St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
4th Sunday after Epiphany
February 3, 2019

Rev. Arden Dorn, Transitional Minister
Mike Tessman, Worship Assistant
Rita Jordan, Organist
Rita Jordan, Lay Reader

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The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God’s glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✞ one God, who creates us and forms us, who redeems us and calls us, who unites us and sends us.

Amen.

Gathered in God’s presence, let us confess our sin. The assembly shall kneel or stand, as they are able.

Mighty and loving God,
we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.
We seek our own way.
We divide the body of Christ.
In your mercy, cleanse us and heal us.
Let the words of our mouths,
the thoughts of our hearts,
and everything that we do be filled with faith, hope, and love.

Amen.

Hear the voice of Jesus:
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to proclaim release to the captives.”
In the name of ✞ Jesus Christ,
I proclaim to you that your sins are forgiven and you are released.
The joy of the Lord is your strength, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are yours forever.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN (ELW p. 661) I Love to Tell The Story
GREETING

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

KYRIE

We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.
Renew us with your saving pow’r; create in us new hearts!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:
Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav’n above;
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:

we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God’s right hand.
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father’s splendor bright.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!
PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Oremos. Dios Todopoderoso y siempre viviente, aumenta en nosotros los dones de la fe, la esperanza y el amor; y que podamos obtener lo que prometemos, hacernos amar lo que usted manda, a través de su hijo, Jesucristo, nuestro Salvador y Señor. Amén.

The assembly is seated

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1:4-10

God calls Jeremiah to be a prophet and consecrates him in the womb. Jeremiah’s task is to preach God’s word in the midst of the difficult political realities of his time, before the Babylonian exile. He is to make God known not only to Judah, but also to the nations.

4Now the word of the Lord came to me saying,
5“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”
6Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” 7But the Lord said to me,
“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.
8Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
says the Lord.”
9Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me,
“Now I have put my words in your mouth.
10See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to pull down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant.”

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God
RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 71:1-6

R: From my mother’s womb you have been my strength.

1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame.
2 In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free; incline your ear to me and save me.
3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe; you are my crag and my stronghold.
4 Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor. R
5 For you are my hope, O Lord God, my confidence since I was young.
6 I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother’s womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you. R

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Christians in Corinth prided themselves on their spiritual gifts. Paul reminds them that God gives us many gifts through the Holy Spirit, but the purpose behind all of them is love, the kind of love that God showed us in Jesus Christ.

1 If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7 It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. 9 For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; 10 but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.
The assembly stands.
People in Jesus’ hometown are initially pleased when he says that God will free the oppressed. Their pleasure turns to rage when he reminds them that God’s prophetic mission typically pushes beyond human boundaries so that mercy and healing are extended to those regarded as outsiders.

21 Then [Jesus] began to say to [all in the synagogue in Nazareth,] “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” 23 He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’” 24 And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. 25 But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; 26 yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. 27 There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” 28 When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. 30 But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW p. 676) Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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

United as one body in Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

The assembly shall kneel, as they are able

We pray for the church. Inspire us by your Spirit as we respond to your call. When we are reluctant, strengthen us; when we are doubtful, encourage us. Above all, let your love shine through us. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the earth. For mountains and prairies, cities and farms, rain forests and deserts. Awaken us to the mystery and diversity of your creation. Nurture all living things and protect your creation from harm. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the nations. Kindle within us a spirit of respect for one another. Protect those fleeing their homes to escape danger or oppression. Bring peace to communities torn apart by warfare and violence. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those in need. Protect those who suffer abuse and encourage those who lack hope. Guide all who provide medical care. Comfort those who grieve and bring healing to the sick, especially for Mitch, Laquita, Mary Louise, Francis, Lynda, Leroy, John, and Roxanna, as well as those that we name out loud or in our hearts... Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For this assembly. Bless our children and our elders. Gather us into a community guided by your love. Inspire in us a spirit of hospitality and kindness. Teach us to bear one another’s burdens with compassion. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As we sow Seeds of Hope, we pray for St. John Lutheran in Westhoff. Guide them to new opportunities and abilities to draw younger people into the congregation. We pray also for St. Peter’s in Elgin that they may have vision, direction, and that God would use them as an instrument of grace in their community. We pray for St. Paul’s – Karnes City and St. Paul’s – Nordheim as the congregations begin the St. Paul’s Squared opportunity. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

With all churches in the Southwestern Texas Synod we pray for each other and also for ELCA member congregations such as those in the Eastern North Dakota Synod, Christ Lutheran Church in Alamo Heights, and California Lutheran College. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We give thanks for those who have gone before us in faith, and who now see you face-to-face. Inspire us by their example and bring us into your everlasting presence. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers and fill us with the radiance of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.
Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING  An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERING HYMN  (ELW p. 674)  Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.  God of all creation,  
all you have made is good,  
and your love endures forever.  
You bring forth bread from the earth  
and fruit from the vine.  
Nourish us with these gifts,  
that we might be for the world  
signs of your gracious presence  
in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  Amen.

Lasset uns beten.  Gott der ganzen  
Schöpfung,  
alles, was Sie gemacht haben ist gut,  
und deine Liebe hält ewig aus.  
Du bringst Brot von der Erde  
und Früchte vom weinstock.  
Nähren Sie uns mit diesen Gaben,  
dass wir für die Welt sein könnten  
Zeichen deiner gnädigen Gegenwart  
in Jesus Christus, unserem Erlöser und  
Herrn.  Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.  
By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;  
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;  
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.  
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:
THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Amen, amen, amen.
LORD’S PRAYER

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

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

Come to the table.
Feast on God’s abundant life for you.

