

APRIL, 2021

A LIFE OF FAITH

Monthly newsletter of St. Paul's Lutheran Church

April 2021, Volume 6, Issue 03

FEATURED STORIES THIS MONTH:

*"Reflections of
Salvation" -
A message from
Pastor Pomrenke*



WHAT'S INSIDE:

Pastor's Message - pg 2
President's Message - pg 3
Buildings and Grounds - pg 4
Christian Education - pg 5
Missions and Ministry - pg 6
LWML News - pg 6
Spotlight - pg 7
Birthdays & Kids Corner - pg 8
April Calendar - pg 9

*Happy Easter everyone! Let
us remember the true spirit
of Easter and Praise Jesus
Christ! He has Risen, He
has Risen Indeed!*

Reflections of Salvation

Pastor's Pomrenke's Message April 2021

Good Day Beloved,

It's hard to believe that spring is here ... but it Is! Spring Has Sprung Upon Us! It makes me think of the other things in our lives that we are not ready for them to come but they do ... seemingly without any warning. We have taken a journey this Lenten Season unlike any we have in the years I have been at St. Paul's. Holy Week is upon us and I hope you are prepared for the emotional roller coaster that this week brings. This week, in my opinion, is the most important week of the church year. Christ's birth is truly important, but it is solely in the events of this week that give us hope.

So, what will be different for us this year following Our Savior's resurrection? Will it just mean that we can finally have the things we gave up for Lent? Or does it have a deeper meaning. I pray you said a deeper meaning.

Once again let us ponder the words from Luke 23: 44-47 ... *"44 It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!' And having said this he breathed his last. 47 Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, 'Certainly this man was innocent!'"*

In these verses from Luke, we see prophesy fulfilled. The curtain was torn in two and darkness encompassed the whole land. This is a sacrifice like no other man has made, nor father, for that matter. This was the biggest recorded act of love that mankind has been a part of. God knew that only through the death and resurrection of His one and only Son Jesus Christ would humanity have a path to eternal salvation. I love this scene as depicted in Mel Gibson's "Passion Of The Christ." After those last words were uttered by Jesus and He gave up His spirit, a huge tear dropped from Heaven. This is indicative of the sadness that God must have felt as He watched His Son mocked, ridiculed, tortured, and crucified for the sins of mankind.

Do not let this visual escape your thoughts during Holy Week and beyond. Jesus Loved us so much that He willingly endured all of it for you and me. So, if Christ could do this for us ... then why is it so hard for us to share a minute fraction of that love with others? That, my beloved is what must be different after Holy Week this year. We must be renewed in the love that is Holy Week. Let that love set us apart from the world. Amen?

Rev. Gary R. Pomrenke

He Has Risen ... He Has Risen Indeed ... Alleluia !!!

President's Message

John Bowling, President



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Where has the time gone? It seems like only yesterday there was ice and snow everywhere and now it's spring. However, spring brings so much hope for better days ahead for everyone. Looking forward to strengthening our faith together as a church family as we prepare to celebrate Easter and the resurrection of our Savior during the coming weeks.

I want to give a big welcome to our new Administrative Assistant, Jenny Moonen, who began working at St. Paul's recently. Please stop in if you get a chance to introduce yourself and say hi during the coming weeks. We are very excited to have her on board here at St. Paul's.

I also want to thank Brad Clements for all of his work both inside and outside the church as well as everyone who has worked with him behind the scenes. A big thank you to Paul Piphio for his help with repairs needed on our playground and getting our playground mulch. We may need a work day to complete this project. Brad will keep us updated on that.

Prayerfully, we will soon be able to get back to having our fellowship activities one again. Brenda and I have had our shots and I know many of you have as well. I sure do miss our potlucks and all the wonderful fellowship and great food! St. Paul's is very blessed.

Stay safe and have a blessed Easter!

John H. Bowling,
Council President

Building and Grounds Update

Brad Clements

Status of Projects:

About two years ago, the congregation developed a list of projects for the church that needed to be undertaken in order to maintain the infrastructure. The congregation has done an outstanding job in providing their talents and financial support for maintaining and improving our Lord's house. The following identifies the status of current projects and projects that still need to be addressed. Once this work is complete, it will be much easier to maintain everything. Most beneficial would be the development of a long-term maintenance program, which would be most cost effective for the church, hopefully avoiding large projects such as we have had the past two years.

