

St. Paul UCC

2nd Sunday of the season of

Lent

March 1, 2026



stpaulucc.org

Welcome to St. Paul UCC

Sunday, March 1, 2026 ~ 9:00 am
Second Sunday of the Season of Lent

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Visiting Clergy Rev. Dr. Chance Beeler
Director of Music Dr. Tristan Frampton
Organist Cynthia Johnson
Liturgist Brett White

WELCOME

PRELUDE

I to the Hills Will Lift Mine Eyes (Ps. 121)
Hymn Tune: Dundee
arr. Healey Willan

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: First, the water was deep chaos and the beginning, and the Holy witnessed its goodness.

Congregational Sung response:

I am here in the heart of God.

God is here in the heart of me.

Like the wave in the water and the water in the wave.

I am here in the heart of God.

***In the Heart of God*, by Erin McGaughan**

<https://erinmcgaughandotcom.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/let-that-voice-songbook-complete.pdf>

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I am here in the heart of God, God is here in the heart of me, like the

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wave in the wa-ter and the wa-ter in the wave, God is here in the heart of me.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff is marked with a circled '1' and contains the melody for the first line of the response. The second staff is marked with a circled '2' and contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

One: Then, the water was flooding destruction and the end, and the Holy vowed, never again.

Congregational Sung Response

One: And then, the water was a saving path and freedom, and the Holy brought forth liberation.

Congregational Sung Response

One: Then, the water was a sacred sign and grace and the Holy said, beloved.

Congregational Sung Response

One: And then, the water was a new way and birth, and the Holy promised, this is how the kingdom comes.

Congregational Sung Response

***INVOCATION (Unison)**

Let this prayer be a womb, nurturing us in water until the time comes.

Let this prayer be a river, making a way out of no way until we reach the place that holds us all, together.

Let this prayer be a tear, spilling over with love which is grief which is love until we cannot tell the difference between a prayer, and a river, and a womb.

Let this prayer be the Spirit, drenching us in new life, until the kingdom comes.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

***OPENING HYMN** *Come, O Fount of Every Blessing* (See insert)

***SEEKING TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

Call to Transformation

Leader:

I wonder if when Jesus said to Nicodemus,

“...no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit,” what he was trying to say was, the river runs through the middle of our body or all water is a part of all water everywhere or water is life.

This Lent, how might our lives be tested, new understandings opened, and vulnerabilities recognized if we knew ourselves as water and the kingdom of God as a watershed?

Time of silent reflection

One: For the water in our faucets
and the water in our communities, we pray:

All: God, have mercy.

One: For the places in the world where clean water is hard to find or not yet
available, we pray:

All: Christ, have mercy.

One: For the water melting in precious glaciers in Antarctica, we pray:

All: God, have mercy.

One: Keep us accountable to all the waters that bring forth life;

All: Guide us, Holy One. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

One: Let your soul receive this rest: justice will roll down like a river and
righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

**All: Praise God who forgives us and frees us inviting us to embrace the
grace that goes on and on like water, an unending cycle of new life.**

ANTHEM

Witness

arr. Jack Halloran and Dick Bolks
Sanctuary Choir

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 12:1-4a

Brett White

Psalm 121

Brett White

John 3:1-17

Rev. Dr. Chance Beeler

MESSAGE

Of Water and Spirit

Rev. Dr. Chance Beeler

PASTORAL AND 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.

REFLECTION ON GIVING

The season of Lent invites us to consider what it means for us to live life sacrificially, to lean into Jesus' call to costly discipleship. How might God be calling you to a new way of sharing your resources to build care and equity in our communities and world? Let us offer whatever gifts we have to love the world like God did in giving God's Son.

RECEIVING OF THE GIFTS & OFFERTORY MUSIC

Partita on "Lord Jesus, Think on Me"

By Daniel E. Gawthrop

*DOXOLOGY (Tune: Old Hundreth)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ in whom God's grace we know
Praise Spirit, with us evermore
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

For the loving of the world, these gifts.
For the flowing of the water, these hearts.
For the coming of the kingdom, these lives.
May it be so. Amen.

Service of Holy Communion

The Invitation

One: In this body, water.

All: In these bodies, water.

One: In this bread, these grapes, water.

All: In this flesh, these bones, water.

One: Under this floor, water.

All: Above this roof, water.

One All water is a part of all water everywhere.

