

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026

10:30 A.M. in the Church

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker
Rector

Welcome to our Church

WELCOME to St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We are delighted you are seeking God in this special place. We want you to know that wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome to ask your questions here.

Services are available: Recent services are available on our website: <https://stpaulwilkesboro.org>

Newsletters: Sign-up today to receive our weekly electronic newsletter! Email the church office at office@stpaulwilkesboro.org to have your name added. If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter mailed, please call the office.

We extend a special thanks today to all that have been so generous with their time and talents in making this service possible.

200 W. Cowles St., P. O. Box 95, Wilkesboro, NC 28697
336-667-4231
www.stpaulwilkesboro.org
E-mail: office@stpaulwilkesboro.org
Pastoral Emergency Line: 336-482-6800

ONLINE GIVING QR CODE:



The Gathering

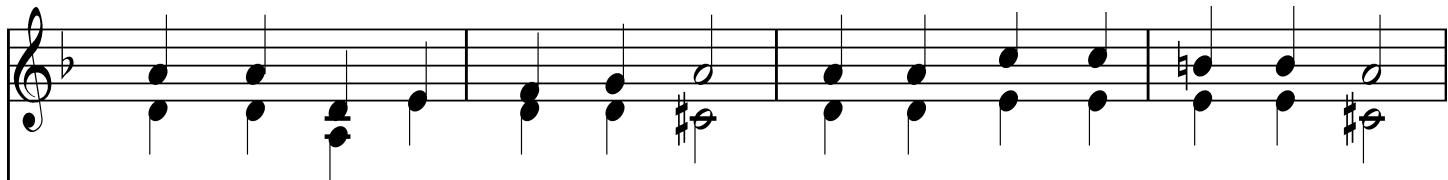
Prelude

Behold The Lamb of God (from *Messiah*)

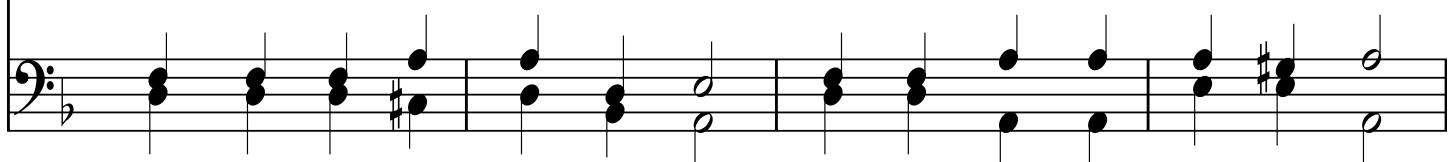
G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Welcome and Announcements

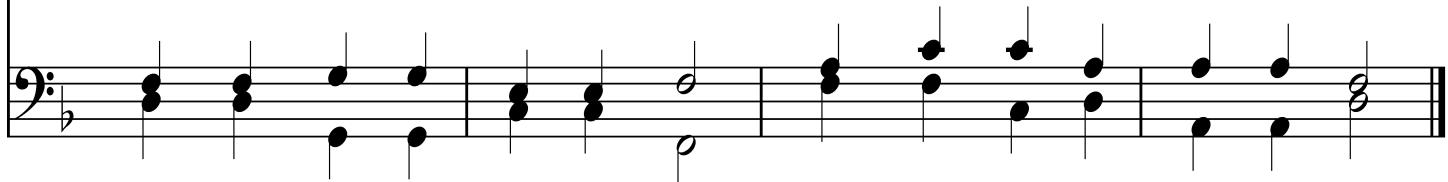
Processional Hymn #150 Forty Days and Forty Nights



1 For - ty days and for - ty nights thou wast fast - ing in the wild;
2 Should not we thy sor - row share and from world - ly joys ab - stain,
3 Then if Sa - tan on us press, Je - sus, Sa - vior, hear our call!
4 So shall we have peace di - vine: ho - lier glad - ness ours shall be;
5 Keep, O keep us, Sa - vior dear, ev - er con - stant by thy side;



1 for - ty days and for - ty nights tempt - ed, and yet un - de - filed.
2 fast - ing with un - ceas-ing prayer, strong with thee to suf - fer pain?
3 Vic - tor in the wil - der - ness, grant we may not faint nor fall!
4 round us, too, shall an - gels shine, such as min - is - tered to thee.
5 that with thee we may ap - pear at the e - ter - nal Eas - ter - tide.



Words: George Hunt Smyttan (1822-1870), alt. Music: *Aus der Tiefe rufe ich*, melody att. Martin Herbst (1654-1681), alt.; harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889).

Please remain standing as you are most comfortable.

