

Service of Ashes  
March 5, 2025

No matter who you are,  
No matter where you are  
On life's journey,  
You are welcome here.

***Please silence cell phones.***

*Bibles for use during worship are available at each entrance to the Sanctuary.  
Assisted listening devices and Bluetooth hearing aid guides are in the Narthex.*

THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

"The hour which gives us life begins to take it away." Seneca

PRELUDE *Komm, süßer Tod* BWV 478 J. S. Bach  
(*Come, Sweet Death*)  
Kurt R. Hansen, tenor  
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

Come, sweet death, come, blessed rest!  
Come lead me to peace for I am weary of the world,  
O come! I wait for you, come soon and lead me,  
close my eyes. Come, blessed rest!

CHORAL INTROIT *Just as I Am*  
Chancel Choir

WELCOME Matt Fitzgerald

\* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Blessed are those whose transgression is forgiven.

**All: Blessed are those in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

One: While I kept silent, my body wasted away.

**All: Then I acknowledged my sin and said:**

**"I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."**

One: And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

**All: You surround me with glad cries of deliverance.**

\* *Please stand if you are able to do so.*

\* HYMN

*Be Still My Soul*



1. Be still, my soul: for God is on your side; \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Be still, my soul: for God will un - der - take \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Be still, my soul: the hour will soon be here \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ bear pa - tient - ly the cross of grief or pain; \_\_\_\_\_ Leave to your  
\_\_\_\_\_ to guide in fu - ture days as in the past. \_\_\_\_\_ Your hope, your  
\_\_\_\_\_ when we shall be with God whom we a - dore, \_\_\_\_\_ with dis - ap -



God to or - der and pro - vide; \_\_\_\_\_ in ev - ery change God  
con - fi - dence let noth - ing shake; \_\_\_\_\_ all now mys - te - rious  
- point - ment gone, no grief nor fear, \_\_\_\_\_ sor - row re - placed with



faith - ful will re - main. \_\_\_\_\_ Be still, my soul: your best e - ter - nal  
shall be clear at last. \_\_\_\_\_ Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still  
joy for - ev - er - more. \_\_\_\_\_ Be still, my soul: when change and tears are



friend \_\_\_\_\_ through thorn - y ways leads to a joy - ful end.  
know \_\_\_\_\_ how Je - sus' pow - er ruled them long a - go.  
past, \_\_\_\_\_ all safe and bless - ed we shall meet at last.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

Liz Nickerson

One: O God, you are unflinchingly faithful. We are repeatedly unfaithful.

**All: You are merciful. We are defiant.**

One: You come to us. We withdraw.

**All: You are wholly concerned with us. We are otherwise occupied.**

One: Christ makes himself known. We make our own gods.

**All: God, You are utterly self-giving. We are turned in upon ourselves.**

One: You are always ready to give. We are never ready to receive.

**All: Your Word is a radiant message of joy. We turn it into a gloomy rule.**

One: All of this is no less against ourselves than it is against you, O Lord.

**All: And yet, You still forgive. Amen.**

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

THE 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.**

**Amen.**

1. What won - drous love is this, O my soul! O my soul! What  
 2. To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to  
 3. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and

won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won - drous love is  
 God and to the Lamb, I will sing; To God and to the  
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing on! And when from death I'm

this! that Christ should come in bliss to bear the heav - y cross for my  
 Lamb who is the great I Am, while mil - lions join the theme, I will  
 free, I'll sing and joy - ful be, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing

soul, for my soul, to bear the heav - y cross for my soul!  
 sing, I will sing; while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.  
 on, I'll sing on, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on!

## SCRIPTURE

*2 Corinthians 5:15-6:4*

All of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and take what is coming to us. *That* keeps us vigilant, you can be sure. It is no light thing to know that we'll all one day stand in that place of Judgement. That is why we work urgently with everyone we meet. If I acted crazy, I did it for God; if I acted in my right mind, I did it for you. Christ's love has moved me to such extremes. His love has the first and last word in everything we do.

The love of Christ urges us on: One man died for everyone, therefore all have died. We are all in the same boat. He included everyone in his death so that everyone could also be included in his life, a resurrection life, a far better life than people ever lived on their own. Because of this, we don't judge people by what they have or how they look. Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

You ask, "How?" In Christ! God put our sin on him who never did anything wrong so we could be put right with God.

As we are in this work with you, we beg you, please don't squander one bit of this marvelous life God has given us. Listen, God reminds us,

"I heard your call in the nick of time,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the right time to listen; today is the day of salvation! I speak to you as to children: open your hearts.

