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WHAT IF... GOD DIDN'T LOVE THE WORLD?

February 28 and March 1, 2026

What if God didn't love the world? What if God was indifferent, or even antagonistic toward the world? Our life would literally fall apart. No rain, no crops, every man for themselves. If God didn't love the world there would be no love in the world. It would be like every post-apocalyptic movie, just worse.



WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S – CONNECTION CARD

Thank you for joining us in worship. Please complete a Connection Card, sharing any questions or prayer requests you might have. You can fill out the card online and find other resources by scanning the QR Code.

CHILDCARE EVERY SUNDAY 8:45 – 11:45 am in the Kids hallway to your left as you leave the sanctuary.

SUNDAY KIDS CLUB FOR 3K – GRADE 5 9:00 – 10:00 am at the school. Register online at stpaulmuskego.org/kidsclub.

ACCESSIBILITY A hearing loop system is on the pulpit side of the church. There are also large-print worship folders available. Ask and usher for assistance.

QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE? Visit the Welcome Center in the Commons where a greeter will be happy to assist.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR GOSPEL MINISTRY You may place your offering in the box in the lobby or scan the QR code to give using Venmo. Thank you for helping us share the peace and joy we have in Jesus.



CONGREGATIONAL HYMN SING

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC MEDITATION (*Sunday*)

Church Sanata in F

By Mozart

St. Paul's Woodwind Ensemble

BELLS AND WELCOME

OPENING – RED HYMNAL 391, vv. 1-4

God loved the world so that he gave
His only Son the lost to save
That all who would in him believe
Should everlasting life receive.

God Loved the World So that He Gave
Christ is the solid rock of faith,
Who was made flesh and suffered death.
All who confide in him alone
Are built on this chief cornerstone.

**God would not have the sinner die;
His Son with saving grace is nigh.
His Spirit in the Word does teach
How we the blessed goal may reach.**

**Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
Forgives the sins that you have done.
You're justified by Jesus' blood;
Baptized, you are a child of God.**

M In the name of the Father and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

M Sisters and brothers in Christ, we live in a world loved by God. Yet we also live in a world broken by sin.

C **We have sinned in thought, word, and deed. We deserve God's judgment, not his love.**

M But God's love is greater than our sin. In love, he sent his Son to take the punishment we deserve. Trusting in this love and confident of his forgiveness in Christ, we confess our sins to God.

All **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior, Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

M In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

**Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To you, O blessed Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

M Let us pray.

Almighty God, you loved the world so much that you gave your one and only Son to be lifted up for our salvation.

C **Open our eyes to see the depth of your love and the seriousness of our sin.**

M Lead us to trust in Jesus alone, that we may not perish but have eternal life. Hear us for the sake of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now

C **and forever. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Numbers 21:4-9, Bible page 155

The Israelites grumbled against God, and he sent venomous snakes among them. But in love, God provided a way of rescue: a bronze snake lifted up on a pole. All who looked at it in faith were healed.

PSALM OF THE DAY (*Saturday*)

Psalm 51a, Red Hymnal page 86
Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love!

ANTHEM (*Sunday 9:00 am*)

God So Loved
By K. Crane and S. Wilkinson
St. Paul's School Junior Choir

ANTHEM (*Sunday 10:30 am*)

Tis So Sweet to Trust
Arr. D. F. Everson
St. Paul's Woodwind Ensemble

SECOND LESSON

1 John 4:7-12, Bible page 1230
*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us
and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

HYMN OF THE DAY – RED HYMNAL 390, vv. 1-4

Salvation unto Us Has Come

1 Salvation unto us has come
By God's free grace and favor.
Good works cannot avert our doom;
They help and save us never.
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone;
He is the one Redeemer.

2 What God does in his law demand
And none to him can render,
Brings wrath and woe on ev'ry hand
For man, the vile offender.
Our flesh has not those pure desires
The spirit of the law requires,
And lost is our condition.

3 It is a false, misleading dream
That God his law has given
That sinners can themselves redeem
And by their works gain heaven.
The law is but a mirror bright
To bring the inbred sin to light
That lurks within our nature.

4 Yet as the law must be fulfilled
Or we must die despairing,
Christ came and has God's anger stilled,
Our human nature sharing.
He has for us the law obeyed
And thus the Father's vengeance stayed
Which over us impended.

After the sermon, the congregation sings:

**All blessing, honor, thanks, and praise
To Father, Son, and Spirit,
The God who saved us by his grace
All glory to his merit!
O Triune God in heav'n above,
You have revealed your saving love;
Your blessed name be hallowed!**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M Heavenly Father, we thank you for loving the world so much that you gave your one and only Son.

C **Without your love, we would have no hope and no future.**

M Thank you for showing us the depth of our sin and the greatness of your grace.

C **Help us to trust in Jesus alone for our salvation.**

M We pray for all who do not yet know the love of Christ. Send your Spirit to open their hearts to believe the good news.

C **Use us as instruments of your love in this world.**

M Comfort those who are struggling, heal those who are sick, and give peace to those who are troubled.

C **Be with us in our Lenten journey, and lead us at last to the joy of Easter.**

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

CLOSING – RED HYMNAL 385, vv. 1-3

Chief of Sinners Though I Be

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed his blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am his, and he is mine.

Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me – wondrous thought –
Found me when I sought him not.

Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod.

CLOSING PRAYER

M Almighty God, grant to your Church the Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes from above.
Let nothing hinder your Word from being freely proclaimed to the joy and edifying of Christ's
holy people, so that we may serve you in steadfast faith and confess your name as long as we
live, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one
God, now and forever.



BLESSING

M The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and (†) give you peace.



ST. PAUL'S CONNECTION