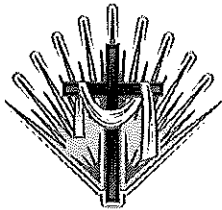

THE LETTER OF ST. PAUL

April, 2025

Volume 63, Number 4



St. Paul Lutheran Church
4660 W. 94th Street
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
(708) 423-1040
www.stpauloaklawn.org

The Mission Statement of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
By God's grace, we exist to
prepare hearts, minds, and
souls for life in the world
and in eternity.

St. Paul congregation has
extended a call to the Rev,
David Lindenberg of Rapid
City, South Dakota, to be
our next pastor. Please
include him and St. Paul
Church in your prayers.

Thank you to all who give
of their time, talents, and
treasures to support the
ministry of St. Paul.

Please see the enclosed flyer
re: our congregation dinner
on May 2. Reservations are
needed by April 16th!

WORSHIP SERVICE
Sundays, 9:00AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL AND
BIBLE STUDY, 10:30AM

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 13 at 9AM

On this day we remember our Lord's entry into Jerusalem by a crowd filled with anticipation for the coming Messiah. However, Jesus was going to Jerusalem to suffer and die for the sins of the world. We recreate the day in our worship, but all the while our eyes look ahead to the cross and the events of the coming week. Holy Communion is a part of our worship service.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 17 at 11AM and 7PM

Two traditional communion services are held, one during the day and one in the evening. We focus on the gift of the blessed sacrament of Holy Communion, given by our Lord to His church on the first Maundy Thursday, when He told us, "*do this in remembrance of Me.*"

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 18 at 11AM and 7PM

On that first Good Friday, our Lord was on the cross, dying for you and for all mankind. The service of Tenebrae, the "*Service of Darkness*", is one of the most moving services of the year, as one by one, candles are extinguished. In growing darkness, we remember the Lord's suffering, death, and burial.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 20 at 9AM

We give thanks on this day with special festival services for Jesus' resurrection from the dead ~ the assurance that He is the victorious Lord over life and death, and the assurance that we too shall be raised from the dead. We are united to our crucified and risen Savior through the sacrament of Holy Communion.

EASTER BLESSINGS TO ALL!

THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Ecclesiastes 1:2-3 Meaningless, meaningless says the teacher. Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless. What do people gain from all their labors at which they toil under the sun?

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart, yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Back in 1966, the movie Alfie came out. Michael Cain starred as the lead character Alfie Elkins in this comedy/drama framed as a morality tale. Alfie is a charming British chauffeur who is bent on promiscuity. It's one woman after another. His is a very self-centered life. After he impregnates his girlfriend, Alfie takes off on a vacation,, and then, soon afterwards, he continues his life of womanizing.

However, finally misfortune strikes Alfie beginning first with a major health issue and then some negative ramifications resulting from his previous romantic affairs. All of this causes a mental breakdown which eventually forces him to question his uncaring behavior, his priorities, and a lifestyle that has ultimately ended in loneliness. In the theme song, "What's It All About, Alfie?" there's some key lyrics that strike at the heart of Alfie's identity/existential crisis:

Without love, we just exist, Alfie.
As sure as there's a heaven above,
I know that there's something more,
Something even unbelievers believe in.

As I thought about that film of long ago, for the first time I discovered a connection with another character from the far distant past – like 3,000 years! Well do this man's declarations regarding his life story portray a similar kind of lament: What's it all about Solomon? Like Alfie, the Scriptures describe Solomon as the rich playboy of playboys with his 700 wives and 300 concubines. Solomon sought to experience all the pleasures of life to the fullest, but like Alfie comes up empty. "Vanity of vanities all is vanity!" Solomon complains about the futility of life "under the sun." It's the same old – the sun rises and the sun sets, the wind comes and the wind goes.

THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

And why this sense of futility? It's because Solomon thinks like our secular world today. Life is lived totally at a material level. There is no God, no absolute truth, no after life. This is it, and so where is there meaning in this life? You live and you die. Solomon is coming up empty in a loveless, impersonal universe.

