

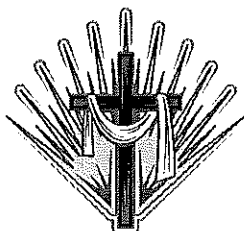
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# THE LETTER OF ST. PAUL

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February, 2024

Volume 61, Number 2



**St. Paul Lutheran Church**  
4660 W. 94<sup>th</sup> Street  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453  
(708) 423-1040  
[www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://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.

For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

**Happy Valentine's Day!**

It's time to renew your subscription to the Lutheran Witness magazine. If you are interested in renewing or starting a subscription, read more inside.

Pray for our missionaries, Rev. David and Joyce Erber as they seek to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love to the people of Ghana, Africa.

**WORSHIP SERVICES:**  
**SUNDAY, 9AM**  
**WEDNESDAY, 6PM**  
**(7PM During Lent ONLY)**

## **ASH WEDNESDAY** **MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES &** **SUPPERS**

The beginning of Lent is Ash Wednesday, February 14, and is a day of repentance. Ash Wednesday services will be held at 11am and 7pm. The services include Confession & Absolution and the celebration of Holy Communion. During our Ash Wednesday services, ashes will be placed upon the forehead of those desiring this outward sign of our inward repentance. Ashes will be imposed during the time of Holy Communion, before the bread and wine are distributed. Those wishing not to receive the ashes are asked to simply bow their heads into their hands as the distributor of the ashes passes by. Parents are encouraged to speak with their children beforehand about the ashes and their meaning. Ashes will not be given to children without their parent's consent.

All members are invited to a free continental breakfast that will be served by the Ladies Guild on Ash Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 10am in the Timothy Room. Please come to enjoy food, fellowship, and inspirational singing! The Ash Wednesday morning communion service follows at 11am. ALL ARE WELCOME! If you are able to help with a food donation for the breakfast, please sign the "Food Donation" sheet on the counter outside the church office.

You are also invited to join us for food and fellowship at the Lenten Suppers held on Wednesdays, February 21 & 28 and March 6, 13 & 20 from 5:30-6:30pm in Fellowship Hall. A free-will offering will be received. A hymn sing precedes the service at 6:40pm with the service at 7pm. Unlike the other five Wednesday evening Lenten services, there will be no "supper" preceding the Ash Wednesday evening service due to the penitential nature of the day.

**GOD BLESS YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY!**

# THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

## Not Much Going On?

The season of Epiphany is tucked between our celebration of Jesus' birth and the darker days of His passion, crucifixion and death for the sins of the world. But even during those dark days, we anticipate His glorious resurrection on the first Easter Sunday, when He confirmed His authority over death and Satan for us, making eternity with Him in heaven a reality for all who believe – truly our greatest reason for celebration and joy!

But between all of that is the season of Epiphany, when it might not seem like much is going on. While Valentine's day may fall during this time, I can't think of any "Hallmark Holidays" that Epiphany generates. Still, it's an incredibly important time in the Church and for us Christians!

It's important, because it's the time when, through the inspired Word of God, we begin to see Jesus as He truly is: The Son of God, Savior of the world, and Lord over all. While we don't read all of the Epiphany accounts every year, over time we have learned much!

First, God clearly proved His love for people of every nation by leading the gentile Magi to acknowledge and worship His Son as Lord (Matthew 2:1-12). The season continues with the baptism of Jesus, when the Holy Spirit descended on Him "like a Dove" and the Father spoke from heaven and declared Him to be His Son, with whom He is well pleased. Not only is Jesus' identity confirmed, but we're also given a clear and complete picture of the Holy Trinity (Matthew 3:13-17).

Then, after resisting the intense temptations of Satan, Jesus begins to gather His 12 disciples who would learn from Him, and so be prepared to share the message of salvation with the world after Jesus' ascension. He took Simon, Andrew, James and John from their careers as fishermen and gave them new callings as evangelists. They would now be fishers of men, and they became the core group of His disciples who would be with Him throughout His ministry.

During this time, He proclaimed the Gospel in the synagogues as He restored vision, speech, and hearing to those impaired, mobility to those suffering from paralysis, and gave hope and freedom to those who had been caught in Satan's grip by his demons.

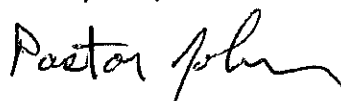
It was during this time that Jesus preached the "Sermon on the Mount," bringing encouragement for the people of God through the teachings we call "the Beatitudes." The downhearted, the grieving, those longing for righteousness, and especially those who are persecuted because of their relationship with Him are blessed to hear His promise of the Kingdom of Heaven as their reward (Matthew 5:1-12). But along with the blessed peace of the Gospel, Jesus also affirmed that God's Law must still be fulfilled and that He would be the one to fulfill it for us, even as we—His people—must continue to strive to live by it (Matthew 5:13-48).

The Epiphany season ends with the account of the gift that Jesus gave to Peter, James, and John when they saw Him transfigured before them. For a brief moment they saw Jesus in all His heavenly brightness and splendor, assuring them of His Godly power and glory even as He was preparing them for what still lay ahead—His gruesome suffering and death for the sins of the world and His resurrection victory for our salvation (Matthew 17:1-9).

As they were prepared, so are we prepared by the time of reflection and repentance that we call Lent. This year Ash Wednesday is February 14, when we'll begin once more to follow Jesus on His journey to the cross. The theme for our Midweek Lenten worship this year is "*Behold the Man*," Pontius Pilate's short, yet profound sermon in which he unwittingly pointed the world to Christ. We'll carry this theme through Holy Week to our joyous celebration of His resurrection on Easter Sunday.

