



THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
JANUARY 21, 2024

SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 West 94th Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

(708) 423-1040

Pastor John Moeller

Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Allan Buss

www.stpauloaklawn.org

Director of Music Ruth Sievers

As We Gather

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen by trade. Jesus invited them to follow Him and promised that He would make them fishers of men. Today's Old Testament reading helps us understand Jesus' meaning. The prophet Jonah was swallowed and then spewed out by a great fish after running from God's call to preach to the sinful people of Nineveh. God was giving Jonah a second chance to share the Gospel with them, and through him, by God's grace, more than 120,000 people there were saved from destruction. Jesus' Words invite us to repentance and faith in the Good News of salvation, which is embodied in Him. This message is the net by which the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the people of God.

Prelude

"Today Your Mercy Calls Us"

V. Hildner

Opening Hymn

"Today Your Mercy Calls Us"

#915

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Today Your mercy calls us
To wash away our sin.
However great our trespass,
Whatever we have been,
However long from mercy
Our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us
And make us clean today.</p> <p>2 Today Your gate is open,
And all who enter in
Shall find a Father's welcome
And pardon for their sin.
The past shall be forgotten,
A present joy be giv'n,
A future grace be promised,
A glorious crown in heav'n.</p> | <p>3 Today our Father calls us;
His Holy Spirit waits;
His blessed angels gather
Around the heav'nly gates.
No question will be asked us
How often we have come;
Although we oft have wandered,
It is our Father's home.</p> <p>4 O all-embracing Mercy,
O ever-open Door,
What should we do without You
When heart and eye run o'er?
When all things seem against us,
To drive us to despair,
We know one gate is open,
One ear will hear our prayer.</p> |
|---|--|

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Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 113:1-3

P Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD,

C praise the name of the LORD!

P Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and forevermore!

C From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the LORD is to be praised!

Confession and Absolution

Jonah 3:2, 10; 1 Corinthians 7:29, 31; Mark 1:15, 17

P Today, our Confession and Absolution is based on the three Scripture readings appointed for today. From the Old Testament, we learn that even though Jonah was reluctant when the Lord spoke to him the first time, God called Jonah a second time and told him, "go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you."

C As You, O Lord, have given us the message of the Gospel, we have been reluctant to go bring Your truth and grace to all people. For this we ask Your forgiveness.

P In the Epistle, St. Paul reminds the people of God, *“The appointed time has grown very short. . . . The present form of this world is passing away.”*

C O Lord, even though You have given us each day and hold all time in Your hands, we have not used our time wisely. For this we ask Your forgiveness.

P In today’s Gospel, Jesus called to Simon, Andrew, James and John, *“Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”* Immediately they dropped their nets and followed Him.

C As You, O Lord, have called us to follow You, we have instead sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. For this we ask Your forgiveness.

P God showed His mercy to the sinful people of Nineveh when they repented and turned from their sin. *“When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that He had said He would do to them, and He did not do it.”* Jesus proclaimed to the people, *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”* Though we deserve His present and eternal punishment, God has relented by sending His Son to bear our sin and to be our Savior. Christ has taken our punishment on the cross, paid the price of our sins through His perfect life and sacrificial death, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

✠ Word ✠

Introit

Psalm 113:1–2, 4, 7–8; antiphon: v. 3

P From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised!

C Praise the Lord! Praise, O servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord!

P Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore!

C The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens!

P He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap,

C to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people.

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

C as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised!

Prayer of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, as You call us to follow You through Your Word, grant us Your Holy Spirit, that we may trust and serve You in true repentance and faith; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

✠ Jonah Goes to Nineveh ✠

Jonah 3:1–5, 10

¹Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, ²“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” ³So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. ⁴Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” ⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. . . . ¹⁰When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

L This is the Word of the Lord.**C** Thanks be to God.**Anthem of Praise Duet**

“Listen, God Is Calling”

Kenyan Spiritual; tr. H. Olson

Epistle

✠ The Appointed Time Grows Short ✠

1 Corinthians 7:29–31

²⁹This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, ³⁰and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, ³¹and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

L This is the Word of the Lord.**C** Thanks be to God.**Holy Gospel**

✠ Jesus Calls the First Disciples ✠

*Mark 1:14–20***P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the first chapter.**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁴After John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

¹⁶Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” ¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

¹⁹And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

✠ Confession of Faith ✠

The Apostles’ Creed

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

**And 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 sits at the
right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence 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.**

Sermon Hymn

“O Christ, Who Called the Twelve”

#856 sts. 1-4

- 1 O Christ, who called the Twelve
To rise and follow You,
Forsaking old, familiar ways
For ventures bold and new:
Grant us to hear Your call
To risk security
And, bound in heart and will to You,
Find perfect liberty.

