

# St. Paul Lutheran Church

Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026 ~ 5:30 pm

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## GATHERING

*The assembly gathers in silence*

Welcome and Announcements

*Please rise in body or spirit*

Call to Worship (Psalm 51:1-8a)

P: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.

**C: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**

P: In whose image were we formed from dust? Whose name do we bear?

**C: Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

P: Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

**C: You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

P: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**C: Let me hear joy and gladness.**

## Gathering Hymn:

"Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service" Screen or ELW #712



- 1 Lord, whose love in hum - ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu - man need,
- 2 Still your chil - dren wan - der home - less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;
- 3 As we wor - ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal - ing light
- 4 Called by wor - ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer - cy's per - fect deed:  
still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.  
in its height and depth and great - ness dawns up - on our quick - ened sight,  
to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;  
As you, Lord, in deep com - pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,  
mak - ing known the needs and bur - dens your com - pas - sion bids us bear,  
hope and health, good - will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im - part.  
by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.  
stir - ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun - dant life to share.  
that your ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

Text © Oxford University Press

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## Greeting

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God,

**C: you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*The congregation is invited to be seated.*

## WORD

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A: A reading from the book of Joel.

A: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—a day of darkness and gloom a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, “Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’ ”

A: Word of God, Word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalms: 103:8-14

A: We will read the Psalm responsively by whole verse.

A: The Lord is merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**C: He will not always accuse,  
nor will he keep his anger forever.**

A: He does not deal with us according to our sins  
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

**C: For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;**

A: as far as the east is from the west,  
so far he removes our transgressions from us.

**C: As a father has compassion for his children,  
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.**

A: For he knows how we were made;  
he remembers that we are dust.

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b - 6:10

A: A reading from 2 Corinthians.

A: We entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we entreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." Look, now is the acceptable time; look, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: in great endurance, afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; in purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors and yet are true, as unknown and yet are well known, as dying and look—we are alive, as punished and yet not killed, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing everything.

A: Word of God, Word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

*Please rise in body or spirit.*

Gospel Acclamation:

*Spoken:* **C: Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

The Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord!**

P: [Jesus said to the disciples:] "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as

the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

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

*The congregation is invited to be seated.*

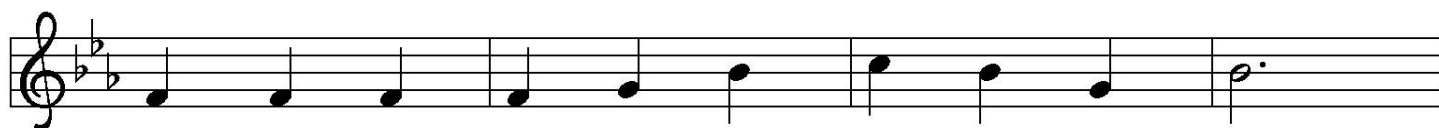
Sermon

*Please rise in body or spirit.*

Hymn of the Day: "Be Thou My Vision" Screen or ELW # 793



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,  
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,  
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931

Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

Public Domain

## Invitation to Lent

P: Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to

love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

*The assembly may be seated or kneel.*

## Confession of Sin

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination*

P: Most holy and merciful God,

**C: we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

P: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

**C: Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

**C: Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

### Imposition of Ashes

P: Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C: Amen.**

*The congregation is invited to be seated.*

*At this time, people may come forward to receive the ashes. The pastors will mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes saying:  
"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

Hymns: "Restore in Us, O God" Screen or ELW #328



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -  
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from  
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -  
4 Three-per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.  
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.  
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.  
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933

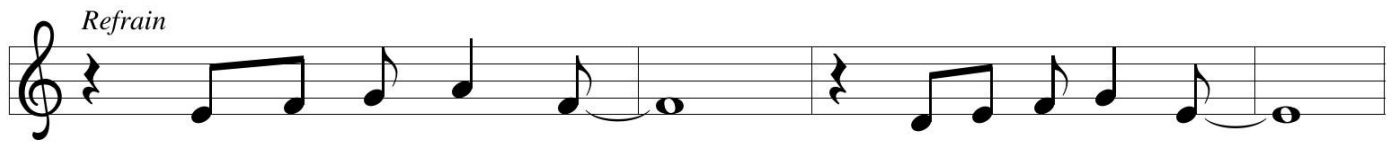
Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company.

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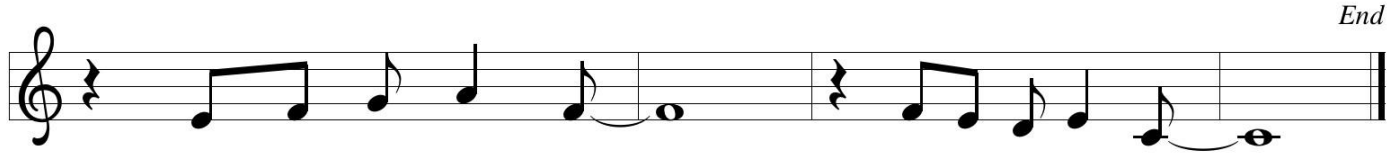
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# "Change My Heart of God" Screen or ELW #801



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.