So the great king is depressed, but then suddenly there's a flash of light that shines upon his darkened disposition – God has put eternity in our hearts. For a moment the yawning void is lifted. There's something beyond this life. However, sadly, this light, like a bolt of lightning,

disappears and Solomon goes on with identity/existential crisis. He's locked into his life under the sun and unable to grasp the life preserver like that thrown out to Alfie.

Without love, we just exist, Solomon.
As sure as there's a heaven above,
I know that there's something more,
Something even unbelievers believe in.

As we now approach Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord, yes, we do have something much more. Christ has brought light and life to the world. It gives an alternative to that issue of death which causes something inside us to scream: We were made for something more! Yes, Solomon, God has placed eternity in our hearts, and Jesus gives us meaning when He declares:

And whoever gives even a cup of water to one of my little ones
because he is My disciple, truly, I tell you, he will never lose
his reward.

This gives us all meaning for living, along with the reward of the Resurrection with a new body in a glorious new and sin-free world. Thank God Who through His Son has made you billionaires beyond all of Solomon's imagining!

That's why we praise Him Who for the Resurrection life "under the Son!"
Pastor Gregg

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 W. 94th Street, Oak Lawn, IL 60453
(708) 423-1040 ~ www.stpauloaklawn.org

Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Gregg Ramirez

Director of Music: Mr. Jeff Kiel

Church Administrative Assistants: Joanna Cauffman and Ruth Sievers

(for Mrs. Sandra Barry)~ sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org

Office Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 9-1pm; Fridays 9-2pm

To view our Sunday services, calendar, and newsletter, visit www.stpauloaklawn.org

The deadline for placing articles in the newsletter is the 2nd Sunday of the month.

Newsletter editor: Ruth Sievers

Send submissions to sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org.

GROW IN CHRIST ~ SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Sunday School meets in Room 8 each Sunday at 10:30 am after the Sunday morning service. Teens and adults are also invited to gather together to study God's Word after the Sunday service in Room 6 during Lent or the Timothy Room other Sundays. **The Bible study series is called "God's Love: Knowing God through the Psalms"**, led by Pastor Ramirez. Grab something to eat and drink and join us!

ALTAR FLOWERS

Thank you to our flower chairperson, Terry Hornburg, for the beautiful floral arrangements she has been blessing us with each Sunday to celebrate a special occasion or "just because". To place an order for flowers, you may reserve a date on the flower calendar in the narthex and/or call the church office at 708-423-1040. Please make your check payable to *Terry Hornburg*.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact the church office (708-423-1040) or email sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org if you have recently moved, or if your phone number or email address has changed. We want you to be able to receive the latest St. Paul news and also keep our records up to date. Thank you!

SUNDAY WORSHIP VIDEO

The Sunday worship video is available each week on our website www.stpauloaklawn.org. To access the video, just click on the Sunday date – or church services – on the homepage.

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

WHEN YOU ARE HOSPITALIZED

Please call the church office to let us know when you or a member of your family has been admitted to the hospital. We want to include you in our prayers.

REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

OUR MEMBERS: Sandy Barry; Betty Beegle; Vic and Marty Both; Jan Briede; Delphine Cherry; Doris Cyga, Loretta Frank; Louis Clayton Frank; Jennifer Garcia; Arthur Gerth; Amanda Greene; June Hagberg; Katherine Hice; Kevin Hickey; Roy Hodgeman; Herta Iversen; Graham Jackson; Janice Janiszewski; Flora Jones; Robert Kaczmarek; Ron Klingensmith; Betty Kruckow; Elaine Lebron; Jan Leise; Ingrid Lesko; Warren A. Miller; Regina Nordquist; George Oberg; Dorothy Pavella; Barbara Prendergast; Janice & Rich Przybycien; Rosa Richardson; Lori Safstrom; Kurt Seehofer; Beverly Sellers; Norma Silinski; Carol Small; Keith Vanselow; Bill Volk; Susan E. Volk; Sarah Weber

OUR MEMBERS IN CARE FACILITIES: Betty Larson; Gloria Meyer; Melva Smith; Delores Stegemann

FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE CONGREGATION: Lisa Anglin; Barbara Apt; Devon Apt; Carrie Aspan; Lance Barrientos; Cathy Becker; Sue Berg; LeRoy Bitner; Henry Bonder; Sharon Bryant; Selma Carmichel; Frankie Coglina; Judy Collins; John Darge; Dana DeAngelis; Rudy DeAngelis; Bridget & Nick DeAngelo; Shirley Demyres; George Dodaro, Sr.; Shirley Fairchild; Justin & Ashley Fasel; Diane Fauser, Emily Feehan; Triston Ferry; Gloria Folsom; David Franzone; Jerry Gross; Ted Gross; Donald Hakanson; Shawn Harland; Charley Heitz; Amanda Hermansen; Ann Herold; Phyllis Hicks; Elaine Hoffstetter; Doreen Holford; Carl Hoppe; Vern Howe; Louise Hrynkow; Kyle Hughes; Rich Huscher; Ray Jackson; Marissa Jiminez; Dana Kahn; Monica Kato; Debby Kehrli; Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.; Julie King; Debbie Kleeman; Herb Kleeman; Zech Kleeman, Evelyn & Ron Konieski; Christopher Kosary; Jerry Kreten; Glen Krietsch; Dorothy Kroll; The Lamberth family; Carol Loecherbach; Margaret Lundgreen; Ron Lunt; Adrian Martinez; Iris McCoy; Carol Jean and Tim McPhillips; Audrey Metes; Carol Milazzo; Marie Miller; Daniel Musser; Roberta & Carlos Owens; Pam Palhegyi; Patricia Paulsen; Sandy Plath; Jackie Plichta; Barb Potter; Doris Potts; Fred Raddatz; Guillermo Ramirez; Raquel Ramirez; Kimberly Rooney; Sophia Salus; Elmo Schultz; Rhonda Scott; Allyson Seehofer; Linda Shuman; Al Silinski; Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.; Sarah Skelton; Anna Stendic; Marian Strassner; Janet Trierweiler; Bernadette & Rich Trusk; Jose Urena; Wayne Volk; Vicki Warren; Michael Watkins; Gene Wawrzynikowski; Cindy (Joens) Wendel; Katherine Zeleny; Jean & Al Zirbel

THOSE IN THE MILITARY: Mark Brown (son of Pam Brown and nephew of Beth Matusевичius) Navy Reserves/Great Lakes Naval Base, Chicago); Aurora DeAngelis (daughter of Michelle and Curtis Simonson), USACE, Detroit, MI; Peter Scialabba (son of Susan Scialabba and nephew of Sharon Helmbold) Special Forces; Adam Skelton (grandson of Rich and Jan Briede) stationed in Dover, Delaware; Christopher Skopec (son of Steven and Debbie Skopec) stationed in North Carolina; Sean Rosales (son of Ed and Mia Rosales) stationed in Washington.

(Please let the church office (708) 423-1040 know when your need for our prayer list is over.)

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

MESSAGES FROM OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS

Dear Fellow Members of St. Paul Lutheran Church,

My newsletter article for April has three purposes. First, I want to let you know how fortunate the Elders feel to work with our loving members. We admire your kindness, generosity, and devotion. Thanks to you, St. Paul has been able to create and maintain many strong programs which God has blessed! And we appreciate how enthusiastically you have responded to Rev. Gregg Ramirez, our vacancy pastor, and how warmly you have welcomed Mr. Jeffrey Kiel, our new director of music. They need everyone's support.

Second, I want to remind you that April will have Holy Week as its highlight and focal point. We encourage you to attend services scheduled for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. You will discover seasonal music, relevant messages, traditional liturgy, lively fellowship, and ample access to the Sacrament of Holy Communion, God's gift of strength, hope, and comfort to his followers.

Third, I want to assure you that the Elders remain committed to assisting St. Paul in its efforts to care for the congregation and the surrounding community. We ask members to consider whether they might become more involved in St. Paul's various ministries. We can welcome many more participants in our church's worship program, in our social ministry activities, in our fellowship events, in our musical life, in our outreach to military personnel, and in our Bible study classes!

The Elders pray that God will continue to bless our congregation. We wish each of you, dear members, confidence in God's forgiveness and salvation, and we hope you find bountiful Easter joy at the thought of resurrection and eternal life in Heaven.