- 2 O Christ, who taught the Twelve
The truth for ages sealed,
Whose words and works awakened faith,
The ways of God revealed:
Instruct us now, we pray,
By Your empow’ring Word.
True teacher, be for all who seek
Their light, their life, their Lord.

- 3 O Christ, who led the Twelve
Among the desolate
And broke as bread of life for all
Your love compassionate:
Lead us along the ways
Where hope has nearly died
And help us climb the lonely hills
Where love is crucified.

- 4 O Christ, who sent the Twelve
On roads they’d never trod
To serve, to suffer, teach, proclaim
The nearer reign of God:
Send us on ways where faith
Transcends timidity,
Where love informs and hope sustains
Both life and ministry.

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Sermon

“Still Inviting People!”

Rev. Dr. Allan Buss

Prayer of the Church

Announcements & Notes

Offering—*may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving is available to everyone on our website at www.stpauloaklawn.org. For information about regular electronic giving, please contact the church office.*

Offertory Meditation

A word about the Sacrament of the Altar...

We believe Jesus’ own words that the bread and wine we receive in Holy Communion is indeed His true Body and Blood and not just a representation of it. We also acknowledge St. Paul’s instruction to the Church at Corinth that it is harmful for anyone to receive the Sacrament without recognizing the real presence of His Body and Blood. Because of this, in Christian love we ask anyone who does not understand these truths to please refrain from receiving the Sacrament until you’ve spoken with the pastor. (*Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-30*)

✠ The Sacrament of the Altar ✠

Preface

- 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 Him thanks and praise.**

Proper Preface

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Our Lord

Proclamation of Christ

- P** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father...

The Lord's Prayer

- C** **Our Father, who art in Heaven...**

Pax Domini

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C **Amen.**

✠ Distribution of the Sacrament ✠

Hymn

"Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus"

#685

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Let us ever walk with Jesus,
Follow His example pure,
Through a world that would deceive us
And to sin our spirits lure.
Onward in His footsteps treading,
Pilgrims here, our home above,
Full of faith and hope and love,
Let us do the Father's bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide;
I shall follow where You guide. | We shall reap celestial joy;
All discomforts that annoy
Shall give way to mirth hereafter.
Jesus, here I share Your woe;
Help me there Your joy to know. |
| 2 | Let us suffer here with Jesus
And with patience bear our cross.
Joy will follow all our sadness;
Where He is, there is no loss.
Though today we sow no laughter, | 3 Let us gladly die with Jesus.
Since by death He conquered death,
He will free us from destruction,
Give to us immortal breath.
Let us mortify all passion
That would lead us into sin;
And the grave that shuts us in
Shall but prove the gate to heaven.
Jesus, here with You I die,
There to live with You on high. |

4 Let us also live with Jesus.
He has risen from the dead
That to life we may awaken.
Jesus, You are now our head.
We are Your own living members;

Where You live, there we shall be
In Your presence constantly,
Living there with You forever.
Jesus, let me faithful be,
Life eternal grant to me.

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Hymn

“Come Follow Me, the Savior Spake”

#688

1 “Come, follow Me,” the Savior spake,
“All in My way abiding;
Deny yourselves, the world forsake,
Obey My call and guiding.
O bear the cross, whate’er betide,
Take My example for your guide.

My heart, My mind, My strength, My all,
To God I yield, on Him I call.

2 “I am the light, I light the way,
A godly life displaying;
I bid you walk as in the day;
I keep your feet from straying.
I am the way, and well I show
How you must sojourn here below.

