



# Rethinking Religion

**THE SOLUTION TO SIN**

Fourth Sunday in Lent

# **ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH | Bangor, WI**

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*March 10, 2024*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we welcome you to St. Paul's. We especially welcome our guests who have joined us today. We pray that your soul will be strengthened by the good news of God's forgiveness through Jesus.

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## **PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP**

God of grace, you stand alone in all the world as the only God, the only truth, and the only way to eternal life. Forgive me when I follow along with the rest of the world's thinking that I contribute to my own salvation. Remind me today of my lost condition without you, and comfort my heart with your promise of my complete forgiveness through the life and death of Jesus my Savior. With confidence in his perfect salvation I pray. Amen.

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## **FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

Children's activity sheets are available near the entrance to the sanctuary. The church basement is also available with a live feed of the worship service along with a Kids' Corner for parents with children to utilize during the service if needed.

## **THANK OFFERING**

You may leave your offering in the plate in the lobby. The QR code to the right will provide the link to our online giving option. If you're visiting with us today you are welcome to give an offering, but don't feel compelled by guilt or embarrassment to do so. God wants all offerings to be made freely and with joy.



# SETTING ONE

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*The Service is a version of the historic liturgy of the Christian church that highlights the Word of God and the forgiveness, life, and salvation we receive through the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## CHOIR

*I Heard the Voice of Jesus*

*Stand*

## INVOCATION

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

**Amen.**

## CONFESSION

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,**

**and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,**

**according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

## DECLARATION OF GRACE

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LORD, HAVE MERCY

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



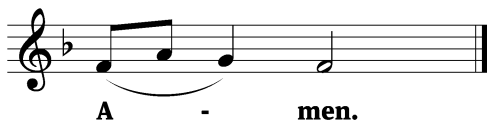
**Lord, have mer - cy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



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## HYMN

## 563 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less sts. 1, Ref, 2

(short musical intro)



1 My hope is built on noth - ing less than Je - sus'  
2 When dark - ness veils his love - ly face, I rest on



blood and right - eous - ness; I dare to make no  
his un - chang - ing grace; in ev - 'ry high and



oth - er claim, but whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.  
storm - y gale my an - chor holds with - in the veil.



On Christ, the sol - id rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Text: Edward Mote, 1797–1874, alt.

Tune: John Stainer, 1840–1901, alt.

Text and tune: Public domain

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# *The Word*

## **SALUTATION**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Grant, O merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace that they may be cleansed from all their sins and serve you with a quiet mind; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## **FIRST READING**

*Numbers 21:4–9*

<sup>4</sup>They set out from Mount Hor along the road to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom, but the people became very impatient along the way. <sup>5</sup>The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? Look, there is no food! There is no water! And we are disgusted by this worthless food!"

<sup>6</sup>The LORD sent venomous snakes among the people, and the snakes bit the people. As a result many people from Israel died. <sup>7</sup>The people went to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD to take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed on behalf of the people.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD said to Moses, "Make a venomous snake and put it on a pole. If anyone who is bitten looks at it, he will live." <sup>9</sup>Moses made a bronze snake and put it

on the pole. If a snake had bitten anyone, if that person looked at the bronze snake, he lived.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM OF THE DAY

*Psalm 32B*



1 How blest are those the LORD for - gives; how  
2 I si - lent - ly con - cealed my guilt, but  
3 I then con - fessed my sin to you, my  
4 Let all the faith - ful pray to you while  
5 You hide me, LORD; you hold me fast in



glad they are to hear their sin is gone, their  
then I groaned all day: your heav - y hand, like  
griev - ous guilt and shame, you you for - gave my  
you may still be found; you place them safe a -  
all ad - ver - si - ty, sur - round - ing me with



guilt a - toned, their rec - ord clean and clear.  
sum - mer heat, took all my strength a - way.  
wick - ed - ness by your most gra - cious name.  
bove the flood, se - cure on high - er ground.  
faith - ful love and songs of vic - to - ry.

*Text: Michael D. Schultz*

*Tune: Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, 1813, ed. John Wyeth*

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*Tune: Public domain*

## SECOND READING

*Ephesians 2:1–10*

<sup>1</sup>You were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you formerly walked when you followed the ways of this present world. You were following the ruler of the domain of the air, the spirit now at work in the people who disobey.

<sup>3</sup>Formerly, we all lived among them in the passions of our sinful flesh, as we carried out the desires of the sinful flesh and its thoughts. Like all the others, we were by nature objects of God's wrath.

<sup>4</sup>But God, because he is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup>made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in trespasses. It is by grace you have been saved! <sup>6</sup>He also raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>He did this so that, in the coming ages, he might demonstrate the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup>not by works, so that no one can boast.

