

*Fifth Sunday
in Lent*



the good news is..

rooted in justice, mercy,
& faithfulness

March 22, 2026

10:00 am

St. Paul's Eggertsville Campus



Welcome to St. Paul's!

We're glad you're here!
Scan the QR Code Below to check in



Do you have:
Prayer requests?
A need to speak to a Pastor?
Questions about joining St. Paul's?

**For this and more,
Scan the QR code above to share
your needs with us!**

*Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Egbertsville Campus
Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 22, 2026*

Musician: Paul Storfer

Confession and Forgiveness (Please stand if you are able.)

P We worship in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C Amen

P If God threw a party, all would be invited.

C If God hosted a dinner, there'd be a seat saved for each of us.

P If God prepared a banquet,

C a cheer would go up when you arrived.

P This is the good news: God is throwing a party. God is hosting a dinner. God is preparing a banquet, and all are invited.

C Let us worship this invitational God.

P Family of faith, if someone declines our invitations again and again, in our human ways, we tend to stop inviting them. We get the hint. We assume they'd rather be elsewhere. But with God, things are different. No matter how many times we overlook or ignore God's outstretched hand, God will never stop reaching for us. So, with that good news in mind, let us go to God in prayer. Gracious God,

C you invite all of us to your table: the faithful and the doubting, the restless and the hopeless, the addicted and the lonely, the lost and the confused. You invite all of us, regardless of who we are or where we've been, but we often fail to do the same. When given the opportunity, we are guilty of casting judgment on our neighbors. We draw lines, assume the worst, create cliques, and accept exclusion. Forgive our harmful ways. This Lent, show us how to love others the way you love us. With hope we pray, amen.

P Friends, no matter how many times we mess up, no matter how many times we lose our way, no matter how many times we decline God's invitation, God will never stop inviting us to the table. There is and always will be a seat saved for you. There is and always will be love and grace for you. You are forgiven and set free to forgive and love others in the exact same way, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

C Thanks be to God, amen.

Opening Hymn: WOV 734

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling



1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for



you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,
you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain



watch - ing for you and for me.
mer - cies for you and for me? "Come home, come home!
par - don for you and for me.



You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,



Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

Apostolic Greeting

P The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Holy One, when you speak, we don't want to miss it. When you bend down and write in the dirt, when you move through the trees, when you wake with the dawn, when you tug on our heart, or whisper into our dreams, we don't want to miss it. So today we pray, clear out the cobwebs in our ears. Quiet the steady stream of thoughts marching through our minds. Open up space in our hearts so that we can receive your word for us today. With hope we pray.

C Amen.

Children's Time

First Reading: Matthew 23:23

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.

A This is the Word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm 85:1-13 (read responsively)

A LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

C You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.

A You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.

C Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us.

A Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

C Will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you?

A Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.

- C Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
- A Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.
- C Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
- A Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.
- C The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.
- A Righteousness will go before him and will make a path for his steps.
- A This is the Word of the Lord
- C Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and

mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in

stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

P The Holy Gospel according to John the 8th Chapter.
C Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 8:2-11

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, they said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”

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



Sermon

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in his jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the e - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
There is plen - ti - ful re - demp - tion in the blood that has been shed;
If our love were but more sim - ple, we should take him at his word;



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
there is joy for all the mem - bers in the sor - rows of the head.
and our lives would be all sun - shine in the sweet - ness of our Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863

Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

Apostle's Creed

P Together we say what we believe using the words of the Apostle's Creed:

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

Prayers of the Church

A Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. (Please kneel or sit as you are able.)

We pray for the church. Grant life and peace to all who gather in your name. Breathe into us so that we may share your message of forgiveness, hope, and love. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for creation. Renew landscapes that have dried up, prosper the work of those who restore homes and habitats after natural disasters, and sustain places where biodiversity thrives. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for the nations. Unbind leaders trapped by fear to act boldly for justice, free all who live in places of war and violence, and guide refugees and asylum seekers to safety. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for all people in need. Take away the stone of poverty that weighs down so many. Console any who weep and heal all who are sick. We pray especially for the people on our Prayer Lists and Prayer Chain, and those we name before you now, either silently or aloud. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