**All: As a part of one another, of this earth,
of the Living Water that brings new life, all are welcome at this table.**

Communion Prayer

First, the water was deep chaos and the beginning, and the Holy witnessed its goodness. Then, the water was flooding destruction and the end, and the Holy vowed, never again. And then, the water was a saving path and freedom, and the Holy brought forth liberation. Then, the water was a sacred sign and grace and the Holy said, beloved And then, the water was a new way and birth, and the Holy promised, this is how the kingdom comes.

Then the water was kneeling and washing feet And the Holy said, this is what love looks like. And then the water was a body broken and blood poured out and the Holy prayed, remember. "Toni Morrison writes, All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was. Back to the body of earth, of flesh, back to the mouth, the throat, back to the womb, back to the heart, to its blood, back to our grief, back back back. Will we remember from where we've come? The water. And once remembered, will we return to that first water, and in doing so return to ourselves, to each other? Do you think the water will forget what we have done, what we continue to do?"

Words of Institution

We remember that night during the Passover Jesus had his last meal at a table, with those closest to him. There, they shared their love of God and Jesus and of each other. In the midst of love, Jesus gave thanks and broke the bread and said, something like this, "Take and eat this gift from the earth and from the human hands that prepared it and know that God gives it to you, a blessing for your body and your spirit." Later, Jesus took a cup and after blessing it said something like this, "Drink this fruit of the vine, the gift of the sun and labor in the fields. Taste and know the goodness of God."

Prayer for the Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit. Bless this bread and cup and bless each of us. May these elements transform us. May they inspire and give us courage to follow the way of Jesus, which is ever inclusive and expanding.

Come, let's eat this bread and drink this cup together

Closing prayer:

One: For the bread and the cup, for the quenching of communion,

All: Thanks be to God.

One: For the flow of liberation which the world cannot destroy,

All: Thanks be to God.

One: For the hope of water and Spirit and kingdom come,

All: Thanks be to God.

***CLOSING HYMN**

God be With You

(see insert)

***COMMISSIONING (Sung twice in a round)**

I am here in the heart of God.

God is here in the heart of me.

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wave in the water and the water in the wave, God is here in the heart of me.

***BENEDICTION**

As you go out from this wilderness into another hold close to your heart this promise: there will be wellsprings to quench and cleanse and lead you to new life. You are already born of water and the Spirit. Beloved and blessed. Like the river that always finds its way to the sea, there is a way to be made toward the kingdom that we can only make together. So may God's blessings flow in, among and through us.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

Nun lasst uns Gott in Herren

(Now let us to God, the Lord, give thanks and honor him)

by Johann Pachelbel

Follow us on ...



VISITING CLERGY

MARCH 1 - REV. DR. CHANCE BEELER

MARCH 8 - CRAIG BIELKE

MARCH 15 - REV. JOAN MIER

MARCH 22 - CRAIG BIELKE

MARCH 29 - REV. JOAN MIER



For Your Prayers

Carol Hotz & Fred Hotz
 Tim Ritter
 Tim Ritter Jr., son of Sandy & Tim Ritter
 Lou Ann Niemann
 Ralph Eckart, brother in-law of
 Marlene Mueller
 Mike Llamas, brother in law of Mimi Llamas
 Gene Buxton
 Al Stahl
 Audrey Krummrich
 Rosie Keller
 Laura Sadler
 Mike Foppe
 Alec Zaber
 Lindsay Eversmeyer, niece of Pam Nicholson
 Jane Bonaldi

Flowers, Music and Bulletin sponsorships are a lovely way to honor the memory, birthday or achievement of your loved one. To sign up, call the church office. Cost is \$35.00.



**Please call the church for prayer requests:
 618-233-3303 stpaulucc.org**

Please consider being a coffee hour host for March & April

It takes about 15-20 min to set up. Our guests arrive about 10:00. Better to have their coffee ready at that time. Last coffee call no later than 11:00, if not sooner. Takes about 20-25 min to clean up. Printed instructions are available. Assistance is always available.

Contact the office to sign up!



Weekly Offerings	2/21/2026	
Operating	\$	2,237.00
Building Fund	\$	42.00
	\$	2,279.00
Giving YTD	\$	53,747.76
Weekly Budget	\$	6,781.69
Budget to Date	\$	47,471.85
Total Budget	\$	352,648.00

Weekly Attendance - 9AM Service

February 15, 2026 92 + Online Participants
 February 16, 2026 56 + Online Participants

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