4 “I teach you how to shun and flee
What harms your soul’s salvation,
Your heart from ev’ry guile to free,
From sin and its temptation.
I am the refuge of the soul
And lead you to your heav’nly goal.”

3 “My heart abounds in lowliness,
My soul with love is glowing;
And gracious words My lips express,
With meekness overflowing.

5 Then let us follow Christ, our Lord,
And take the cross appointed
And, firmly clinging to His Word,
In suff’ring be undaunted.
For those who bear the battle’s strain
The crown of heav’nly life obtain.

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Hymn

“On Galilee’s High Mountain”

#835

1 On Galilee’s high mountain
Christ gave the great command
In words of strength and promise
Which all can understand:
“All pow’r to Me is given
To do what I shall choose;
Therefore I send My children,
Their witness I will use.”

This Lord, our living brother,
In pow’r at God’s right hand,
Has chosen us to carry
His truth to ev’ry land.

2 The Lord who, born of Mary,
Came down as man and died,
Who preached to all who listened,
For us was crucified—

3 His strength within my weakness
Will make me bold to say
How His redeeming power
Transforms my stubborn clay;
His touch of fire ignites me,
With courage I am sent,
My tongue-tied silence broken,
With grace made eloquent.

4 And not alone to nations
In faraway retreats,
But ev'rywhere I broadcast
His love through crowded streets:
The lives that my life touches,

However great or small—
Let them through me see Jesus,
Who served and saved us all.

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Communion Blessing

P The true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

Closing Prayer

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You've refreshed us with the body and blood of your dear Son in, with, and under this bread and wine. Strengthen our faith in You and our love for others throughout our community, nation, and world. Enable us to follow where You lead and to rejoice in the grace You give, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn

“Almighty Father, Bless the Word”

#923

1 Almighty Father, bless the Word
Which through Your grace we now have
heard.

Grant, Lord, that we who worshiped here
May all at last in heav'n appear.

Oh, may the precious seed take root,
Spring up, and bear abundant fruit!

△ 3 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2 We praise You for the means of grace
As homeward now our steps we trace.

Text: Public domain

Postlude

“Almighty Father, Bless the Word”

D. Buxtehude





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & THANKS

Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr. Allan Buss

Organist: Ruth Sievers

Vocalists: Sandy Barry and Mandy Signorelli

Lector: Sunday: Bill Leise

Altar Care: Sunday: Martha Moeller; Wednesday: Sandy Barry

Elders: Curtis Simonson, Keith Vanselow, David Witkosky; Wednesday: Bill Leise

Flowers on the Altar are from Sue Browne in loving memory of Pat Browne

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Announcements & Notes:

Thursday Evening Bible Study resumes January 25th at 7pm in the Timothy Room, when the topic for discussion will be the Travels and Events of Jesus and the Disciples. The Chosen Study will resume in early February. All are invited!

All women are invited to attend the next Ladies Guild Meeting, when they'll be playing of Bunco on Tuesday, January 23, at 1:00 p.m. in the Timothy Room. No RSVP needed – just come to enjoy the fun!

All men are invited to sing with the Men's Choir on Sunday, January 28th! Rehearsals will be in church on Wednesday, January 24th, at 7 p.m. (after the Wednesday evening church service) and at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 28th. The hymns by the choir will be sung as a memorial to Stan Wirtschoreck, a faithful member of St. Paul's choirs for many years.

Next Sunday St. Paul celebrates Life Sunday and will partner once again with the Southside Pregnancy Center by collecting "All Things Baby" to help support their ministry to families in need. During Bible class Paul Dombrowski, Interim Director of the Center, will give a presentation to update the congregation on what's been happening in their organization. The "All Things Baby" collection begins on Sunday, January 28 and runs through Sunday, February 18. A list of the most needed items is on the table in the narthex. Donations can be brought to the church any time and placed on the tables in the narthex. We hope you'll be able to join us next Sunday.

Soup and Bread Event benefiting Beds Plus will take place on Sunday, February 4th from 3-7pm at the Holiday Inn Countryside. Tickets are \$25 per person and children under 8 eat free! This family-friendly event will feature live music, approximately 20 soups from area restaurants/chefs, plus a variety of craft beers, wines and spirits. For tickets visit www.beds-plus.org or call (708) 354-0858.