Current Projects:

- The new air conditioner that serves the kitchen, bathroom, nursery, and main entry hall is complete.
- All thermostats in the main building have been replaced with new digital Wi-Fi units, similar to the ones in the educational building. Temperatures can be monitored and changed from anywhere. These thermostats will help us to reduce our energy costs.
- New kneelers for the altar and cushions for the pews have been ordered and are expected to be installed by mid-April.
- New projection screens and cornices covered in fabric to match the chairs have been installed.
- Electrical wiring for the new projection screens, new projectors, and TV has been installed.
- Two fans in the right and left front corners of the sanctuary have been moved to the right and left back corners of the sanctuary. This will reduce obstruction to the projection screens, and provide more light in the back of the sanctuary, as has been requested.
- Lighting for the piano and organ has been improved.
- New exit lights with emergency lighting have been installed. All of the old emergency lighting was out of date and not working. Current new emergency lighting, which has been installed, meets the current life safety code requirements.
- Pastor worked with a contractor to complete the wiring and programming so that both projectors and screens, along with the TV are now fully operational.



Future projects:

- The playground needs to be re-mulched. This has not been done for several years. The estimated cost is about \$3,000.
- Replace the floor in the main hallway/narthex of the church. Estimated cost \$2,500.
- Replace the floor in the kitchen. Estimated cost \$1,500.
- Replace the exterior door and framing from the Pastor's office to the outside. Approximate cost \$1,000.
- A long-term project will be to repair and replace the deteriorating asphalt in the parking lot and entrance drives including repainting the striping for parking spaces. We have not received a quote for this work but it will cost approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Christian Education

Sunday School News - Brenda Bowling

To Our Sunday School Families and Friends! What a welcome sight these first signs of spring have been this past week. Those first warm days of spring fill us with so much happiness and excitement and are so rejuvenating to the body and soul, especially after such a long crazy year. Hope you all have a chance to go outside and marvel at the awesomeness of God's creation as the winter months begin to fade and new life begins to awaken everywhere. The beauty of spring reminds us of the new life we now have as God's forgiven children. God is so good! We are looking forward with great excitement to Easter and the celebration of the most glorious event of the church calendar our Lord's resurrection on April 4th. Jesus resurrection means that we too will have new life and will someday live with Him in heaven forever!

We are very excited about once again being able to hold our Easter Celebration and Easter Egg Hunt with our Sunday School families and friends this year after we had to cancel last year's Easter celebrations because of COVID. We welcome all the Sunday school children as well as younger siblings and friends to join us for our annual Easter Egg Hunt which will be held Easter morning, Sunday April 4th beginning at 9:15 AM. As part of our Sunday School's special group Easter activities, all children will come together outside (or in the church if weather is bad) for an opening of songs, an Easter lesson and parachute fun as we hear and celebrate the Easter story by releasing our "alleluias" that we silenced during the season of Lent in a large box during our opening. (Parachute activity TBD if weather is bad) After our opening, everyone will continue on to our Easter egg hunt and some simple refreshments. Put on your Easter best, bring your singing voice, a friend and an Easter basket and join us on April 4th as we celebrate our Risen lord!

Other Upcoming Dates to Circle on Your Calendar: Last day for Sunday School and our Sunday School Closing Program – Sunday May 23rd. Our Sunday school will be sharing some things they have learned throughout the past year at Sunday School as well as some special music with the congregation during the 10:30 AM worship service on the 23rd. We are also planning an outdoor fellowship picnic following the service. Games and other fun activities will be available for the kids spread out in several areas. If weather is not good, we will have a rain date on May 30th. More information will be coming next month.

Vacation Bible School: Don't forget to clear your calendar for this year's Vacation Bible School "Rocky Railroad" where kids will discover "that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs". This year's VBS will be held on June 28th thru July 2nd under the leadership of Meredith Johnson. Help in many areas is needed for this exciting mission outreach into the community.

Thanks in advance for your support and prayers. More information about registration, staff meetings, plans that will be in place to be COVID safe and other ways that you could help will be coming soon.

"Seek His will in all you do and He will show you which path to take." Proverbs 3: 5-6

Mission and Ministry

Lois Beverage

Members of St Paul's! It probably does not have to be repeated that our community, our neighbors are suffering with the many challenges that are in our world today. The generosity of this congregation has certainly helped so many to feed and provide for their families. I asked the St Mary's Helping Hands Food Pantry what would be helpful currently and the list below was the response. I also asked about clothing because often there is a table and clothes rack at the pantry with donated items. Typically they are adult clothes. So I asked if there were needs for children's clothes (light weight for spring and summer) and the volunteers there said that yes they can't keep clothing for children they go fast. After Easter I would like to put a container in the church narthex to collect gently used children's clothing. Please keep donations to spring and summer items.

Thank you so much for your generous hearts and love for each other!