Yours in Christ,
David Witkosky
St. Paul Board of Elders

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTORAL CALL COMMITTEE

At a special call meeting held on March 15, the St. Paul Voters' Assembly unanimously elected the Rev. David Lindenberg of Peace Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota to be our next pastor. At the meeting, Pastor Lindenberg was notified in a phone conversation that he would be receiving our call. He was sent an email of the call documents which were then officially sent by priority mail.

We pray (and also ask you to pray) for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as Pastor Lindenberg considers his two calls – his new call to St. Paul and his current call to Peace Lutheran Church. May God's will be done!

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

MESSAGE FROM FAITH IN ACTION/SOCIAL MINISTRIES

FIA would like to thank the St. Paul congregation for their contributions of non-perishable food items and monetary donations during March and the Easter holiday season. We are already preparing bags for Easter. They will be distributed on April 2nd and 16th. Your financial support and gifts of groceries are very much appreciated.

We had another record breaking food pantry in March. In **March**, we served 93 families and 267 individuals, and received 7 new clients. We are so happy, we are also able to share God's Easter blessings with them through the Lenten devotional "Servant of the Lord" by Lutheran Hour Ministries. Thank you to Ruth and Joel Sievers for making these copies available to the food pantry. **Thrivent** also blessed us with two more \$250 Visa cards. We thank Mike Will and MaryLou Degidio for applying for these Thrivent Action Team grants. Thank you to Thrivent to help congregations like ours reach out into the community and help those in need.

The USPS 2025 food drive entitled "Stamp Out Hunger" is scheduled for Saturday, May 10th. Please save that date on your calendar. Let's make a difference in the fight against hunger! We thank the United States Postal Service for continuing this great community service for the food pantries in our area. We especially want to thank Vince Klimczak, our postal director, and the Bridgeview Post office for their volunteer efforts. More information about this yearly campaign can be found online @ #StampOutHunger! We will again be in need of drivers to pick-up groceries from the Bridgeview post office and deliver them to St. Paul on Saturday, May 10th. This food drive is wonderful and helps us stock our shelves with much needed groceries. We have the Timothy room reserved during the week of May 9th-16th. If you can help sometime during this week to help organize or mark cans, your help would be much appreciated.

We thank Larry Fetchko w/ district 123 and also Shari Wolfe with the Oak Lawn Park district; they have again donated three Oak Lawn Community Garden beds to St. Paul's food pantry. Through these gardens we are able to share fresh produce to our food pantry clients. If you are interested in helping in these gardens, either watering or weeding, please contact Mike Will, or leave your name and number with the church office. Before you toss those poinsettia and Easter pots, we can use them for our garden! Thank you!

We also collected 1763 pounds of rescued food, including Panera, Operation Blessing, Elmhurst-Yorkfield Food Pantry, and Southside Pregnancy Center. These items include meat, frozen mini pizzas, produce, deli, bread & pastries. We are so thankful for these food pantry partners. We are also thankful for the St. Paul men's cook team. They prepared a wonderful corned beef, cabbage, potato & carrot dinner with St. Patrick cookies on March 17th.

You are always welcome to join our team. Just call the church office and leave us a message (food pantry x18).

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Our Adult Choir and Handbell Choir are busy preparing for Holy Week and Easter, and we thank all of our members for giving of their time and talents to make our worship services beautiful. If you would like to join us and be a part of making music to the Lord, please speak to one of our singers/ringers or director Jeff Kiel and let us know how you would like to participate. Even if making music is not your thing, we hope you enjoy hearing what we have to offer and find our worship services uplifting to your soul. Thank you for your support of our musical efforts.

MESSAGE FROM OPERATION BARNABAS

We will be packing care packages on Tuesday April 8th at 10:30 am. If you care to join us, stop by or just come see what we do. If you are interested in reaching out on a personal level, there are blank note cards next to the military mailbox on the counter outside the church office. Your message can be as short or as long as you want. Address it to all service men and women, and we will put your note in one of the boxes. The troops would love to hear from you.

Operation Barnabas will be hosting a luncheon at the Manteno Veteran's Home on May 17th, which is Armed Forces Day.

