



St. Paul Lutheran Church

9:30a Service of Worship

Pastor ~ Reverend Ashley Nicolls

Holy Cross Day | September 14, 2025

May God's grace continue to
overflow to and through you.



Assisting In Worship

Assisting Minister

Marthe Hildreth

Reader

Marty Hillerich

Acolyte

Helen Miller

Sound

Mike Scherr

Rick Barry

Camera Operator

Sue Scherr

Screen Operator

Kendall Riley

Ushers

Sue Barry &

Jan Kruse

Greeter

Hank Roberts

Church Closer

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church!

We hope you will use this bulletin during the week to have a song to sing, prayers to pray and give comfort, whether you are worshipping in person or from home on your electronic devices.

Although not all of us are physically together to worship, our Lord is still with us.

We give thanks for those who attend in-person and the technology that allows us to share the bulletin and the worship service on the website.

St. Paul has a Community Prayer Cross located outside near the road. You are welcome to leave a prayer request there or in the box when you enter, and it will be placed on the cross.

Important community ministries of St. Paul include the Tuesday Community Meal, Saturday Food Pantry, and the Early Childhood Learning Center. Your financial gift makes a difference for Christ and His kingdom and enables St. Paul to be *the community church that cares*. It can be made by online giving, on Sunday morning, mailed to the church, or dropped off during normal office hours
- Monday-Friday • 9a-12noon.

May God bless you and give you peace!

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude ~ "O God Our Help in Ages Past" – Arr. McChesney – The St. Paul Ringers

Gathering Hymn Processional ~ *Lift High the Cross*

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till

The first system of musical notation for the hymn 'Lift High the Cross'. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics 'Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till' are written below the treble staff.

all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

The second system of musical notation for the hymn 'Lift High the Cross'. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics 'all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.' are written below the treble staff.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,
2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied
3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

The third system of musical notation for the hymn 'Lift High the Cross'. It includes a four-part vocal setting of the final line of the hymn. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, with each line corresponding to a different voice part (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass). The musical notation for each voice part is written in the treble and bass staves.

Refrain

our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
 as thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827–1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874–1956

Music: CRUCIFER, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947

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Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, our maker, our helper, and our keeper.

Response: Amen.

Pastor: Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor: Merciful and loving God,

Response: we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.

Pastor: Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of ☩ Jesus, your sins are forgiven!

Response: Amen.

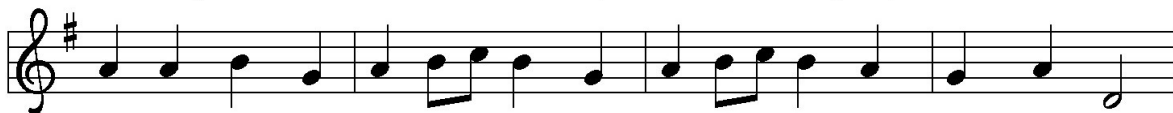
Hymn of Praise ~ *Glory be to God in Heaven*



- 1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
- 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
- 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

Prayer of the Day

Pastor: Almighty God,

Response: your Son Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross so that he might draw the whole world to himself. To those who look upon the cross, grant your wisdom, healing, and eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Ministry in Music ~ “All Who Are Thirsty/Many Will Come” – Wentzel/Schwandt

The St. Paul Singers

Children's Message

Scripture ~ Numbers 21:4b-9

When the people spoke against God and Moses, the Lord sent poisonous snakes against them. Moses interceded for the people, and the Lord ordered him to erect a serpent of bronze on a pole. All who looked at it after having been bitten by a serpent would live.

[From Mount Hor the Israelites set out,] ^{4b} but the people became discouraged on the way. ⁵ The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” ⁶ Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷ The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹ So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Response: Thanks be to God.**

Scripture ~ Psalm 98:1-4

¹ Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things, whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.

² **O LORD, you have made known your victory, you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

³ You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

⁴ **Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

Scripture ~ 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

At the heart of the Christian message is the word of the cross. This proclamation seems foolish to many because it reveals true divine power in the absolute weakness of Christ's crucifixion. True wisdom understands how ours is a God who suffers for and with humankind in the cross.

¹⁸ The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." ²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Response: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

Gospel ~ John 3:3-17

After explaining to Nicodemus that one must be born of water and Spirit, Jesus speaks of being lifted up on the cross, with reference to the bronze serpent lifted up by Moses in the desert. Here the Son of God is revealed as the source of healing.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 3rd chapter.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹³“No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

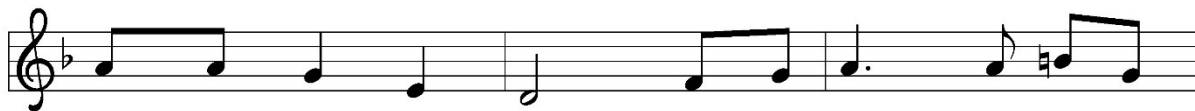
Response: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon ~ Pastor Ashley Nicolls

Hymn of the Day ~ Tree of life and Awesome Mystery



1 Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your
2 We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed
3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling



death we are re - born; though you die in all of
on through act and word; ev - 'ry per - son lost and
though our steps may be; one with you in joy and

his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you
bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord, wears the
sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the

rise with ev - 'ry morn.
bod - y of our Lord.
riv - er, you the sea.

