to Christ than we were before.
5. Discuss this statement in view of today's sermon, readings, and hymns: "Present battles indicate nothing about the overall war."

News & Announcements



Sunday's Bible Study: Meeting the Up and Downs of Life When We Recover from a Serious Illness

Join us in the cafeteria from 9:15 to 10:15 AM

Got Questions?

Feb. 25 | 9:15-10:15 AM

Beginning next week, our Sunday Bible Study will look at questions you have about the passion history in Mark 14-15. As we go through a section of scripture during the midweek service on Wednesday, either note any questions you have about that section on your Connect Card or email them to the church by Friday. Those questions will serve as our discussion points for the Sunday study.

Kindergarten Roundup on Saturday

Feb. 24 | 10:00 AM

Bring your 5-year-old to see our Kindergarten classroom, meet to teacher, and get to know some of the other students this Saturday, Feb. 24 at 10:00 am.

Help Share the Joy of Easter with Children

Mar. 16

Volunteers are needed for Easter for Kids on Saturday, March 16 from 9:00 to 11:45 am. Some help is needed before the event to hang posters, prep materials, and set up. The day of the event, we need activity leaders and people to shepherd groups of children between activities. Teens and adults are welcome to volunteer. For more information, see the Ministry Table.

Hygiene Drive

thru Mar. 3

The annual Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive is underway throughout Central Wisconsin. We are collecting personal care and cleaning products through March 3. You can place your donations in bins by the Ministry Table.

Place Your St. Paul's Scrip Order Today

This is a reminder that St. Paul's scrip now places order for physical cards only on communion Sundays. (This is due to increased shipping costs.) So if you need scrip cards that we do not keep in stock, please plan ahead. We will be placing an order this Sunday, Feb. 18.

Also, if you purchase Visa cards through scrip, you may want to register them online. (Look for the website info on the VISA card.) Registering the card will allow you to track your purchases and check your balance. Plus registering a card allows you to use it to pay bills online or to make online purchases.

Calendar

February 18-25

Sunday	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 3K-6th
	10:30 AM	Worship
Monday	4:30 PM	Choir Practice in the balcony
	5:30 PM	Men's Devotional Basketball in the gym
	6:30 PM	Leadership Council in the Resource Center
Tuesday	6:45 AM	Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
	9:45 AM	Women Walking in the Word in the Resource Center
Wednesday	8:55 AM	School Chapel Service
	4:00 PM	Midweek Lent Worship Service
	4:45 PM	Fellowship meal in the cafeteria
	5:30 PM	Handbell Practice
	6:30 PM	Midweek Lent Worship Service
Thursday	7:00 AM	Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
Saturday	10:00 AM	Kindergarten Round Up
Sunday	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 3K-6th
	10:30 AM	Worship

Attendance Report

Last Week's Attendance: 212

Next Sunday

Theme: Rethinking Suffering under the Cross

Readings: Job 1:13-22; Romans 5:1-11; Mark 8:31-38

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 25 PreK-K Singing at 8:00 Worship
- Mar. 1 NO SCHOOL – Professional Day
- Mar. 3 Catechism Community
- Mar. 16 Easter for Kids





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