We have picked Saturday, September 20st for this year's St Paul Veterans Luncheon. Getting a speaker for the luncheon is the hardest part of the planning.

Your continued support to Operation Barnabas is essential. Without it nothing of what we are doing could be accomplished.

THANK YOU and may GOD bless us all!

MESSAGE FROM THE LADIES GUILD

The Ladies Guild will host the Lenten supper on Wednesday, April 2nd, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Please bring your family and friends and join us in the Timothy Room for our famous beef vegetable soup, salad, bread, crackers, desserts and drinks. The Lenten service follows at 7 pm.

Our next general meeting will be at 1 pm on Earth Day - Tuesday, April 22nd. As spring is here, we are all looking forward to the presentation on flower arranging, led by our own Terry Hornburg. Please bring a friend and join us for an interesting afternoon!

MEMORIALS & THANKOFFERINGS

MEMORIALS

Given by:

Norma Silinski
Jan & Rich Przybycien
Sharon Lawrence
June Hagberg
Cheryl Horan
Cheryl Horan
Debbie & Mike Will
Elaine Lebron
Dawn Schumann
Sue & John Lilja
Ruth Diver

In Memory Of:

Edna Johnson
Harold Lawrence (B-Day)
Harold Lawrence (B-Day)
Edna Johnson
Edna Johnson
Geraldine "Gerry" Keipert
Kim Sierzega
Dana Lebron
Linda Schumann (B-Day)
Robert Klaviter (her Uncle)
Edna Johnson

Designated for:

General Fund
Operation Barnabas
Operation Barnabas
Faith in Action (FIA)
General Fund
General Fund
Faith in Action (FIA)
General Fund
General Fund
Operation Barnabas
Faith in Action (FIA)

THANK OFFERINGS

Given by:

Grace Kreten
Elizabeth Shamasko
Debbie & Mike Will

For:

Blessings Received
Many Blessings
Our Food Pantry Community Outreach – Faith in Action (FIA)

Designated for:

Faith in Action (FIA)
General Fund

ELDER'S SPRING DINNER

Friday, May 2nd

(6pm to 10pm)

At

The Worth American Legion Hall

110th and Depot

Worth, IL

Reservations required

By Friday, April 16th

\$30.00 per person

to be paid by April 21st

Make checks payable to St Paul Lutheran Church

and on memo line put Dinner.

Reservations are limited to 80.

Buffet Menu

Italian Roasted Chicken

Italian Sausage w/Onions, Peppers, and Garlic Potatoes

Polish Sausage w/Sauerkraut

Tossed Green Salad

Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy

Green Beans

Dinner Rolls

Desserts

Cash Bar

Additional parking is available in the METRA parking lot across the street.

St. Paul Lutheran Church - Oak Lawn, Illinois

April 2025



March ← → May

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 *Deadline for ordering Easter Lilies and Daffodils* 10:00 am Bd of Elders 6:30 pm Bd of Trustees 6:30 pm Bd of Evangelism/Parish Ed 6:30 pm Faith In Action 6:30 pm Bd of Stewardship	2 FOOD PANTRY 2:00 pm Food Pantry 5:30-6:30 pm Lenten Supper 7:00 pm Lenten Worship 8:00 pm Choir rehearsal	3	4	5
6 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study 10:30 am Celebration Ringers rehearsal	7 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	8 10:00 am Ladies Guild Board 10:30 am Operation Barnabas 6:30 pm Church Council	9 5:30-6:30 pm Lenten Supper 7:00 pm Lenten Worship 8:00 pm Choir rehearsal	10	11	12
13 Palm Sunday 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study 10:30 am Celebration Ringers rehearsal	14 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	15	16 FOOD PANTRY 2:00 pm Food Pantry 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	17 Maundy Thursday 11:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 7:00 pm Worship with Holy Communion	18 Good Friday 11:00 am Good Friday Tenebrae Service 7:00 pm Good Friday Tenebrae Service	19
20 Easter Sunday 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study	21 3:00 pm BEDS Cook Team 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	22 1:00 pm Ladies Guild General Meeting	23	24	25	26
27 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study	28 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	29	30 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	May 1	2	3