General

Light of life beyond conceiving,
mighty Spirit of our Lord;
give new strength to our believing,
give us faith to live your word

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: Marty Haugen

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Prayers of the Church

Assisting Minister: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need. *(pause for silence)*

Assisting Minister: Sustaining God,

Response: guide your church on the way. Give us patience in our journey, and protect us from division and doubt. May we look to the cross and live.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, **Response:** receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: Creator God,

Response: renew the earth. Heal our planet from the venom of greed and exploitation, and direct us to respect all life as a gift from you. May we look to the cross and live.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, **Response:** receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of wisdom,

Response: grant discernment to those in authority. Thwart the plans of the proud, bring low the mighty, and uphold those who work for peace. May they seek the way of the cross and live.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, **Response:** receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of grace,

Response: alleviate suffering. Comfort the sick and the grieving. Come to the aid of those who are hungry or needing shelter. May they find hope in the cross and live.

Assisting Minister: Be especially with those we name now aloud or in our hearts. (pause)

Assisting Minister: God of grace, **Response:** receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: Good Shepherd,

Response: guide your flock. Protect us from the world's lies and lead us in the way of truth. Strengthen us in our faith and inspire us to serve others. May we follow you to the cross and live.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, **Response:** receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: Merciful God,

Response: you receive into your loving embrace those who have died. Giving thanks for them, may we find comfort in the cross and live in the hope of resurrection.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, **Response:** receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.

Response: Amen.

The Peace

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

Response: And also with you.

Offering

(The collection plates will be brought forward at this time. Offering plates can still be found at the back of the sanctuary if you did not place your offering in the plates when you entered. Online giving at www.stpaulsarasota.org is also available.)

Offering Song ~ *Bringing in the Sheaves*

1. Sow - ing in the morn - ing, sow - ing seeds of kind - ness, sow - ing in the
 2. Sow - ing in the sun - shine, sow - ing in the shad - ows, fear - ing nei - ther
 3. Go - ing forth with weep - ing, sow - ing for the Mas - ter, though the loss sus -

noon - tide and the dew - y eve; wait - ing for the har - vest and the time of
 clouds nor win - ter's chill - ing breeze; by and by the har - vest and the la - bor
 tained our spir - it oft - en grieves; when our weep - ing's o - ver He will bid us

reap - ing - we shall come re - joic - ing, bring - ing in the sheaves.
 end - ed - we shall come re - joic - ing, bring - ing in the sheaves.
 wel - come - we shall come re - joic - ing, bring - ing in the sheaves.

Refrain

Bring - ing in the sheaves, bring - ing in the sheaves, we shall come re -

joic - ing, bring - ing in the sheaves. joic - ing, bring - ing in the sheaves.

WORDS: Knowles Shaw, 1874
MUSIC: George A. Minor, 1880

SHEAVES
12.11.12.11 with Refrain

Offering Prayer

Assisting Minister: Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Response: Amen.**

Spiritual Communion Prayer

Pastor: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in this most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Holy Communion

(Those who want to partake of Christ's body and blood in their in their seats may lift up their elements at this time).

Pastor: 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. With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Lord's Prayer

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your love and teach us to pray.

Response: 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

Pastor: Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: Those who wish to remain at their seats to partake of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine/grape juice may do so now. The body and blood of Christ is given and shed for you. Take and eat. Take and drink. If you wish to come to the altar, you may do so at the ushers' direction.

Post Communion Blessing

Pastor: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace now and forever. **Response: Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Assisting Minister: O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Response: Amen.

Blessing

Pastor: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free, ✠ bless you now and forever.

Response: Amen.

Sending Hymn ~ *Go to the World*



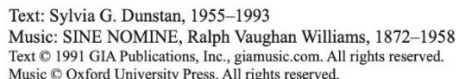
1 Go to the world! Go in - to all the earth.
2 Go to the world! Go in - to ev - 'ry place.
3 Go to the world! Go strug - gle, bless, and pray;
4 "Go to the world! Go as the ones I send,



Go preach the cross where Christ re - news life's worth,
Go live the word of God's re - deem - ing grace.
the nights of tears give way to joy - ous day.
for I am with you till the age shall end,



bap - tiz - ing as the sign of our re - birth.
Go seek God's pres - ence in each time and space.
As ser - vant church, you fol - low Christ's own way.
when all the hosts of glo - ry cry, A - men!"