- A We pray for this assembly. Ready the hearts and spirits of all preparing to be baptized. Deepen our wonder at the mystery of your resurrection and life. Hear us, O God.
- C **Your mercy is great.**
- A We offer our thanksgiving for all people who have died in faith. Give us faith to trust in your power to redeem and save, and bring us up from our graves to life in you. Hear us, O God.
- C **Your mercy is great.**
- A Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.
- C **Amen.**

Ways to Give to St. Paul's:

Options you can use to continue tithing to St. Paul's:

- **In-Person Worship:** Continue to put your envelopes and cash in the plate
- **Giving by Mail:** Please mail your donations payable to St. Paul's, 4007 Main Street, Eggertsville, NY 14226
- **Online:** The St. Paul's website contains a link to Online Giving. The website is: <https://stpaulseggertsville.com/online-giving/>

QR Giving Code:



Last Week's Service Offerings: \$7,192.00

Budgeted Weekly Service Offering: \$7,488.00

Offering Music and Prayer

- P Let us pray,
- C God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these gifts we offer today and in our planned giving for the needs of the world, through Christ our Savior. Amen.



Dialogue and Preface

P The Lord be with you.

C **And Also with you.**

P Jesus has always been one to invite. He said, “Drop your nets and follow me.” He said, “Let the little children come.” He said, “Stand up from your mat, you are healed.” Jesus has always been one to invite, and that has not changed. So friends, you are invited to this Table. Each and every one of us—with our doubts, our fears, our scars, our joy, our dreams, our hopes, our questions—we are invited to God’s table.

C **And here we will be met. Here we will be fed. Here we are given a taste of an expansive life that is full to the brim with love, overflowing with joy.**

P So come. Not because you must, but because you can. Come. You are invited. This Table is for you.

C **God who knows us, we are amazed by you. Your love never runs out, your hope never runs dry, your joy never gives up. We wish that we could be more like you in that way.**

P In a world that loves scarcity, your abundance is shocking. In a world that knows fear, your joy is compelling. In a world that knows anxiety, your peace is captivating. We long for these things. And you gave that to us in this meal.

We celebrate that on the night that Jesus was handed over, he took bread, blessed it and broke it and gave it to his disciples saying: “This is my body, given for you; Do this in remembrance of me.”

And again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it for them 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 in remembrance of me.”

God, we are amazed by you. Your love never runs out, so bring that never-ending love here. Together we pray:

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

Holy Communion at St. Paul's: celebrated every time we gather, and is open to all.

Please approach by the center aisle, receive the bread and the wine, and return to your seat via the side aisle. Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available. Simply request it from the Assisting Minister holding the wine. Children are welcome! Those who receive elsewhere may receive here. Children who do not yet receive may come for a blessing. If you have difficulty walking, communion will be brought to you at your seat.

Communion Blessing

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

Prayer After Communion

P Loving Christ, thank you for the bread that nourishes our bodies. Thank you for the cup that quenches our thirst. Thank you for this community, which reminds us who we are. Thank you for this Table that brings us together. Thank you for the music that lifts our spirits. Thank you for the promise that at this Table, and every table, you will be there. May this holy meal nourish us to go out into the world speaking of your good, good news. With joy and hope we pray.

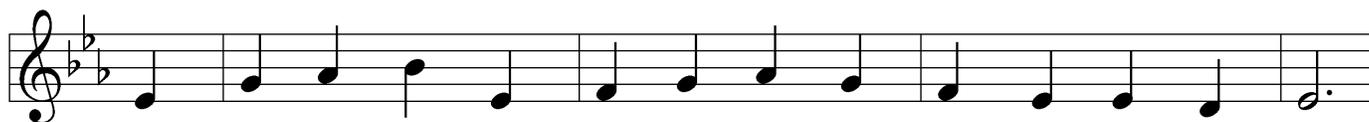
C Amen.

Benediction

P As you leave this place, when you meet anger, speak with love. When you meet fear, speak with hope. When you meet pain, speak with gentleness. But no matter what, speak this good news. For the good news of the gospel is love and justice for all. It is joy that surprises, and grace that transforms. The good news of the gospel is alive in the world, so go forth speaking. For if we won't, then who will? Thanks be to God for this good, good news. And all God's children' said:

C Amen.

