

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21

¹“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.”²“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.”³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,⁴ so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.⁵“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.”⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.”

¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,¹⁸ so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.”²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Sunday Service at 9:30 AM

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Find us on Facebook [@stpaulsmpk](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsmpk) or our website stpaulsmpk.org

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Join us for worship on Sundays at 9:30 am

News and Needs

- **The Lord's Supper**, our sharing of the bread and wine as Jesus invites us to do, is open to all who accept the presence of Jesus in this simple meal. We continue to use pre-filled communion chalices for a sanitary, safe, and traditional communion experience. We rejoice in our opportunity to join together in praise and thanksgiving to God. Newcomers among us are invited to participate in every aspect of our worship. Any questions? Please ask.
- **Pastor David Berkedal is a regular preacher and worship leader at St. Paul's.** Pastor Berkedal will be working on **Thursdays, from 10:00 am. to 4:00 pm.** in Monterey Park to help us develop the congregation's ministry and outreach. He and his wife, Rev. Sally Welch began a Youtube Channel, "Streams of Living Waters" to provide connection and encouragement and an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be Christian during times of isolation. Each video has been matched with a podcast on their "Living Water Radio" channel and a blog entry on "Words of Living Water." You may send an email to Pastor Berkedal at dberkedal@gmail.com for links to all three or visit our website (stpaulsmprk.org).
- **Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent.** Lent consists of the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter on April 16th (excluding Sundays, which are like little Easters) and is linked to the 40 days of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. The ashes that are used as a sign of repentance are made from a mixture of olive oil and burnt palm branches. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.
- **Continue the Lenten Journey with St. Paul's Lutheran Church!**
 - Palm Sunday- April 2nd**
 - 9:30am Palm Sunday Service in English
 - 11am Palm Sunday Service in Mandarin courtesy of Trinity Faith Lutheran.
 - *Both services will be held in St. Paul's Sanctuary*
 - Maundy Thursday- April 6th**
 - 3:00pm-5:00pm Quiet Prayer in St. Paul's Sanctuary
 - 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service in Sanctuary (English)
 - Good Friday- April 7th**
 - 3:00pm-5:00pm Quiet Prayer in St. Paul's Sanctuary
 - 7pm Good Friday Service in Sanctuary (Mandarin)
 - Easter Sunday- April 9th**
 - 9:30am Easter Service in English
 - 10:45 am Easter Egg Hunt
 - 11:00 am Easter Service in Mandarin by Trinity Faith
 - Afternoon Egg Hunt (TBD)

PSALM 51

¹ The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble. He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!
¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses. ² **Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.** ³ For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ **Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.** ⁵ Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb. ⁶ **Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.** ⁷ Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow. ⁸ **Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.** ⁹ Hide your face ¹ from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness. ¹⁰ **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.** ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² **Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.** ¹³ Let me teach your ways to offenders, and sinners shall be restored to you. ¹⁴ **Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.** ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. ¹⁶ **For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You are not pleased with burnt offering.** ¹⁷ The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

READING: JOEL 2:1-2, 12-17

¹ Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—² a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. ¹² Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³ rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. ¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God? ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶ gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. ¹⁷ Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"