<sup>10</sup>For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance so that we would walk in them.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*John 3:16*

**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,  
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

## GOSPEL

*John 3:14–21*

<sup>14</sup>"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>so that everyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>"For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup>The one



who believes in him is not condemned, but the one who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup>This is the basis for the judgment: The light has come into the world, yet people loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>In fact, everyone who practices wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, or else his deeds would be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But the one who does what is true comes toward the light, in order that his deeds may be seen as having been done in connection with God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

*Children who are in grade four and younger may come forward and sit on the front step for the children's devotion. Older children, parents, or other family members may come forward to encourage the younger children's participation.*



## HYMN OF THE DAY

570 God Loved the World So That He Gave



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly  
 2 Christ is the sol - id rock of faith, who was made  
 3 God would not have the sin - ner die; his Son with  
 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives the



Son the lost to save that all who would in  
 flesh and suf - fered death. All who con - fide in  
 sav - ing grace is nigh. His Spir - it in the  
 sins that you have done. You're jus - ti - fied by



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.  
 him a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.  
 Word de - clares that we in Christ are heav - en's heirs.  
 Je - sus' blood; bap - tized, you are a child of God.

5 If you are sick, if death is near,  
 this truth your troubled heart can cheer:  
 Christ Jesus saves my soul from death;  
 this is the anchor of my faith!

6 Glory to God the Father, Son,  
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One!  
 To you, O blessed Trinity,  
 be praise now and eternally!

*Text: tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.; Heiliges Lippen- und Hertzens- Opfer, Stettin, c. 1778*

*Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816–1893*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

## **SERMON**

*Ephesians 2:1-10*

### **Wanted: Alive, Not Dead**

*Stand*

## **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.**

*Be seated*

## **OFFERING**

*"Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits from your entire harvest" (Proverbs 3:9).*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Gracious Lord, according to your will and promise, you sent your Son into our world to atone for sin and restore eternal life. You planned his path to the cross, and he followed it perfectly. Your Spirit led him to endure the temptations of Satan, but he triumphed. Your own people rejected his message, but he persevered. He confronted the blindness of unbelief, the confusion of doubt, and the hurt of death but was not deterred as he proclaimed your kingdom to the least, the last, and the lost.

**He embodied your gracious love that we might know you.**

Guide us to follow Christ by faith as we walk the road of temptation and trial. Spare us from falling into Satan's traps, and steel our resolve as his partners confront us. Teach us to use your Word as a weapon to fight against all devilish lies and deceptions.

**When we fall—and we surely will—lift us up again with your forgiveness and grace.**

As we hear and contemplate the holy record of our Savior's passion and death, use the sharp message of the law to empty us of pride and self-reliance. Humble us as we view the Savior in his humility, remembering and believing that he endured the cross so we might be freed from its horror.

**In his suffering show us our healing, in his grief show us our joy, and in his death show us our life.**

Protect all who are bearing the cross of persecution and disdain. Supply your power to those fighting temptations and addictions. Watch over all who are sick and suffering in body, mind, and heart. We pray especially for children who are abused, forsaken, or ignored.

**Comfort all your troubled people with the sweet peace that only Jesus can bring.**

Give wisdom and resolve to the leaders of our government that their rule may bring prosperity to our land and peace to our people. Supply insights to those who seek cures and invent devices to make our lives on earth better and safer. Inspire creative minds to touch our hearts in ways that reflect your creating love.

**You desire that we bask in the glory of your redemption; according to your will, may we also enjoy the wonders of your creation.**

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.*

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

Hear our prayers, Lord, for the sake of Jesus, whose journey to the cross we remember during the days of Lent. Comfort and strengthen us by his life and death on our behalf, and thrill us as we look forward to celebrating his victory on Easter.

**In his name we pray. Amen.**

## HYMN

575 *By Grace I'm Saved*



1 By grace I'm saved, grace free and bound-less; my soul, be -  
2 By grace God's Son, our on - ly Sav - ior, came down to  
3 By grace! O mark this word of prom - ise when you are  
4 By grace to tim - id hearts that trem - ble, in trib - u -  
5 By grace! On this I'll rest when dy - ing; in Je - sus'



lieve and doubt it not. Why wa - ver at this word of  
earth to bear our sin. Was it be - cause of your own  
by your sins op - pressed, when Sa - tan plagues your trou - bled  
la - tion's fur - nace tried, by grace, de - spite all fear and  
prom - ise I re - joice, for though I know my heart's con -



prom - ise? Has Scrip - ture ev - er false - hood taught? So then this  
mer - it that Je - sus died, your soul to win? No, it was  
con - science, and when your heart is seek - ing rest. What rea - son  
trou - ble, the Fa - ther's heart is o - pen wide. Where could I  
di - tion, I al - so know my Sav - ior's voice. My heart is



word must true re - main: by grace you, too, shall heav'n ob - tain.  
grace, and grace a - lone, that brought him from his heav'n - ly throne.  
can - not com - pre - hend God by his grace to you did send.  
help and strength se - cure if grace were not my an - chor sure?  
glad, all grief has flown since I am saved by grace a - lone.

*Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Christian L. Scheidt, 1709–1761, abr.*

*Tune: Cornelius H. Dretzel, 1697–1775*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

*Stand*

## PRAYER

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

## BLESSING

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.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## CLOSING HYMN

519 *There Is a Redeemer*



1 There is a Re - deem - er, Je - sus, God's own Son,  
2 Je - sus, my Re - deem - er, name a - bove all names,  
3 When I stand in glo - ry, I will see his face;



pre-cious Lamb of God, Mes-si - ah, Ho - ly One.  
pre-cious Lamb of God, Mes-si - ah, hope\_ for sin - ners slain.  
there I'll serve my King for-ev - er in\_\_\_ that ho - ly place.



Thank you, O my Fa - ther, for giv-ing us your Son



and leav - ing your Spir - it till the work on earth is done.

*Text: Melody Green, b. 1946*

*Tune: Melody Green, b. 1946, alt.*

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# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## MIDWEEK LENTEN SERIES

Our midweek Lenten worship this year is entitled *Scriptures Fulfilled*. It focuses on various Old Testament prophecies concerning the suffering and death of the Christ and how Jesus fulfilled them. We pray this series refreshes us in the truths that our God is all-knowing, powerful, and gracious. Come deepen your appreciation for our Lord Jesus Christ's love for you, me, and all people.



## MIDWEEK STUDY

Our midweek study is an evangelism module called *In Season & Out of Season*. In his second letter to Timothy, apostle Paul wrote, "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season" (4:2). Although originally written as an encouragement to a first-century pastor, Paul's words are equally applicable to twenty-first-century Christians. We have the same message to share with sinners who desperately need to hear it. *In Season & Out of Season* seeks to encourage and equip God's people to share that message in any and every situation.



## GRAPE JUICE NOW OFFERED AT COMMUNION

For those who cannot drink wine, we are now offering grape juice during the Lord's Supper. The grape juice will be **in the center of the tray in the purple-tinted cups**. Please reserve the cups with grape juice for those who need them. If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Groth.

## BAKE SALE

On Sunday, March 24th, PACE will be hosting our annual bake sale between services in the church basement. Funds raised will help support the Easter Egg Hunt and various other PACE initiated events throughout the year. If you would like to donate a baked good for the event, feel free to bring an item to the church basement on Saturday, March 23rd between 9:00-10:00 am or on March 24th prior to the first church service. If baking isn't your expertise, feel free to indulge in the talents of those others have prepared!



## **EASTER EGG HUNT**

March 30th, your St. Paul's School will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt for the children of our congregation and community. The event will start at 10:00 am and will include an egg hunt, games, an Easter story, and door prizes. We hope that our St. Paul's family will help support the event by either attending the event, spreading the word, or attending the bake sale. Thank you for your support.

## **FAREWELL FOR RIEDIGERS**

Christ Lutheran in West Salem invites all who would like to join them for a farewell open house for Pastor Riediger and his wife Sue on Saturday, March 23, from 2:00-4:00 pm, in the Christ-St. John's gymnasium. There will be a light lunch served with a program at 3:00 pm.

## **WELS COULEE WOMEN'S RETREAT**

On Saturday, April 20, 2024, at Luther High School, join us for a day of fellowship, growth, and renewal as we learn from Scripture how God fills us with love that it overflows into everything we do. Speakers include: Emily Krill of the "Messy Worship" blog, Amy Vannieuwenhoven author of "Look Up From Your Phone So I Can Love You", Rev. Joseph Radsek from Institutional Ministries, Rebeckah Ellinghuysen MA, Anna Wallander of Temple Love Fitness, and Hayli Littlehead. Visit our website for more details and registration information! <https://welscwr.wixsite.com/retreat>

## **OFFERING SUMMARY** (includes online and memorials to Gen Fund)

2024 Weekly Budget: \$11,826.00	Budget to Date: \$106,434.00
Received Last Week: \$9,970.01	Rec'd to Date: \$78,176.77

## **LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE**

8:00 am: 101	Online Viewers: 24	10:00 am: 106	Total: 231
Sunday Bible Study: 31	Sunday School: 9	Tues./Wed. Bible Study: 25	
Midweek Lenten Service: 165	Online Viewers: 20	Total: 185	

# CALENDAR

TODAY	8:00 am	Worship
	9:10 am	Sunday School
	9:15 am	Bible Study
	10:00 am	Worship
MONDAY	6:00 pm	Bible Basics Class
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice
TUESDAY	7:00 pm	Bible Study
WEDNESDAY	9:00 am	Bible Study (same as Tues.)
	3:30 pm	Public School Catechism Class
	7:00 pm	Lenten Worship
NEXT SUNDAY	8:00 am	Worship with Communion
	9:10 am	Sunday School
	9:15 am	Bible Study
	10:00 am	Worship with Communion

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## SERVING IN WORSHIP

Presiding Minister	Pastor Brock Groth
Accompanists	Irene Bakken
	Micah Gray

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