Opening Acclamation

Presider: Blessed be the God of our salvation:

People: Who bears our burdens and forgives our sins.

Presider: Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:29-31

Confession of Sin

Please stand or kneel as you are most comfortable.

The New Zealand Prayer Book, page 479

Presider: In God there is always forgiveness.

**Loving and all-seeing God,
forgive us where we have failed to support one another
and to be what we claim to be.
Forgive us where we have failed to serve you;
and where our thoughts and actions have been
contrary to yours we ask pardon.**

Presider: God forgives us; be at peace.

Moment of silence observed.

Presider: Rejoice and be glad, for Christ is forgiveness and reconciliation for all the human race.

**We shall all be one in Christ,
one in our life together.
Praise God who has created us,
praise to God who has accepted us,
praise to God who sends us into the world. Amen.**

Remain standing or kneeling.

Bless The Lord, My Soul

(sing twice)

Bless the Lord, my soul
And bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul
Who leads me into life

Please stand as you are most comfortable.

The Collect

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan: Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

Please be seated.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s People.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Response

Psalm 32

Beati quorum

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, *
and whose sin is put away!

Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, *
and in whose spirit there is no guile!

While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, *
because of my groaning all day long.

For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; *
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, *
and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." *
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; *
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

You are my hiding-place;
you preserve me from trouble; *
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; *
I will guide you with my eye.

Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; *
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
or else they will not stay near you."

Great are the tribulations of the wicked; *
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.

Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; *
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

The Second Reading

Romans 5:12-19

As sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned-- sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn #529 In Christ There is No East or West

Unison or harmony

1 In Christ there is no East or West, in
2 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what-
3 In Christ now meet both East and West, in

him no South or North, but one great fel - low -
e'er your race may be! Who serves my Fa - ther
him meet South and North, all Christ - ly souls are

ship of love through - out the whole wide earth.
as his child is sure - ly kin to me.
one in him, through - out the whole wide earth.

Please stand as you are most comfortable.

The Gospel

Matthew 4:1-11

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written,

‘One does not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’

and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Jesus said to him,

“Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,

and serve only him.’”

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

Please be seated.

The Sermon

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker

A time of silence following the sermon.

Please stand as you are most comfortable.

The Affirmation of Faith

The New Zealand Prayer Book, page 481

You, O God, are supreme and holy.

You create our world and give us life.

Your purpose overarches everything we do.

You have always been with us.

You are God.

You, O God, are infinitely generous,

good beyond all measure.

You came to us before we came to you.

You have revealed and proved

your love for us in Jesus Christ,

who lived and died and rose again.

You are with us now.

You are God.

You, O God, are Holy Spirit.

You empower us to be your gospel in the world.

You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.

You are our God. We worship you. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Leader In peace, we pray to God.

Silence

Leader Deepen our gratitude for all you have given us:
the beauty of creation, love given and received,
and the sacred calling to share your grace with
a hurting world

Silence

Leader Grant us a lively hope in your mercy and deliver
us from weariness in our struggles, from
despondency in failure, and from an
overburdened sense of unworthiness.

Silence

Leader Save us from all unwise haste, from the impatient or arrogant
retort of irritation, the taunt of sarcasm, and
from all the idle words that wound.

Silence

Leader Lead us away from strife, partisanship, and division, from
magnifying our certainties, condemning all differences,
and from building systems that unduly punish the vulnerable.

Silence

Leader Inspire those who hold authority and influence in the nations with your vision for a compassionate world and give them the wisdom and humility to work for the common good and dignity of all people.

Silence

Leader Give to the leaders of the Church, the faithfulness of learners and the courage of believers and rescue us all from the easy arrogance that seeks wisdom in our own opinions and salvation through our own efforts

Silence

Leader Comfort with your healing grace all those who suffer in body and spirit; both those whose suffering is clear to us and all those whose suffering is hidden; especially those suffering from cognitive decline, and loneliness. I invite your additional prayers at this time either silently or aloud.

Silence

Leader We pray for all who have died.
Let Light perpetual shine upon them.

Silence

Presider O Lord our God, we know that you accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, you look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Peace

◊ “***The Peace***” is a Christian tradition deriving its roots from Jesus himself who greeted people saying, “Peace be with you.” “***The Peace***” may feel awkward if you are new or an introvert or trying not to be noticed. We take this portion of our worship seriously as we live in a deeply divided world full of violence. These actions in God’s house model what we are called to do in the world.



Presider: The Peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Offertory

Offertory Anthem

Surely He Hath Borne Our Griefs (from *Messiah*)

G.F. Handel

Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him.