\* A STATEMENT OF FAITH

**We believe in God who has created and is creating,  
who has come to us in Jesus Christ to reconcile and make us new,  
who works in us and others by the Holy Spirit.**

**We trust God. God calls us to be the Church,  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to love and serve others,  
to care for creation,  
to seek justice and to resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

**In life and death, in life beyond death, God is with us.**

**We are not alone. Thanks be to God!** *(adapted from the United Church of  
Canada)*

* RESPONSE	<i>What Wondrous Love Is This</i> See previous hymn	v. 2
SERMON	“Raised with a shock from the slumber of monotony”	Matt Fitzgerald
* RESPONSE	<i>What Wondrous Love Is This</i> See previous hymn	v. 3

OFFERTORY

*Abide With Me*  
Chancel Choir

William H. Monk  
arr. Moses Hogan

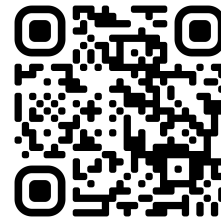
Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,  
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.  
I need Thy presence every passing hour.  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me. Amen.

*You can give to St. Pauls electronically by:*

*Scanning this code with your cell phone camera,*

*At [spucc.churchcenter.com/giving](http://spucc.churchcenter.com/giving),*

*Or through Zelle or PayPal to [giving@spucc.org](mailto:giving@spucc.org).*





PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jeff Carlson

**All: Most holy and merciful God: We confess to you and to one another, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

One: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

**All: Have mercy on us, Lord.**

One: We have not listened to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

**All: Have mercy on us, Lord.**

One: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives;

**All: Have mercy on us, Lord.**

One: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

**All: We confess to you, Lord.**

One: Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

**All: We confess to you, Lord.**

One: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to tend the faith that is in us,

**All: We confess to you, Lord.**

One: Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

**All: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

One: For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

**All: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

One: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

KYRIE

Richard Webster

SILENT REFLECTION AND PERSONAL CONFESSION

*Use the blank piece of paper in your bulletin for personal confession.  
Bring it forward to the basket on the table when instructed.*

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*If you wish to receive ashes, remain at the front after  
placing your confession in the container.  
If you do not wish to receive ashes, return to your seat.  
If you do not wish to come forward at all, please remain seated.*

MEDITATION

*Komm, süßer Tod*  
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

J. S. Bach  
arr. Virgil Fox

ANTHEM

*There Is a Balm in Gilead*  
Chancel Choir  
Breanna and Todd Coe, soloists

African American Spiritual  
arr. William L. Dawson

*Refrain: There is a Balm in Gilead,  
To make the wounded whole,  
There is a Balm in Gilead,  
To heal the sin-sick soul.*

Sometimes I feel discouraged,  
And think my work's in vain,  
But then the Holy Spirit,  
revives my soul again. *Refrain*

If you cannot sing like angels,  
If you cannot preach like Paul,  
You can tell the love of Jesus,  
And say he died for all. *Refrain*  
*based on Jeremiah 8:22*

\* LITANY OF ASSURANCE

One: There is therefore now no condemnation  
for those who are in Christ Jesus.

**All: If God is for us, who is against us?**

One: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus  
has set us free from the law of sin and death.

**All: The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing  
with the glory to be revealed to us.**

One: We know that all things work together for good  
for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose.

**All: If God is for us, who is against us?**

**It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?**

\* HYMN

*In the Cross of Christ I Glory*

1. In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tower - ing  
2. When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -  
3. When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and  
4. Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the  
5. In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tower - ing

o'er the wrecks of time; All the light of sa - cred  
- ceive, and fears an - noy, Nev - er shall the cross for -  
love up - on my way, From the cross the ra - diance  
cross are sanc - ti - fied; Peace is there that knows no  
o'er the wrecks of time; All the light of sa - cred

sto - ry gath - ers 'round its head sub - lime.  
- sake me: Lo! it glows with peace and joy.  
stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.  
mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.  
sto - ry gath - ers 'round its head sub - lime.

\* BENEDICTION

*After the benediction, the congregation will follow the pastors to the courtyard for the burning of the confessions.*

POSTLUDE

*Toccatà in e minor*  
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

Johann Pachelbel

## **PERSONAL CONFESSION**

Included in this evening's bulletin is a blank piece of paper upon which you may write a personal confession or some other burden that you wish to give to God: a grudge you no longer want to carry, a secret you no longer need to keep to yourself, a resentment you no longer wish to nurture, a grief you no longer care to bear alone. Please come forward during the imposition of ashes to place your personal confession in the offering plate in the front of the church. Following the service, the confessions will be burned as our offering to God. If you do not wish to receive ashes, you may bring your confession forward and simply return to your seat. If you do not wish to come forward at all, you may remain seated.