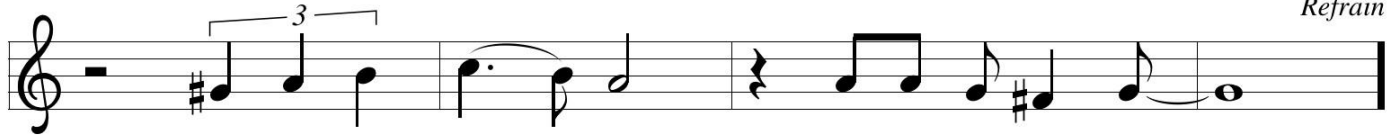


*End*

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



*Refrain*

Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Text: Eddie Espinosa, b. 1953  
 Music: CHANGE MY HEART, Eddie Espinosa  
 Text and music © 1982 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing, admin. Music Services  
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P: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

**C: that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

P: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

**C: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

P: Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **C: Amen.**

*Please rise in body or spirit.*

Prayers of the People

Screen

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

*A brief silence.*

A: Guide your church, O God. Accompany all Christians in this season of repentance, and renew our faith in the riches of grace you give to us in baptism. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Heal this earth, O God. Satisfy the needs of every parched place, every diverse ecosystem, every suffering creature. Though all return to dust, grant beauty and purpose to each living thing. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Restore the nations, O God. Let your healing spring up quickly across the world. Give all in authority the will to loose the bonds of injustice and let any who are oppressed go free. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Deliver your people, O God. Comfort any whose hearts are bent by grief, uphold any who are sick, bring food to those who hunger, and give housing to all without shelter. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Bless this assembly, O God. Reconcile us to one another and to you. Strengthen our resolve to fast from evil, open our hands in sharing, and quicken our prayer. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Hold us forever, O God. We thank you for all who now know their treasure in heaven, and for Martin Luther and for all who on earth proclaimed your abounding, steadfast love. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

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

**C: Amen.**

## MEAL

Holy Communion

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

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

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

**C: It is right to give God 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. 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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
 heav-en and earth are 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 in the high - est.

## Words of Institution

P: Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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, Jesus 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."

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of

Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

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

**C: 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.

*The congregation is invited to be seated.*

### Distribution of Holy Communion

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say  
"The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you."*

*And each person may respond, "**Amen**".*

*St. Paul Lutheran Church and the ELCA practice "open table" communion.*

*This is Christ's table; Jesus is our host.*

*Everyone is invited and welcome to receive Holy Communion,  
eating at Jesus' table.*

### Communion Hymns:

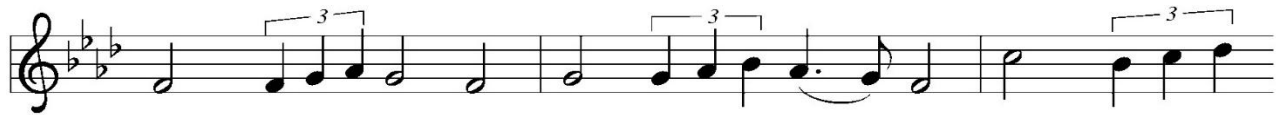
### "Lamb of God"

### Screen

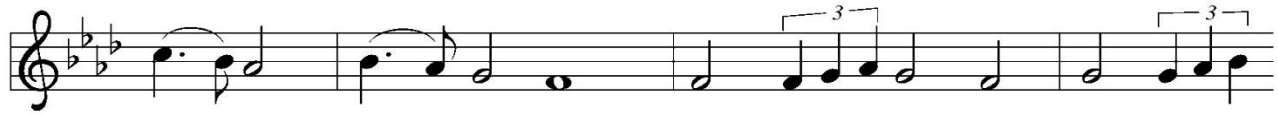
The image shows the musical notation for the hymn "Lamb of God" in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff with a treble clef. The lyrics are written below the staff, aligned with the notes. The hymn consists of four lines of music. The first line ends with a semibreve note, and the second line ends with a half note. The third line ends with a quarter note, and the fourth line ends with a half note. The lyrics are: "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." The word "grant" is underlined in the original image.

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.

# "Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow" Screen or ELW #327



1 Through the night of doubt and sor - row, on - ward  
 2 One the light of God's own pres - ence on the  
 3 One the strain that lips of thou - sands lift as  
 4 On - ward, there - fore, sis - ters, broth - ers; on - ward,



