

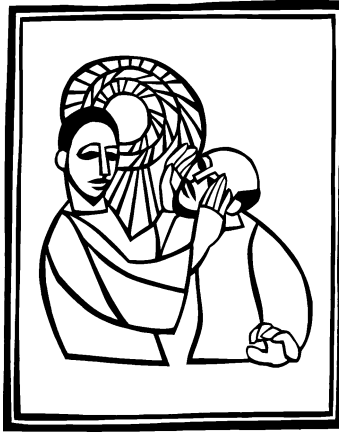
# St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church of New Pittsburg, Ohio

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**Sunday, March 19, 2023**

**Lent 4**

Service of Holy Communion

Hymns from ELW

10:00 A.M.

*This Lent, we're embracing questions. We're pondering what we do not know, opening ourselves to uncertainty, and holding space for discernment. This can feel challenging and uncomfortable. As we seek and search this Lent, may you always remember this unquestionable truth: God loves you. God embraces you. And God uses everything-even uncertainty-to create love and connection.*

# Order of Service

**PRELUDE**

*In the Garden*

Kay Ringley

*God of grace, you have given us minds to know you, hearts to love you, and voices to sing your praise. Fill us with your Spirit, that we may celebrate your glory and worship you in spirit and truth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

**\*GATHERING SONG**

*Amazing Grace*

ELW 779

Greetings to you  
in the name of Jesus,  
our conversation partner;  
the Holy Spirit,  
our great unknowable mystery;  
and the Creator God,  
the one who answers shame with love.

**Amen.**

When God made us, God knew what we needed to thrive. God made the earth creative and abundant. And God gave us partners for the planting, for the harvest, for the meal. But when God gives us an orchard, we hunger for more.

Please join me as we confess our sins together. Consider: Where have you gone wrong this week? How have you harmed your relationship with God, with your neighbor, and with yourself?

*[Silence for reflection.]*

Now we confess our sins together.  
**We know we have harmed each other  
and damaged our relationship with you.  
But we fear that admitting our sin  
will only drive us deeper into isolation.**

**So we sneak a bite from the fruit  
that is not ours to take.  
Then we throw away the evidence  
of our disloyal decisions.  
We create distractions  
to hide what we have done.  
We point our fingers at  
the faults of others.  
We interrogate those  
who have no reason to lie.**

**And we avoid you.**

**God, you are perfect and holy.  
But we are imperfect and lonely.  
And you know we have broken trust,  
abandoned faith, invested in lies.  
You always discover the wreckage  
that bears our fingerprints.  
And our shame feels more intimate  
than your love.**

**What have we done?**

**Is it too late  
to receive your forgiveness?**

Friends, even when we sin,  
God does not accuse.  
God only asks what we have done  
so we can set down our guilt.

And God only asks where we have gone  
because God wants to bring us back.

Jesus died to reveal the limitless depth  
of God's love.

You can doubt this love.  
But you can never change the truth of it.

God knows all and forgives all.

The only question that remains  
is whether we can accept  
love so freely given.

**We do.**  
**We embrace your mercy,**  
**and we thank you, God.**

**\*CANTICLE OF PRAISE – *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil***

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

The musical score is written on five staves in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The lyrics are placed below the notes on each staff. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray,

**Healing God, who gives sight to the blind. Open the eyes of our hearts to see your truth. Where we lack vision, give us your insight, so that we might see ourselves and others as you see us. Amen.**

*Assembly is seated.*

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

*Pastor Stephanie*

**FIRST READING:** 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Now the boy Samuel was serving the LORD under Eli. The LORD's word was rare at that time, and visions weren't widely known. <sup>2</sup>One day Eli, whose eyes had grown so weak he was unable to see, was lying down in his room. <sup>3</sup>God's lamp hadn't gone out yet, and Samuel was lying down in the LORD's temple, where God's chest was.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD called to Samuel. "I'm here," he said.

<sup>5</sup>Samuel hurried to Eli and said, "I'm here. You called me?"

"I didn't call you," Eli replied. "Go lie down." So he did.

<sup>6</sup>Again the LORD called Samuel, so Samuel got up, went to Eli, and said, "I'm here. You called me?"

"I didn't call, my son," Eli replied. "Go and lie down."

(<sup>7</sup>Now Samuel didn't yet know the LORD, and the LORD's word hadn't yet been revealed to him.)

<sup>8</sup>A third time the LORD called Samuel. He got up, went to Eli, and said, "I'm here. You called me?"

Then Eli realized that it was the LORD who was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>So Eli said to Samuel, "Go and lie down. If he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD. Your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down where he'd been.

<sup>10</sup>Then the LORD came and stood there, calling just as before, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel said, "Speak. Your servant is listening."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 23

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd.

I lack nothing.

<sup>2</sup>**He lets me rest in grassy meadows;  
he leads me to restful waters;**

<sup>3</sup>**he keeps me alive.**

He guides me in proper paths  
for the sake of his good name.

<sup>4</sup>**Even when I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no danger because you are with me.**

Your rod and your staff—  
they protect me.

<sup>5</sup>**You set a table for me  
right in front of my enemies.**

You bathe my head in oil;  
my cup is so full it spills over!