Wednesday Evening Communion Services are held in the Sanctuary beginning at 6pm.

Remembering our homebound friends is a caring ministry of St. Paul meant to help us stay in touch with our members who aren't able to be with us for worship. Please remember them in your prayers. You may also like to send a note or a card. This week our homebound friend is **Melva Smith, 10310 Village Circle Drive, #205, Palos Park, IL 60464.**

Please pray for these members of our St. Paul family

Dorothy Pavella
Vic & Marty Both
George Oberg
Rich & Jan Przybycien
Rev. Paul and Judy Anderson
Bill Volk
Arthur Gerth
Ingrid Lesko
Jan Briede
Roy Hodgeman
Katherine Hice
Kurt Seehofer
Flora Jones
Graham Jackson
Kevin Hickey
Gloria Meyer
Elaine Lebron
Melva Smith
Delores Stegemann
Carol Small
Mike Degidio
Norma Silinski
Beverly Sellers
Betty Beegle
Warren Miller
Delphine Cherry
Ron Klingensmith
Louis Frank
Betty Kruckow
Herta Iversen
Loretta Frank
George Dodaro, Sr.
Barbara Prendergast

Nancy Bundley
Rosa Richardson
Tammy & Carl Hoppe
Sarah Weber
Rev. Daniel Gensch

Please pray for these friends and family of our members:

Roberta & Carlos Owens
Roy Strassner
Dorothy Kroll
Emily Feehan
LeRoy Bitner
Georgiana Easton
Jackie Plichta
Patricia Paulsen
Ken Kruckow
Janet Trierweiler
Vicki Warren
Rhonda Scott
Michelle Mitchell
Al Silinski
Pam Palhegyi
Carol Milazzo
Rich Huscher
The Lamberth Family
Jerry Gross
Louise Hrynkow
Gloria Folsom
Mary Beth Pasqua
Shirley Fairchild
Simeon Hoppe
Ron Lunt
Christopher Kosary
Sandy Plath
Iris McCoy

Shirley Demyres
Raquel Rameriz
Nick & Bridget DeAngelo
Henry Bonder
Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.
Kyle Hughes
Elaine Hoffstetter
Fred Raddatz
Allyson Seehofer
Selma Carmichael
Bernadette & Rich Trusk
Dana Kahn
Donald Hakanson
Guillermo Ramirez
Paul Noffke
Vern Howe
Shawn Harland
Ann Herold
Barb Potter
Wayne Volk
Lance Barrientos
Linda Shuman
Doris Potts
Doreen Holford
Judy Collins
Luke Pajowski
Phyllis Hicks
Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.
Cathy Becker
Ken Matz
Jean & Al Zirbel
Carol Loecherbach
Charley Heitz
Sophia Salus
Justin & Ashley Fasel
Frank Coglinase

Gene Wawrzynkowski
Kimberly Rooney
Helena Hoffman
Evelyn & Ron Konieski
Audrey Metes
Richard DeSaga
Ken Wente
Margaret Lundgreen
Julie King
Sharon Bryant
Anika Seger
Monica Kato
Herb Kleeman
Debra Kleeman
Sarah Skelton
Barbara Apt
Bob & Gloria Freeman
Carrie Aspan
Lisa Anglin
Devon Apt
Tristan Ferry
LaNell Mauler Koenig
Todd, Sofia & Grace Lylum
Hillary Pittelko
Sue Berg
Carol Jean & Tim McPhillips
Donna Santi
Evelyn & Ron Konieczki
Katherine Zeleny
Elmo Schultz
Jose Urena
Joanne Ganzel
Mike Feyerer

- We pray for Pastor Dan Gensch, as he is recovering from a valve replacement surgery on Thursday. If you'd like to send him a card, mail or drop it off at our church office. We'll collect them here, and then Jan will pick them up.
- We'll include a prayer for Sanctity of Life Sunday today, because this is the designated day, but our main observance of Life Sunday will be next Sunday, Jan. 28.
- This is also the official start of Lutheran School's week, so we include the schools of our synod.

**Please let the church office know when your need for our congregational prayers is over.
(708) 423-1040**