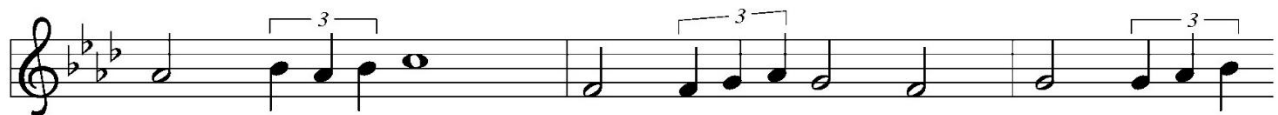
goes the pil - grim band, sing - ing songs of ex - pec -  
 ran - somed peo - ple shed, chas - ing far the gloom and  
 from the heart of one; one the con - flict, one the  
 with the cross our aid. Bear its shame, and fight its



ta - tion, march - ing to the prom - ised land. Clear be -  
 ter - ror, bright - 'ning all the path we tread. One the  
 per - il, one the march in God be - gun. One the  
 bat - tle till we rest be - neath its shade. Soon shall



fore us through the dark - ness gleams and burns the  
 ob - ject of our jour - ney, one the faith which  
 glad - ness of re - joic - ing on the far e -  
 come the great a - wak - 'ning; soon the rend - ing



guid - ing light; pil - grim clasps the hand of  
 nev - er tires, one the ear - nest look - ing  
 ter - nal shore, where the one al - might - y  
 of the tomb! Then the scat - t'ring of all



pil - grim step - ping fear - less through the night.  
 for - ward, one the hope our God in - spires.  
 Fa - ther reigns in love for - ev - er - more.  
 shad - ows, and the end of toil and gloom.

Text: Bernhardt S. Ingemann, 1789–1862; tr. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924, alt.  
 Music: EBENEZER, Thomas J. Williams, 1869–1944  
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*Please rise in body or spirit*

### Post Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **C: Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray. God of our salvation,

**C: 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. Amen.**

## SENDING

### 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.

**C: Amen.**

# Sending Hymn:

“Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church” Screen or ELW #321



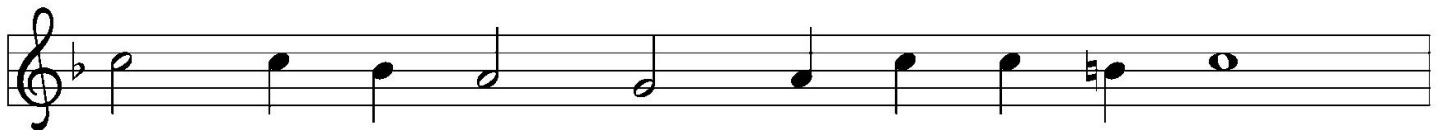
1 E - ter - nal Lord of love, be - hold your church  
2 So dai - ly dy - ing to the way of self,  
3 If dead in you, so in you we a - rise,



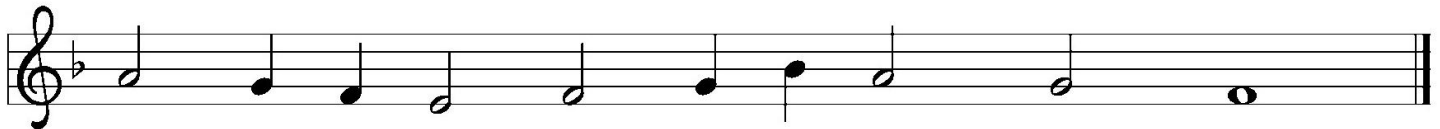
walk - ing once more the pil - grim way of Lent,  
so dai - ly liv - ing in your way of love,  
you the first - born of all the faith - ful dead;



led by your cloud by day, by night your fire,  
we walk the road, Lord Je - sus, that you trod,  
and as through ston - y ground the green shoots break,



moved by your love and toward your pres - ence bent:  
know - ing our - selves bap - tized in - to your death:  
glo - rious in spring - time dress of leaf and flow'r,



far off yet here— the goal of all de - sire.  
so we are dead and live with you in God.  
so in - to life and glo - ry shall we wake.

Text: Thomas H. Cain, 1931–2003

Music: OLD 124TH, *Trente quatre psaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

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## Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Believe the good news. **C: Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

Leading Worship Today

**Musician:** Kathy Sheridan

**Presider:** Pastor Anthony Windau

**Preacher:** Pastor Riley Reed-Windau

**Worship Assistant:** Marian Myers

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## St. Paul Announcements

Church Office contact information ~ email: [office@stpauldixon.org](mailto:office@stpauldixon.org) phone: 815-288-2757

Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 am – 1:30 pm

Pastor Anthony Windau (414) 364-9504 [pastoragwindau@gmail.com](mailto:pastoragwindau@gmail.com)

Pastor Riley Reed-Windau (406) 240-2145 [pastorreedwindau@gmail.com](mailto:pastorreedwindau@gmail.com)

## Midweek

### LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

#### **FEBRUARY 25**

*St. Luke's Episcopal; 5:30 pm*

#### **MARCH 4**

*St. Paul Lutheran; 5:30 pm*

#### **MARCH 11**

*Immanuel Lutheran; 5:30pm*

#### **MARCH 18**

*St. Luke's Episcopal; 5:30 pm*

#### **MARCH 25**

*St. Paul Lutheran; 5:30 pm*

ALL SERVICES ARE FOLLOWED BY A SOUP SUPPER AND FELLOWSHIP

## DACMA

(Dixon Area Christian

Ministers)

Lent Services

February 22, 6:00 pm

@ 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian

March 1, 6:00 pm

@ Grace UMC

Refreshments to follow