## **ASH WEDNESDAY**

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent for the Christian Church. Lent is a 40-day period before Easter patterned after the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert in fasting and prayer. The 40 days do not include Sundays, which are considered "days of resurrection" in the midst of a time of confession and prayer.

Ash Wednesday, which was first observed in the fourth century, has been linked most often to the Roman Catholic Church, but it actually predates Roman Catholicism and comes from our common early church heritage. Ash Wednesday, along with several other "acts" of worship, was lost during the Protestant Reformation as a result of that period's heavy emphasis on preaching the Word. The imposition of ashes upon the foreheads of believers was, and is, a sign of human mortality. The ancient Biblical reference is from *Genesis 3*, when God speaks these words to Adam and Eve: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return."

In a day when the grand promise of human progress and potential has come to some not-so-grand ends, it is necessary for all Christians to bear public witness to the fact that we human beings do not have the final word in life. We are not all good, all powerful, all loving; only God is, and we must recognize it.

During the service, we will make a statement of confession and recognize our human limitation through the ashes. We appreciate your presence at the Ash Wednesday Service whether you come forward to participate in the imposition of ashes or choose to remain seated during this part of the service.

## TONIGHT'S MUSIC

***Komm, süßer Tod*** (*Come, Sweet Death*) BWV 478 is from a short collection of solo songs, *Geistliches Lieder*, by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). It expresses one of the deeply held tenets of the Lutheran faith of Bach's time: the view that death was both a "sweet" release from the pains of life, and the promise of eternal life with Jesus.

***Just as I Am*** is set to the tune WOODWORTH, which was composed in 1849 by American William B. Bradbury (1816–1868). He also composed the children's hymn *Jesus Loves Me, This I Know*. The text is by Charlotte Elliot (1789–1871), who was British. Sadly, she was frail and sickly most of her life, which makes her text especially poignant and personal. It is a hymn that many of us associate with the crusades of the Rev. Billy Graham (1918–2018).

***Be Still My Soul*** uses a tune called FINLANDIA because the melody was composed by Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) as part of his famous tone poem of the same name that honored his homeland. The original German text is by Kathrina von Schlegel (1697–17??) and was translated into English by Scottish Jane Borthwick (1813–1897), who translated and composed many hymn texts.

***What Wondrous Love Is This*** is another truly great and uniquely American hymn. Neither the author nor composer of the tune, WONDROUS LOVE or CHRISTOPHER, is known, but it was first published in *Southern Harmony* in the same early 19th century era as the Sacred Harp. Musically, it has both a spiritual slow swing and an open harmony with very few major chords.

***Abide With Me*** - After preaching the last sermon of his career in 1847, Rev. Henry F. Lyte (1793-1847) gave a copy of this hymn text to a relative. Lyte died two months later. The hymn tune, one of the most popular since its composition, was composed near the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 by William H. Monk (1823-1889). Moses Hogan continued and amplified the great tradition of spiritual arrangement that includes William L. Dawson. He recorded a number of compact disks and created solo arrangements for singers like Kathleen Battle. He was commissioned by St. Pauls to write a piece, *I Got a Home in-a That Rock*, in honor of Ron McCowan's 25 years of service to this congregation.

***There Is a Balm in Gilead*** was arranged for choir by William L. Dawson (1898-1990). He was choral director for many years at the Tuskegee Institute of Alabama. He was responsible, along with others of his generation like Hall Johnson, for making beautiful arrangements of spirituals that spread the performance and popularity of that music within and beyond the African American community. The Tuskegee Choir gained international stature under Dr. Dawson's leadership.

***In the Cross of Christ I Glory*** is a text written in 1825 by John Bowring (1792-1872). He was an English Unitarian and became a member of Parliament. His text is decidedly Christian. RATHBURN was composed in 1851 by Ithamar Conkley (1815-1867). Conkley was an American of Scottish descent. He became a professional bass and also organist in New York City.

The ***Toccata in E Minor*** was composed by Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706). Pachelbel is not well known outside music circles, but his compositions, especially for organ and choir, provided a deep foundation for German composers of the following generation, such as Bach and his contemporaries. His best known work is his *Canon in D Major*, which achieved popularity in the last several decades.

# Special Music Theme for 2024-2025

## HEAR Ye! + Bach

Enjoy another year of special music during worship services.

