

A photograph of a sunset over a mountain range. The sun is low on the horizon, partially obscured by a mountain peak, creating a bright glow and lens flare. The sky transitions from a deep orange near the sun to a dark blue at the bottom. The text is centered in white, sans-serif font.

ONE THING I KNOW,
WHEREAS I WAS BLIND,
NOW I SEE

JOHN 9:25

Lent 4: Light for the Blind

March 22, 2020



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**St. Paul's Lutheran Church is a
Congregation in the Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Synod.**



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

We want to extend a warm welcome to everyone attending this worship service! Especially to you who are guests and visitors, WELCOME!

We at St. Paul's Lutheran share a common belief in **Jesus** as **our Savior** from sin and as the Lord of our lives. Our faith is based on God's Word, revealed in the Bible. We want to share God's Word with as many people as possible because we know that Jesus lived, died and rose from death to save us and all people. We're happy to have the opportunity to share the saving truths of the Bible with you and yours!

We hope that you will worship with us again!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Coronavirus situation: Since we can't all gather in one room for worship this weekend, our service can be viewed online through links from our website, stpaulshowardsgrove.org. There will also be a limited range radio broadcast throughout our church parking lot on Sunday morning at 8:00 and 10:30 am on FM 88.3.

Communion: Communion won't be offered today. Pastor Bode will be available at church on Monday (6:30-8:00pm) and Tuesday (9:00am-1:00pm). Pastor Mueller will be available at church most of the day Thursday. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment with the appropriate pastor if you desire communion. During these times, offerings can also be dropped off and scrip purchased.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (The WELS) and was founded in 1862. We have our Lutheran elementary school (pre K-grade 8) on site and are part of a federation of churches to support our own high school, Manitowoc Lutheran High School.



SERVICE OF THE WORD

Lent is a 40-day season of the Church Year when we take to heart Jesus' suffering and death for our salvation. We also give special attention to turning away from sin and from anything that hinders our relationship with the Lord. During Lent, we eagerly anticipate the joyful celebration of Easter. The liturgical color for Lent is purple, symbolizing repentance. Today we see how the Light of the world, Jesus, gives gracious sight to the blind who trust in him; he gives blinding judgment on those who reject him; finally, he displays the work of God in the lives of those who now walk in the light of Christ.

OPENING DUET

Amazing Grace | 379

Amazing grace -- how sweet the sound-- that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.

The Lord has promised good to me; his Word my hope secures. He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come; 'tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

M: The grace of our Lord (+) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray:

Almighty God, the antidote to the darkness and dark times is your light. Give strength to all who are joined in your family to reject what erodes their faith and to follow your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 42:14-21

The LORD promised to turn the darkness into light and lead the blind along unfamiliar paths.

¹⁴I have been silent for a long time. I have kept still. I have restrained myself. But now, like a woman giving birth, I will scream. I will gasp and pant.

¹⁵I will dry up mountains and hills. I will make all their grass wither. I will turn rivers into islands. I will dry up pools.

¹⁶I will lead the blind on a way they do not know. Along paths they do not know I will direct them. Ahead of them I will turn darkness into light and rough places into level ground.

These are the things I will accomplish for them. I will not abandon them.

¹⁷They will be turned back and completely disgraced—those who trust in an idol, those who say to molten images, “You are our gods.”

¹⁸ You deaf ones, listen! You blind ones, watch carefully so that you can see!

¹⁹ Who is as blind as my servant? Who is as deaf as my messenger whom I sent? Who is as blind as my associate, as blind as the servant of the Lord?

²⁰ You, Israel, see many things, but you do not observe. Israel opens his ears, but he does not hear.

²¹ Because of his own righteousness, the Lord was pleased to make his law great and glorious.

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 27

The LORD is my light and my salvation -- whom shall I fear?

Soloist: First Refrain & Verses

ALL: Repeated Refrain & Refrains after Verses

I be - lieve, I be - lieve I shall
see the good - ness of the Lord in the land,
in the land of the liv - ing.

Soloist: The Lord is my light, the Lord is my rock, my salvation. The Lord is my refuge, guarding my life; of whom should I be afraid?

ALL: Refrain

Soloist: Only one thing I ask: may I live in the house of my Lord. I shall gaze on God's goodness all of my days; I shall live in the shelter of God.

ALL: Refrain

Soloist: I believe I shall see the goodness of God in the land of the living. Be strong, wait for the Lord.

ALL: Refrain

GOSPEL LESSON

John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39

Jesus healed a man born blind and brought the Pharisees' blindness to light.

¹ As Jesus was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that God's works might be revealed in connection with him. ⁴ I must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the World."

⁶ After saying this, Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and spread the mud on the man's eyes. ⁷ "Go," Jesus told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means "Sent"). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

¹³ They brought this man who had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees also asked him how he received his sight.

"He put mud on my eyes," the man told them. "I washed, and now I see."

¹⁶ Then some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath." Others were saying, "How can a sinful man work such miraculous signs?"

There was division among them, ¹⁷ so they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about him, because he opened your eyes?"

The man replied, "He is a prophet."

³⁴ They answered him, "You were entirely born in sinfulness! Yet you presume to teach us?" And they threw him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out. When he found him, he asked, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"

³⁶ "Who is he, sir," the man replied, "that I may believe in him?"

³⁷ Jesus answered, "You have seen him, and he is the very one who is speaking with you."

³⁸ Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" and he knelt down and worshipped him.

³⁹ Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, in order that those who do not see will see, and those who do see will become blind."

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Christ Is the World's Light | 343 v. 1, 4

**1 Christ is the world's light, Christ and none other;
Born in our darkness, he became our brother.
If we have seen him, we have seen the Father:
Glory to God on high!**

**4 Give God the glory, God and none other;
Give God the glory, Spirit, Son, and Father;
Give God the glory, God with us, my brother:
Glory to God on high!**

SERMON

Ephesians 5:8-14

You are light in the Lord; have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness.

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. ¹⁰ Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord, ¹¹ and do not participate in fruitless deeds of darkness. Instead, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention the things that are done by people in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes things visible. ¹⁴ Therefore it is said, "Awake, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Lord, Please Put Some Light on the Subject!
The black spot * The blind spot * The bleach spot

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

Online giving options available



In thanks for Christ's light and forgiveness, we bring him a generous portion of all we receive. Offerings may be dropped in the box under the canopy today, or brought to the office this week Monday (6:30-8:00 pm), Tuesday (9:00am-1:00pm), or most of the day Thursday.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH & LORD'S PRAYER

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.

M: Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

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 ☩ give you peace.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN *Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness* | 353 v. 1, 3

**1 Praise the one who breaks the darkness
With a liberating light;
Praise the one who frees the pris'ners,
Turning blindness into sight.
Praise the one who preached the gospel,
Healing ev'ry dread disease,
Calming storms and feeding thousands
With the Father's word of peace.**

**3 Let us praise the Word incarnate,
Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose victorious
That we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness,
Seeing what our God has done;
Let us praise the true Redeemer,
Praise the one who makes us one. Amen.**

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PSALM 27:

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SERVICE OF THE WORD:

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SERVING JESUS WITH HEARTS OF LOVE:

PASTOR: Rev. Aaron Mueller

PIANIST: Gillian Curia

SOLOISTS: Bev Gumm & Nathan Meitner

In Your Prayers This Week:

1. Norb Prange has surgery coming on March 25 for a kidney stone.