<sup>6</sup>**Yes, goodness and faithful love  
will pursue me all the days of my life,  
and I will live in the LORD's house  
as long as I live.**

## SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-15

<sup>8</sup>At one time you were in the dark. But now you are in the light because of what the Lord has done. Live like children of the light. <sup>9</sup>The light produces what is completely good, right and true. <sup>10</sup>Find out what pleases the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Have nothing to do with the acts of darkness. They don't produce anything good. Show what they are really like. <sup>12</sup>It is shameful even to talk about what people who don't obey do in secret. <sup>13</sup>But everything the light shines on can be seen. And everything that the light shines on becomes a light. <sup>14</sup>That is why it is said, "Wake up, sleeper.

Rise from the dead.

Then Christ will shine on you."

<sup>15</sup>So be very careful how you live. Do not live like people who aren't wise. Live like people who are wise.

The Word of the Lord.  
**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.

**\*GOSPEL:** John 9:1-41

See Insert

**SERMON**

*Who are we?*

Pastor Stephanie

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Be Thou My Vision*

ELW 793

**\*APOSTLES' CREED**

Do you believe there is a God who made us?

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

Do you believe this God sent a child named Jesus to save this world?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe the Holy Spirit animates our faith and empowers the church today?

**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.**

**\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God, we ask this of you,  
**Hear our prayer.**

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting that you hear our requests and answer them in great love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Assembly is seated.*

Before we collect  
our offering today,  
we prepare ourselves  
with a moment of prayer.

**God, prepare us to give today, to each other and to you.**

**Give us boldness so we might ask our neighbors what they truly need.**

**Give us humility so we might listen to their answers.**

**Give us patience to tolerate disappointment as we wait for goodness to grow.**

**Give us generosity so others can benefit from the money and food and other things the world tells us to keep to ourselves.**

**Give us abundance so no one ever leaves here hungry.**

**Amen.**



**OFFERING**

*Were you There?*

Kay Ringley

*The assembly stands*

**\*OFFERTORY HYMN** *Create in Me a Clean Heart (WOV 732)*

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of  
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

**\*OFFERING PRAYER**

God, only you truly know the good that will come from these gifts. Use the gifts we give today to grow tomorrow's mercy.  
**Amen.**

**COMMUNION**

*from Barn Geese Worship*

Where is our God?

**God is here in this place.**

Where are your hearts?

**We have given them to God.**

What shall we do in the presence of our God?

**We shall give our thanks and praise.**

Praise and thanks go to you, Great God,  
for at the beginning of time

...

Now, humble people,  
we respond with our own affirmation.

Is our God loving?

Does our God work for the good of those who wait for justice?

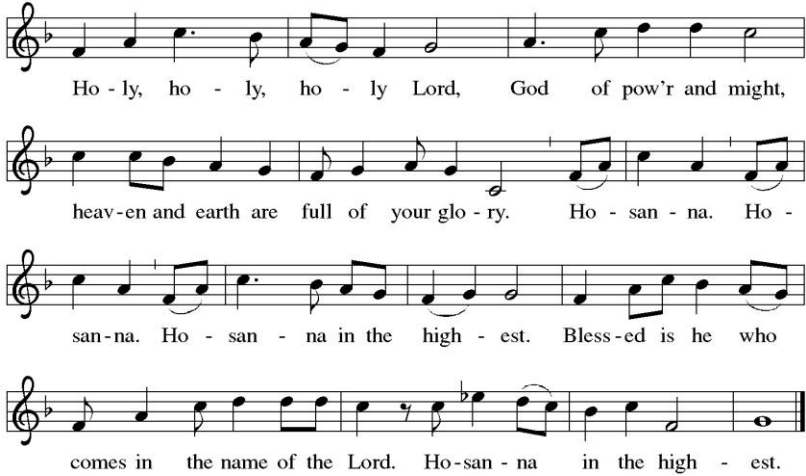
Does our God bring new life to those who have died?

**Yes,**

**yes,**

**yes.**

**\*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW Setting 3)**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*from Barn Geese Worship*

**\*LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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 THE TABLE** *from Barn Geese Worship*

If you wonder whether God really wants you at this table, Jesus answers *yes*.

Bring your unanswered questions with you, because the Spirit unquestionably beckons you to taste the truth of God's love.

**MUSIC DURING COMMUNION**

*Kay Ringley*

**\*BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

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

**Amen.**

**\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Embodied God,  
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.  
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,  
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors  
and touch the world with your love.

**Amen.**

**\*SUNG BLESSING** to the tune of “*Edelweiss*”

**May the Lord, mighty God, bless and keep you forever.  
Grant you peace, perfect peace, courage in every endeavor.  
Lift up your eyes and see His face, and His grace forever.  
May the Lord, mighty God, bless and keep you forever.**

**\*BLESSING**

May God the Creator inspire you;  
May Christ the Redeemer preserve you;  
May the Spirit the Sustainer strengthen you,  
today and every day.

**Amen.**

**\*SENDING HYMN**      *O Master, Let Me Walk with You*      ELW 818

**\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Asking good questions.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**\*POSTLUDE**

Kay Ringley