**H**- Hebrew

**E** - English

**A** - Austrian

**R** - Russian

**November 3, 2024 - Reformation Sunday - *Lobet den Herrn* - Bach**

**December 8, 2024 - Christmas Cantata (Hebrew & English)**

*Nachamu, nachamu ami* - Max Janowski (*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*)

*Fantasia on Christmas Carols* - Ralph Vaughan Williams

with guest artist William Buchman, from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

**February 16, 2025 - Northwestern University Chapel Choir – Guest choir in worship**

**March 9, 2025 - *Komm, Jesu, komm* - Bach**

**April 6, 2025 - (Austria) - *Requiem* - Mozart**

**May 18, 2025 - (Russian) - *Symphony of Psalms* - Stravinsky/Shostakovich**

Mark these dates in your calendar!



## **TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS**

**Clergy:** Matt Fitzgerald, Liz Nickerson, Jeff Carlson

**Music Director:** Kurt R. Hansen

**Organist:** Kevin Dzierzawski

**Lay Liturgical Administrator:** Kevin O'Brien

**Head Usher:** Beatrice Jaji

**Ushers:** David Baker, David Faulkner

**Gatekeeper:** Dodd Brown

**Camera Operators:** Jim Alrutz, Marie Ankenman, Bob Ball, Jose Cruz, Brian Hafner

**Custodian:** Ramiro Gonzalez

## LENT & EASTER AT ST. PAULS

- SUN, MAR 9 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT - 10 a.m.  
Bach Motet *Komm, Jesu, komm*
- SUN, MAR 16 SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT - 10 a.m.  
Intergenerational Orchestra  
Annual Meeting - 11:15 a.m.  
Blood Drive - 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- SUN, MAR 23 THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT - 10 a.m.
- SUN, MAR 30 FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT - 10 a.m.
- FRI, APR 4 PERFORMANCE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK - 7 p.m.
- SUN, APR 6 FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT - 10 a.m.  
*Mozart Requiem*
- SUN, APR 13 PALM SUNDAY - 10 a.m.  
Palm branches, songs, Easter Egg Hunt
- THU, APR 17 MAUNDY THURSDAY - 7 p.m.  
Labyrinth walk  
Taizé Service - 7:30 p.m.
- FRI, APR 18 GOOD FRIDAY - 7:30 p.m.  
Communion, Tenebrae with choir
- SUN, APR 20 EASTER SUNDAY - 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.  
Communion, choir, brass

Scan here  
for Lent Info:



## **ABOUT ST. PAULS**

*Making a Joyful Sound in the City!*

St. Pauls UCC has a vibrant history in the city of Chicago. Founded in 1843, we are one of the city's oldest churches. In 1989, we became one of America's first congregations to declare ourselves "Open and Affirming" of LGBTQ+ people.

From founding Chicago's largest provider of social services to at-risk children to starting a home for the elderly, from housing protestors at the 1968 Democratic Convention to hosting Lincoln Park's first MLK day march against violence on Chicago's streets, we are proud to make a joyful sound in the city.

Most important, during the past 180 years we are glad to have introduced thousands of children and adults to the amazing, inclusive, life changing, uplifting love of God. We do so in worship that is traditional, but far from conventional.

Senior Pastor Matt Fitzgerald, [mfitzgerald@spucc.org](mailto:mfitzgerald@spucc.org)  
Associate Pastor Jeff Carlson, [jcarlson@spucc.org](mailto:jcarlson@spucc.org)  
Associate Pastor Liz Nickerson, [lnickerson@spucc.org](mailto:lnickerson@spucc.org)

For a complete list of St. Pauls Staff, Governance, and Lay Leadership  
Please visit [www.spucc.org/contact](http://www.spucc.org/contact)

**St. Pauls United Church of Christ**  
**2335 N Orchard St. | Chicago, IL 60614**  
**(773) 348-3829   [www.spucc.org](http://www.spucc.org)**

Free Parking is available Sundays from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
at the Lincoln Common Parking Garage, 2316 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Parking validation is available in the Narthex.



## **WELCOME TO SAINT PAULS UCC!**

Welcome to those whose hearts are on fire with faith,  
and to those who bring their doubt inside our doors.

Welcome to our first time guests and  
our longtime members.

Welcome to single people, tiny children,  
grandparents and families of all configurations.

Welcome to those who rejoice and to those who grieve.

Welcome to LGBTQ+ people.

Welcome to each and to everyone.

We are blessed by your presence and  
we are glad you are here.