(Isaiah 53:4-5)

The Great Thanksgiving

Please stand as you are able

EOW, Eucharistic Prayer 1, pgs. 57-59

Presider All things come of thee, O Lord
People **And of thine own have we given thee**

Presider: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Presider: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider: It is truly right, and good and joyful,
to give you thanks, all-holy God,
source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:

Sanctus—S124

Holy, holy, holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might, hea-ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. 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.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

Now is the time to stand or kneel as you prefer.

Presider *continues*

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died, Our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

ALL: Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Remembering his life, death , and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of all of your children that with our Patron, Paul, and all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our father in heaven

hallowed be your Name,

Your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in Heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil,

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and for ever. AMEN.

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem

Taste and See

Musical score for the first system of "Taste and See". The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by a 'C'). The lyrics are: "Taste and see. Taste and see the good - ness". The treble staff has a single note on the first beat, followed by a quarter note on the second beat. The bass staff has a single note on the first beat, followed by a quarter note on the second beat.

Musical score for the second system of "Taste and See". The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by a 'C'). The lyrics are: "of the Lord. O Taste and see. Taste and". The treble staff has a single note on the first beat, followed by a quarter note on the second beat. The bass staff has a single note on the first beat, followed by a quarter note on the second beat.

Musical score for the third system of "Taste and See". The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by a 'C'). The lyrics are: "sec the good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord. Fine". The treble staff has a single note on the first beat, followed by a quarter note on the second beat. The bass staff has a single note on the first beat, followed by a quarter note on the second beat.

The Invitation to Communion

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God...

People: God's holy food for God's holy people.

This is the table of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you have little, you who have been here often and you have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, for it is the Lord who invites you.

You will now have three ways to receive communion:

In one kind--this means you receive only the bread or only the wine. Receive the bread by extending your hands, palm upward, when the presider comes to you and then leaving the rail or crossing your hands over your chest when the chalice comes to you.

To receive the wine only, cross your hands when the bread is presented and then drink from the chalice by gently assisting the chalice bearer by grasping the base of the chalice lightly to help guide it to your lips.

Intinction (having the bread dipped in the wine and placed in your hand) is only done by the presider from the intinction tray. To receive communion by intinction simply keep your hands down by your sides as we have been doing. Then raise them to take intincted bread between thumb and forefinger.

In two kinds--this is where you consume both the bread and the wine either by receiving the bread and then drinking from the chalice or by Intinction.

There is no intinction by multiple individuals from the chalice.

Gluten free wafers available upon request.

COMMUNION MUSIC

May It Be (Irish Blessing)

Enya (b.1961)

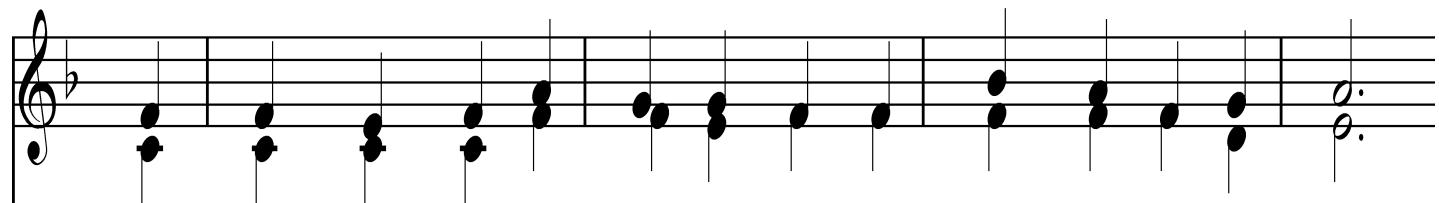
Please stand or kneel as you are able.

Post Communion Prayer

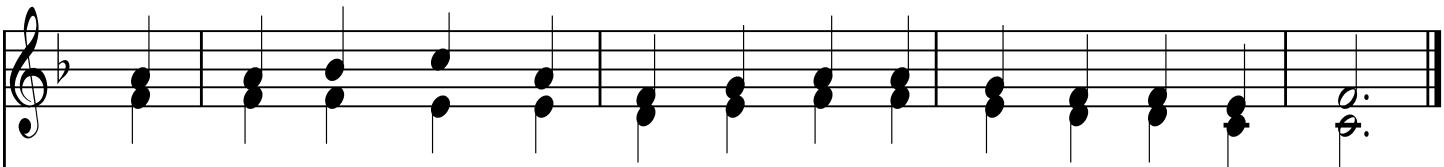
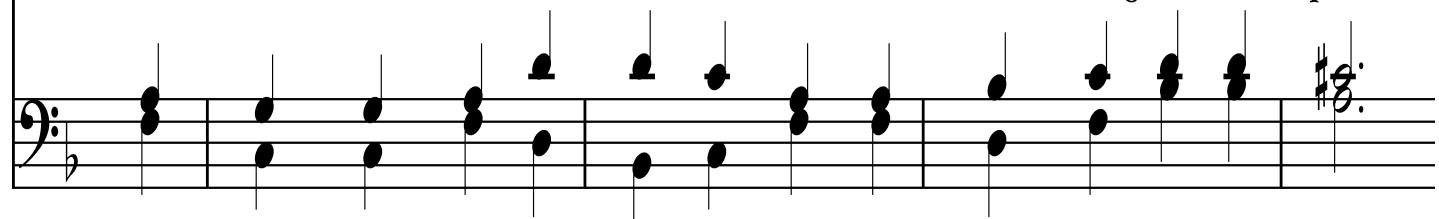
Presider: Let us pray.