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION – All are WELCOME at the table of the Lord.

This meal gives you strength for your journey of faith & life. Go forward as the body of Christ in your family, community and the world. Children or anyone choosing not to commune, but wishing to be blessed, may indicate this by folding their arms across their chest. Anyone who is unable to come forward may indicate to an usher that you wish to receive communion where you are seated.

1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;

you suffered death our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.
eternal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. We thank you, O God, that you have fed us at your banqueting table with bread and wine beyond compare, the very life of Christ for us. Send your Spirit with us now, that we may set the captive free, use your gifts to build one another up, and in everything reflect your glory revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of glory dwell in you richly, name you beloved, and shine brightly on your path; and the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

SENDING SONG (ELW p. 535)  Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is your light.

Thanks be to God.

DOXOLOGY (ELW p. 884)  Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

For Prayerful Consideration

**Ill, Injured or Otherwise Struggling:** Sharon Baumann, Mitch Dorn, Shane Edens, Michelle Easton, Norma Foreman, Laquita Gibbens, Linda Henning, Jack Hockey, Raymond Jenkins, Mary Louise Jonas, Steve Kelly, Evalina, Francis Kempe, Lynda Lathrop, Ella Manka, Khloe Martinez, John Moczygemba, Charles Pierce, Leroy Polderick, Carly Rosenboon, Mary Schulz, John Tackitt, Roxanna Tom, Yvonne Watkins, Kyle Worthy, Cody Zaiontz, and Norma Zamzow

**For those in the military:** Nick Adams, Anthony Alvarez, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Jon Wayne Schulz, James Skinner, Chris Sustaita, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva

**Birthdays & Anniversary:** Steve Jonas (Feb. 10), Kiera Robinson (Feb. 13), Ryan & Chauna Mika (Feb. 11)
Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul’s by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul’s. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us. **If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance**, please signal an usher.

Coming Events

Let’s join together and PARTICIPATE

**FREE ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts Valentine cards!**
Pick yours up at the display table in the Fellowship Hall. Your ELCA Good Gifts donations help provide families in need with fruit-tree seedlings, honeybees, pigs and other animals, and the resources they need to escape hunger and poverty for good. A very special way for you and yours to celebrate Valentine’s Day, while giving back to ELCA World Hunger.

February 17 Following The 11:00 Worship Service

Celebrate Pastor Dorn’s amazing work at St. Paul’s and the beginning of Vicar Rodriguez' work at St. Paul's!
Does your congregation incorporate any special types of traditions in your worship services, if so, what?
Our congregation is filled with talented musicians. Every Sunday, we have at least one guitarist in addition to our pianist. Usually we have more; on the best of musical days, we have 3-4 guitarists, a drummer, 2-3 flutists, and a violinist! The congregation members are also fabulous and Spirit-filled singers. We change service music at least four times per year, incorporating several ELW settings as well as Now the Feast by Marty Haugen. Living Word is a wonderful place to worship God in song. At the end of each service, before "Go in peace, serve the Lord," we recite our mission statement. We remind each other and ourselves of our purpose together: "Living in God's Grace, Caring for All People, Sharing God's Love, We are Living Word!"

Where or how does your church focus its outreach/service efforts?
Living Word does outreach and service on the local level all the way to the international level. We support HHII, an international group that provides hearing aids and other resources for children in the Ukraine. Two of our members are well-connected to an orphanage there, and we support their work. Over the last year, we have helped provide diapers for children who otherwise would only have had one allotted per day. We send clothing and other needed items, as well. In Buda, we provide a luncheon for the first responders as our God’s Work, Our Hands project. We serve them a meal, and then individuals commit to praying for individual first responders throughout the year.
We are currently partnered with Communities in Schools to provide important items and support for a new local elementary school. We collect supplies for several organizations including one that serves homeless veterans, as well as the Hays County Food Bank. We are important members of the Hays Caldwell Woman's Center town team, and help plan and execute two events with them each year. As members of the Corridor Interfaith Alliance for Families, we work to give a voice to members of our community who often do not have the chance to speak up for themselves and their needs.

What does Faith Formation look like in your congregation?
On Sundays during the school year, we have classes in three age ranges: preschool-4th grade, 5th grade-8th grade, and adults. The children are using Sparkhouse curriculum to delve more deeply into one of the appointed lectionary texts each day. They learn music, read together, play games, and do crafts to reinforce the stories. The adults mostly spend Sundays reading books or stories from the Bible. In the last year, we have read through the Gospel according to Mark, Paul's letter to the Romans, and are beginning a series on the women of the Hebrew Bible. Our classes run year-round, taking only a few Sundays off around holidays. During the summer, we have intergenerational learning. We work with two other congregations (First Lutheran in San Marcos and Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Wimberley) to provide Confirmation instruction for our middle school youth. We meet about once per month to learn the biblical story and Lutheran understandings of faith. We attend camp together, as well.

Does your congregation host any unique annual events or conferences?
We have a church picnic once a year. After worship, we gather to celebrate the end of the summer together.

Are there any ministry teams within your church whose ministries you’d like to highlight?
Living Word has been a Reconciling in Christ congregation since November 11, 2008. It is one thing we are known for in the community and beyond. We are committed to being a community that welcomes all people regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, political leanings, abilities, and more. This principle guides our work together.