Mission and Ministry Chairperson, Lois Beverage

Current Food Pantry Needs: Toilet paper, canned goods, toiletries, laundry detergent, pasta noodles and cereal.

LWML News

Tracie Pomrenke

Pastor and I are heading to Kentucky in June for the LWML National Convention. They are collecting items to be donated for those less fortunate who could use our help. I know this is something St. Paul's is very good at. The items they are collecting are: baby toiletries (shampoo, diaper cream, lotion etc.), baby towels, burp clothes, baby wipes, crib sheets, disposable diapers up to size 3, clothes (newborn to 12 months), diaper bags, toys, small Christian themed books (board, cloth or vinyl), gift cards for \$10, \$20 or \$25 for Walmart or Target, and new or like new reading glasses. These items will go into the wicker basket under the mailboxes in the narthex. I apologize for not getting the basket out sooner. I had it in my Sunday School classroom but forgot to bring it to the narthex as stated.

I am so glad that the world is beginning to get a little closer to pre-pandemic normal. As I am writing this we are going to have our first social event at church in over a year!!! We are streaming a Sidewalk Prophets concert on Friday evening (March 26th). I will be here to open the doors at 6 but the concert is from 6:30 to 8. I am looking forward to spending more time with my church family!! I hope many of you will be joining me! On Saturday (March 27th) I am also going to the LWML spring rally at Lutheran Church of Our Savior.



New Employee Spotlight

by Jenny Moonen



Hello, My name is Jenny Moonen. I am very excited to be working at your beautiful church. I just want to tell you a little about myself. I was born and raised in Minnesota. My husband and I have known each other for most of our lives, but have only been married since 2015. We are both the youngest in our families. I am the youngest of five girls. John has three brothers and two sisters. I lost my dad to Alzheimer's about three years ago, but my beautiful 89 year old Momma is still alive and spunky in Minnesota. John's parents live in Northern Minnesota. We have no human children, but have a German Shepard-Lab mix dog named Duke. We also have two cats, Rudy and Bob.

We moved to La Plata, Maryland in October of last year. John got a promotion to the Central Office in DC at the Bureau of Prisons. I owned a little gift shop called The Five Sisters in Moose Lake, Minnesota before I moved here. I have also been an Avon lady for about 26 years. The Five Sister's is still open, but an on-line only store now. Running the business from home doesn't take much of my time since COVID hit, so here I am.

I am really enjoying working here. Everyone has been really great. Some other hats I have worn in my past have been Executive Assistant, Program Manager, Project Manager, Retail Manager, just to name a few things.

We are really enjoying Maryland so far. This area is so rich in history, we are truly enjoying exploring the area. We recently purchased a used camper so we can really start exploring on the weekends. I enjoy hiking/walking, traveling, reading, board games, spending time with family and friends, and music to name a few things. We are members of St. Joseph's parish in Pomfret.

In my spare time I run a non profit organization called The Traveling Angels. We clean up and rebuild after natural disasters around the country. We haven't gone on any trips since pre-covid, but usually take a trip or two a year for a week or long weekend. If something happens locally, we will take day trips or weekend trips.

I would like to make this a regular feature in the newsletter, featuring members of the church, so look for future spotlights. God Bless!

" Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." 1 Corinthians 13:7

March - April Birthday's

March

Cindy Hicks – 3/6
James Hiller – 3/10
Megan Green – 3/13
Mary Guy – 3/23
Meredith Johnson – 3/30
Justin Vogt – 3/30
Russell Watson – 3/27
Harry Price – 3/28

April

Stephen Stowers – 4/1
Jessalyn Mehrkam – 4/8
Betty Ann Wathen – 4/11
Selma Gheen – 4/15
Shane Lindauer – 4/19
Melissa Chew – 4/21
James Short – 4-25
Tracie Pomrenke – 4/22
James Short – 4/25
Matthew Mehrkam – 4/27
Gayle Gepert – 4/29

KIDS'S CORNER

Easter Word Search

A X E W V E A Q C G P D
L L K E A S T E R Y D G
B A L O N N O S H D A N
M I H E T O M D U I A K
Z O Y B L I B R I S E N
G N M D W U A O G C T R
O E L A S N I O B I V I
J E S U S D E A R P D P
O I U Y O A D S H L O L
J H G Z R X C B N E G M
N O I T C E R R U S E R



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|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. JESUS | 6. DISCIPLES |
| 2. EASTER | 7. ALLELUIAH |
| 3. RESURRECTION | 8. RISEN |
| 4. CROSS | 9. GOD |
| 5. TOMB | 10. SON |