Please remember in your prayers...

All those serving in the U.S. Military, especially Gage Fournier. The homeless in our neighborhood, our city, our nation and the world. The Florida-Bahamas Synod Office of the Bishop Staff: Bishop Pedro, Assisting Ministers to the Bishop Pastors Carlos, Derek, Nicole, and Rob, Specialists Kim, Bill, & Brittney, Support Staff Tina, Yuliet, & Ileana.

SURE – Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity. Community Meal and Food Pantry guests. Prayers upon the HOPE Community Prayer Cross. The Arlington Park Neighborhood.

St. Paul members, especially, Brittany, Emerson, Kevin, and Palmer Salvatore, Susana Santa Cruz, Jill and John Scherer.

St. Paul Early Childhood Learning Center directors, teachers, students, and families.

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| Members Beetle/O'Hara Family Dorothy Boller John Beyer Susan Burmaster Judy Carnal Sue Fisher Joann Flanigan Bob Fong Valerie Nicolls James Paulsson Colleen Ryan Susy Scholl Esther Smith Betty Smowton Homebound Members Donna Casala Evelyn Gulliksen Lindy Lindemann Anna Mathisen Virginia McQuaig Michael Reiter Carole Wilson Friends and Family Alice – <i>friend of JoAnn Jordan</i> Debbie – <i>friend of Scherrs</i> Ed – <i>friend of Sandy Choquette</i> Donnie – <i>community meal guest</i> Jeff – <i>community meal guest</i> Mark – <i>friend of M & D Hillerich</i> Rick – <i>nephew of Linda Knight</i> Scott – <i>friend of John Beyer</i> Sharon – <i>friend of Jane Schubert</i> Susan – <i>friend of C. Paxton</i> Sandi Acevedo – <i>sister-in-law of Acevedo</i> Kareem Ali – <i>friend of Fred Melton</i> | Clinton Allen – <i>friend of Jim Paulsson</i> Laura Anderson – <i>niece of Roberts</i> Sheryl Brandes – <i>sister-in-law of Sue Scherr</i> Buete and Pearson family– <i>family of Brian McCulley</i> Caroline Burmaster – <i>sister-in-law of Susan Burmaster</i> Todd Couch – <i>son of Sandy Choquette</i> Mike Cunningham- <i>friend of H. Roberts</i> David Eller – <i>friend of Carolyn Mele</i> John and Joy Emanuelli – <i>friends of Roberts</i> Gladys Faraone – <i>friend of H. Roberts</i> Vickie Hall – <i>sister of Fonda Davies</i> Niklaus Heisler – <i>great-grandson of Irene Felicetti</i> Katy Hernandez – <i>niece of M. Acevedo</i> Nicole Ketter – <i>friend of Susan Burmaster</i> Kate Kretschmann- <i>family of Lindy Lindemann</i> Karen Kugler – <i>friend of Marty Hillerich</i> Pr. John Hilficker – <i>friend of Conrad Hellwege Jr.</i> David McCall – <i>brother of J. Roberts</i> Marsha McKinney- <i>former member</i> Addie McLean – <i>daughter of ECLC Director Lisa</i> | Becky Nobles – <i>friend of Lindy Lindemann</i> Linda and Jim Norris – <i>family of Doris Schlotterback</i> Karen Paulsson – <i>sister of J. Paulsson</i> Hannah Puckhaber Manny Ribas – <i>friend of Cindy Schlotterback</i> Clint Shantz – <i>former member</i> Brian & Kenny Schlotterback— <i>sons of Doris Schlotterback</i> Haley Schlotterback – <i>granddaughter-in-law of Doris Schlotterback.</i> Bill Schroeder – <i>friend of Conrad Hellwege</i> Bethany Smith – <i>daughter of B&B Smith</i> Natalie Smowton Boxx – <i>great-granddaughter of Betty Smowton</i> Noel Scott Studenwalt – <i>nephew of B&B Smith</i> Bill Sweeney – <i>grandson of Marilyn and George Hutfilz</i> Swisher Family – <i>family of Kathie Snyder</i> Dan Torrence – <i>friend of K. Snyder</i> David Van Ness – <i>brother of Missy Craig</i> Elaine & Mark Vanderweight- <i>friends of Jim Paulsson</i> Curtis Weckwerth – <i>cousin of Rich Weckwerth</i> John and Janet Welther – <i>family of Ethel Hamilton</i> Pr. Pete Zieg – <i>former pastor of JoAnn Jordan</i> |
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St. Paul Lutheran Church

and Early Childhood Learning Center

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
and the Florida-Bahamas Synod, established 1955
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Executive Committee

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