You Are the Way



- 1 You are the way; through you a - lone can we the Fa - ther find;
- 2 You are the truth; your word a - lone true wis - dom can im - part;
- 3 You are the life; the rend - ing tomb pro - claims your con - qu'ring arm;
- 4 You are the way, the truth, the life; grant us that way to know,



in you, O Christ, has God re - vealed his heart, his will, his mind!
you on - ly can in - form the mind and pu - ri - fy the heart.
and those who put their trust in you not death nor hell shall harm.
that truth to keep, that life to win, whose joys e - ter - nal flow.

Text: George W. Doane, 1799–1859, alt.
Music: DUNDEE, *Psalter*, Edinburgh, 1615

Sharing the Peace and Sending

P Go in peace, serve the Lord!

C Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

What's Happening This Week at St. Paul's: March 22-29, 2026

Unless otherwise noted, all activities will take place at the Eggertsville Campus

Sunday: 9:00-9:45 am: Adult Forum
9:30 am-1:00 pm: Western New York Church at AC
10:00 am: Church Unleashed: YouTube, Facebook, and MeTV
10:00 am: Worship, Communion, and Sunday School
1:00 pm: Ray of Hope at AC

Monday: 4:15 pm: Daily Bread Food Truck Meal Share
5:30-9:00 pm: Straight Pepper Diet Meeting at AC
7:00-8:30 pm: Waiting in Hope

Tuesday: 10:00 am: Bible Study
5:00-6:30 pm: We Can No Longer Blame Others (NA)

Wednesday: 12:00 pm: Soup and Psalms
6:30-8:30 pm: Ray of Hope Prayer Group at AC
8:00 pm: AA Meeting

Thursday: No Events Planned

Friday: No Events Planned

Palm Weekend:

Saturday: 9:00 am-3:00 pm: Peniel Haitian Church at AC
9:00 am-12:30 pm: Tiger's Den Food Pantry Open
5:00 pm: Worship and Communion at AC

Sunday: 9:00-9:45 am: Adult Forum
9:30 am-1:00 pm: Western New York Church at AC
10:00 am: Church Unleashed: YouTube, Facebook, and MeTV
10:00 am: Worship, Communion, and Sunday School
1:00 pm: Ray of Hope at AC

Deacons: 3/22: Martin Troutman; 3/29: Nancy Bartels-Holiman

Ushers: 3/22: Mimi & Scott Fierle; 3/29: Todd Vahue, Vanessa Solomon, & Marissa Vahue

***Prayer List: In our congregational and extended family:** Martha Szczerbinski; Sondra Howe; Claudia Staines; Maurice Saxton; Norma Hornung; Christine Vranich; Barbara Fisher; Cheryl Shepker; Maria Neudecker; David Wiczorek; Lavon Amos; Cindy Milazzo Schwartz; Sylvia McLaughlin; Sue Epstein*

Prayer List: Shut-Ins (* indicates new names or changes added this week)

Joyce Chace: Brookdale, 6076 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221

Neal DeLeo: Greenfield Manor, #D127, 5958 Broadway, Lancaster, NY 14086

Jack Gallagher: Amberleigh, 2330 Maple Road, #183, Williamsville, NY 14221

John Hornung: Brothers of Mercy, 10570 Bergtold Road, Clarence, NY 14031

Jan Isaacs: 6 Bush Gardens, Three Rod Road, Alden, NY 14004

Joan Maefs: Solstice, 6363 Transit Road, #136, East Amherst, NY 14051

Elaine Masman: Heathwood Assisted Living, 815 Hopkins, Room 251, Williamsville, NY 14221

Sylvia McLaughlin: 44 Sherwin Drive, Tonawanda, NY 14150

Wilma Nantka: Fredonia Place, 201 Reist Street, #238, Williamsville, NY 14221

Charles Scofield: Fredonia Place, 201 Reist Street, #228, Williamsville, NY 14221

David Wolf: Solstice, 6363 Transit Road, #244, East Amherst, NY 14051

PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

In-Person Worship: St. Paul's has two in-person worship services: Saturday evening at 5:00 pm at the Amherst Campus, 5125 Main Street, Williamsville, 14221, and Sunday morning at 10:00 am at the Eggertsville Campus, 4007 Main Street, Eggertsville, 14226. The Sunday 10:00 am worship service is also livestreamed on St. Paul's YouTube page.