People: Loving God,
we give you thanks
for restoring us in your image
and nourishing us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.
Now send us forth
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

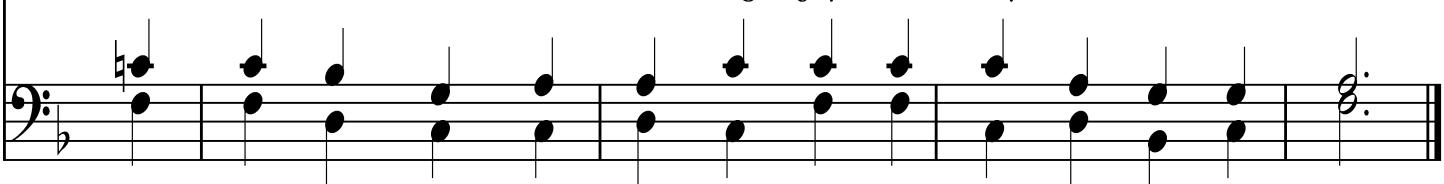
Recessional Hymn #142 Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days



1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us didst fast and pray,
 2 As thou with Sa - tan didst con-tend, and didst the vic-tory win,
 3 As thou didst hun-ger bear and thirst, so teach us, gra-cious Lord,
 4 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through thy Pas-sion - tide,
 5 A - bide with us, that so, this life of suf - fering o - ver - past,



1 teach us with thee to mourn our sins, and close by thee to stay.
 2 O give us strength in thee to fight, in thee to con-quer sin.
 3 to die to self, and chief - ly live by thy most ho - ly word.
 4 yea, ev - er - more, in life and death, Je - sus! with us a - bide.
 5 an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last!



Words: Claudia Frances Hernaman (1838-1898). Music: *St. Flavian*, melody from *Day's Psalter*, 1562; adapt, and harm. Richard Redhead (1820-1901).

The Blessing

Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you with an everlasting love. Go in peace to follow the good road and may God's blessing be with you always. **Amen.**

~Saint Clare

Dismissal

Presider: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

If Thou But Trust in God to Guide Thee

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

PRAYER LIST

Please remember in your prayers: All who are ill or unemployed and those who are on our prayer list.

Short-term

Kaye Hall, Ray Jameson, Rick Moretz, Kim Tetzlaff, Doug Merritt, Shannon Ryan, The Al-banil Family, Jamie Tate

Long-term

Michael Morrison, Cade Gibbs, Ray Call, Steve Jackson, Ken Asel, Shane Jenkins, Kaye Hall, Dot Beamon, Da'Shon Horton, Rose Andrews

Armed Forces

Let us pray for the safety of **all our troops**, especially John Craine, Micha Duerk, Faith Lankford, Cole Griffith, Zach Necessary, Jason Westmeyer, and all others who serve throughout the world.

Prayer requests can be submitted through the prayer request form by scanning the QR code below, or by contacting the office.





February 27th—Rebecca Hartzog

February 22nd—Dayton &
Mary Sue Pruitt



Serving Today

Altar Guild: Sharon Greene, Bonnie Merritt

Reader: Maggie McCann

Acolytes: Robin Shumate, Matthew Minick

Usher: David McNeill

Bread Bakers: Mark Williams & Ben Staley

Vestry Lock-Up for February: Diane Peabody



The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin
Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina

St. Paul's Vestry 2026

Jeff Beard

Jim Burch, Jr. Warden

Chuck Forester

Scott Jessee, Sr. Warden

Tana Myers

Diane Peabody

Bill Harris, Secretary

Linda Schneider, Treasurer

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker, Rector
rector@stpaulwilkesboro.org

Russell Stinson, Director of Music

Penny Farmer, Finance Administrator

Robyn Setzer, Parish Administrator

Dean Carlton, Sexton