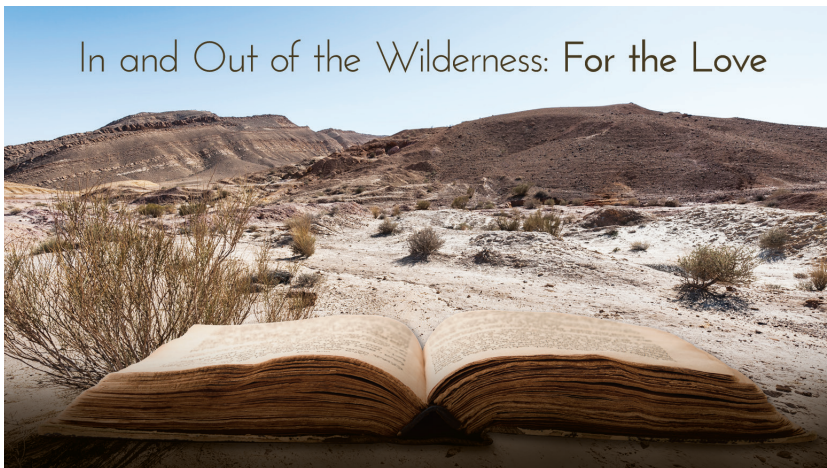




March 15 – 16, 2025

**For the Love**

Exodus 5:1-3, Luke 15:1-32



In and Out of the Wilderness: For the Love

### MUSIC THIS WEEKEND

**CONTEMPORARY**  
SAT 5:30 pm | SUN 10:30 am

**The Lord's Prayer (It's Yours)**  
**Graves Into Gardens**  
**Gratitude**  
**House of the Lord**

**CLASSIC | SUN 8:45 am**  
Music led by Ritterchor from Wartburg College

**God Loved the World**  
RITTERCHOR ANTHEM: **Grace**  
RITTERCHOR ANTHEM: **El Yivneh Hagalil**  
RITTERCHOR ANTHEM: **Steal Away**  
FLUTE ENSEMBLE: **What Wondrous Love**  
RITTERCHOR ANTHEM: **Shout Glory!**

MESSAGE: **Paul Dean**  
**Communion** (Saturday 5:30 pm)  
**Baptisms** (Sunday 10:30 am):  
Cal William Brostrom,  
Sloane Vivian Carlson, Ella Jane Moore

### JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

**Classic: Sun 8:45 am | Contemporary: Sat 5:30 pm, Sun 10:30 am**  
Resources, livestreams, playlists and podcast links at [popmn.org](http://popmn.org)

**Artist in Residence: Jason Gray | Saturday, March 22 | 7:00 pm**  
RSVP for this free concert: [popmn.org/register](http://popmn.org/register)

### JOIN US FOR COMMUNITY

**Congregational Vote | Sunday, March 23 | Both worship services**  
Vote for our Associate Pastors of Engagement and Family Ministry

**New Member Classes | Sunday, March 23 and 30**  
Interested in joining Prince of Peace? Register: [popmn.org/register](http://popmn.org/register)

**Family Ministry Flower Fundraiser | Presale orders due March 17**  
Order at [popmn.org/register](http://popmn.org/register) to support youth attending Wapo

**Board of Directors Applications due March 31**  
We're accepting Board applications: [popmn.org/leadership](http://popmn.org/leadership)

**Feed My Starving Children South Metro Meal Pack**  
Scan the QR code to make a donation towards POP's  
pledge of \$50,000 to the meal packing event.



### JOIN US IN GENEROSITY

**Thank you for your gifts for mission and ministry!**



## Connect With Us

We are here to love God and all people by being the heart, hands and feet of Jesus in the world so that all might know that they are loved. We are an open and affirming church. We value growing a relationship with God and with each other, and showing up for people in need in this community and beyond. **Welcome to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church!**



**Connect** with  
Prince of Peace!  
Scan here to  
join our mailing list  
and find ways to  
get involved.

Follow us on social media:  
**Facebook: @popchurch**  
**Instagram: @popburnsville**  
Listen to our Trust the Story Podcast:  
**YouTube: @PrinceofPeaceLutheranChurch**  
**Spotify: @POPmn**



Scan here to  
make a **prayer**  
**request** or to  
have a member  
of the Spiritual Care  
Team contact you.

**PAPER COPIES OF THESE FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CONNECT DESK.**



## Trust the Story | In and Out of the Wilderness | **For the Love**

Think about habits or behavior in our culture that could be called transactional. (For example, making sure you send Christmas cards to people who send them to you, etc.)

History, religion and literature are filled with stories of transactional relationships, even (or maybe especially) with God. We imagine that if we give God gifts – our resources, our worship, our sacrifice – God will help us in some way. Or at least not smite us.

At its core, this concept asserts that we are not lovable on our own. We need to give God something in order to secure love and belonging in return. It's a transaction. People have been doing this since the beginning. It's something we understand: you give something, you get something. I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine.

But the God we worship exists outside of any transactional arrangement. The "good news" is that our God of unconditional love is actually not transactional at all.

**Read Exodus 5:1-3.** Moses and Aaron ask the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go so they can celebrate "the God of the people" in the wilderness. But Pharaoh doesn't know this God. So Moses and Aaron change their tune, asking instead to go on a long journey in order to make a sacrifice to an "almighty God," or else they will be punished.

**Why do Moses and Aaron change their story? Is a sacrifice to a punishing god something Pharaoh understands? Why does the oppressor, the slave-keeper, only speak in the language of transaction?**

**What do you think Pharaoh's gods were like? Do Pharaoh's gods seem familiar in today's world that values wealth, strength and winning? Do you think Pharaoh's gods inspire love or gratitude? Why, or why not?**

**Read Luke 15:1-32.** In this story a man has two grown sons. The oldest one stays home to help his father. The younger one goes off, lives a life of excess, blows through his entire inheritance, and becomes destitute in the mess that he made for himself. He eventually goes crawling back to his father, begging for mercy. The father sees him coming, is filled with joy, runs to embrace him, and throws him an enormous and lavish party. The older brother looks on, irritated that this kid's return rates a celebration after everything he's done.

**Would the father in this story make sense to Pharaoh? Would the story be lost on him? Why or why not?**

**Do you think many people in our culture today would also be confused or irritated about this amount of wild joy and radical compassion for the kid who selfishly squandered the family fortune? Is that kind of unconditional love something we understand in this culture, where we have to constantly prove our worth?**

**When have you forgotten the nature of God and fallen into transactional thinking? Have you ever failed to welcome those who have nothing to offer in return? Have you ever acted like the old brother, thinking that others don't deserve forgiveness, love, connection, welcome?**

**Have you seen this story played out in the news? How is transactional thinking on display in the world today?**