Church Unleashed: If you cannot join us for in-person worship, please continue to worship with us as Church Unleashed on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am on WBBZ, YouTube, or Facebook.

Prayer Team Ministry: Once a week you will receive an email with a list of people to pray for and specific requests for that person. We ask that you commit to praying for the names on the email. If you'd like to join us, please contact Cody at: Cody@stpaulseggertsville.com

Daily Bread Food Truck: The 2026 Monday Meal Share is underway each Monday from 4:15-5:15 pm. If you are interested in volunteering or donating, contact the office at 716-835-0407 or dailybread4007@gmail.com.

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tigers Den Food Pantry: The Food Pantry is open to anyone in need in zip code 14226, is associated with St. Paul's Amherst Campus, or by referral. The remaining pantry hours for March are: Saturday 3/28 from 9:00 am-12:30 pm. Donations for March: cereal, fruit juice, and diced tomatoes.

Soup and Psalms: Every Wednesday during Lent (ending 3/25/26) beginning at 12:00 pm, you are invited to participate in sharing soup and psalms with other St. Paul's missionaries.



Holy Week Services

Saturday, March 28: Palm Weekend Service at 5:00 pm at AC

Sunday, March 29: Palm Weekend Service at 10:00 am

Thursday, April 2: Maundy Thursday Service at 6:00 pm

Friday, April 3: Good Friday Services at 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm

Saturday, April 4: Easter Vigil Service at 5:00 pm at AC

Sunday, April 5: Easter Services at 8:00 am and 10:00 am

SUNDAY SCHOOL INVITES
CHILDREN
TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR ANNUAL

EASTER EGG HUNT

APRIL 5 2026

EGGERTSVILLE CAMPUS
FRONT LAWN (WEATHER PERMITTING)
FOLLOWING THE 10 AM SERVICE

NEW MISSIONARY *Orientation*

APRIL 12



Interested in becoming part of the family at St. Paul's Lutheran Church?

Join us for our New Missionary Orientation on April 12 immediately following worship.

This relaxed and welcoming gathering is a chance to learn more about the life and ministry of St. Paul's. We'll talk about our mission, and the many ways you can grow in faith, serve the community, and connect with others in the congregation.

Whether you are new to the church or have been attending for a while and are ready to take the next step, we would love to have you join us. Come discover what it means to be part of the St. Paul's community!

Please RSVP to Pastor Steve at steve@stpaulseggertsville.com by 4/6 if you are able to attend!



*+ St. Paul's Mission +
To empower others with the Good News of Jesus Christ.
We do that by: Seeking Connections, Enriching Faith, Nourishing Lives,
and Demonstrating Love in God's Name.*

St. Paul's Congregation Council

*President: Robert Simpson
Vice-President: Tim Johnson
Treasurer: William Niblock
Secretary: Janet Schmidt
Bob Brown David Dahlberg Susan Epstein
Sara Hannon Vanessa Solomon Scott Vahue Barbara Walter*

Pastoral Leaders

*Steve Biegner (716-868-1232 - cell); Email: steve@stpaulseggertsville.com
Kristen Arends: (716-481-8728 - cell); Email: kristen@stpaulseggertsville.com*

*Directors of Music: Paul H. Storfer (SPEC) and Adam Schmidt (AC)
Christian Education Coordinator: June Piette; Email: scs@stpaulseggertsville.com
Youth Ministry: Jordan Dywan; Email: youth@stpaulseggertsville.com
Digital Ministry: Andrew Gruszka
Facilities Manager: Jeff Stein*

Church Office Staff

*Cody Almeter and Adrienne Leary
E-mail: office@stpaulseggertsville.com
Telephone: (716) 835-0407
Website: www.stpaulseggertsville.com*

*St. Paul's Eggertsville Campus
4007 Main Street
Eggertsville, NY 14226*

Worship Service: Sundays at 10:00 am

*St. Paul's Amherst Campus
5125 Main Street
Williamsville, NY 14221*

Worship Service: Saturdays at 5:00 pm