*With so much going on*, I hope everyone who is able will join us for all of these very special Sunday and Midweek services, and as always, please be sure to invite and bring family and friends with you!

In His peace,



## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

### ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 W. 94<sup>th</sup> Street, Oak Lawn, IL 60453  
(708) 423-1040 ~ [www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://www.stpauloaklawn.org)

**Pastor:** Rev. John S. Moeller~ [prjohn99@stpauloaklawn.org](mailto:prjohn99@stpauloaklawn.org)

**Director of Music:** Mrs. Ruth Sievers

**Church Administrative Assistant:** Mrs. Sandra Barry ~ [sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org](mailto:sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org)

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

To view our calendar, visit [www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://www.stpauloaklawn.org)

The deadline for placing articles in the newsletter is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month.

Send submissions to [sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org](mailto:sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org).

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#### **BURIAL(S):**

We extend our Christian sympathy to the following families:

To the family of *Dylan Michael Schuit*, called from this life to his eternal rest with Jesus on November 28, 2023 and buried on December 4, 2023.

To the family of *Susan Marie Volk*, called from this life to her eternal rest with Jesus on December 4, 2023 and buried on December 9, 2023.

To the family of *Joseph Small*, called from this life to his eternal rest with Jesus on December 17, 2023 and buried on January 6, 2024.

To the family of *Jackie Dean McElroy, Jr.* called from this life to his eternal rest with Jesus on January 17, 2024 and buried on January 22, 2024.

To the family of *Roy Strassner*, called from this life to his eternal rest with Jesus on January 24, 2024 and buried on January 29, 2024.

#### **REMOVED BY TRANSFER:**

Mr. William Voight and son, Anthony Voight

#### **THANK YOU**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Thank you for the delightful time together during your weekly Advent service and meal. You are always a great encouragement to us. Your financial support and prayers make our work in Ghana possible. God bless you as you reach lives in Oak Lawn. Pastor David and Joyce Erber

#### **REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS**

**OUR MEMBERS:** Rev. Paul and Judy Anderson; Betty Beegle; Jan Briede; Nancy Bundley; Delphine Cherry; Mike Degidio; Loretta Frank; Louis Clayton Frank; Arthur Gerth; Katherine Hice;

## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

Kevin Hickey; Roy Hodgeman; Herta Iversen; Graham Jackson; Ron Klingensmith; Betty Kruckow; Elaine Lebron; Ingrid Lesko; Bob Marcinkowski; Warren A. Miller; George Oberg; Dorothy Pavella; Barbara Prendergast; Janice & Rich Przybycien; Rosa Richardson; Kurt Seehofer; Beverly Sellers; Patty Sellers; Norma Silinski; Carol Small; Melva Smith; Bill Volk; Sarah Weber

**OUR MEMBERS IN CARE FACILITIES:** Diane Bernitt; Betty Larson; Gloria Meyer; Lisa Polezoes; Delores Stegemann

**FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE CONGREGATION:** Lisa Anglin; Devon Apt; Barbara Apt; Carrie Aspan; Cathy Becker; Sue Berg; LeRoy Bitner; Henry Bonder; Pam Brown; Sharon Bryant; Debby Cabera; Selma Carmichel; Frankie Coglina; Judy Collins; Gabriella Conforti; Edward Cyga; Bridget & Nick DeAngelo; Denise DeLaurentis; Shirley Demyres; Richard DeSaga; Justin & Ashley Fasel; Emily Feehan; Triston Ferry; Mike Feyerer; Mark Fishbaugh; Gloria Folsom; Rev. Daniel Gensch; Jerry Gross; Ted Gross; Donald Hakanson; Shawn Harland; Charley Heitz; Ann Herold; Bob Hessert; Phyllis Hicks; Helena Hoffman; Elaine Hoffstetter; Doreen Holford; Carl Hoppe; Elaine and Paul Horan; Vern Howe; Louise Hrynkow; Kyle Hughes; Rich Huscher; Monica Kato; Diane Johannes; Dana Kahn; Julie King; Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.; Debra Kleeman; Herb Kleeman; Evelyn & Ron Konieski; Christopher Kosary; Dorothy Kroll; Ken Kruckow; The Kruski Family; The Lamberth family; Carol Loecherbach; Margaret Lundgreen; Ron Lunt; Todd, Sofia & Grace Lynum; Ken Matz; LaNell Mauler Koenig; Iris McCoy; Carol Jean McPhillips; Audrey Metes; Carol Milazzo; Paul Moeller; Andrew Mrochen; Jessica Nigrelli; Eda Nitz; Paul Noffke; Roberta & Carlos Owens; Luke Pajowski; Pam Palhegyi; Patricia Paulsen; Sandy Plath; Jackie Plichta; Barb Potter; Doris Potts; Fred Raddatz; Guillermo Rameriz; Raquel Rameriz; Rose Rohloff; Kimberly Rooney; Sophia Salus; Donna Santi; Elmo Schultz; Rhonda Scott; Allyson Seehofer; Anika Seger; Linda Shuman; Al Silinski; Sarah Skelton; Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.; Del Smylie; Janet Trierweiler; Bernadette & Rich Trusk; Jose Urena; Wayne Volk; Vicki Warren; Gene Wawrzynikowski

**THOSE IN THE MILITARY:** Mark Brown (son of Pam Brown and nephew of Beth Matusевичius) Navy Reserves/Great Lakes Naval Base, Chicago); 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.)**

### **GROW IN CHRIST ~ ADULT BIBLE CLASS ~ THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY**

All are invited to join us each week as we gather together to glorify God through fellowship with one another and to study God's Word after services at 10:15am in the Timothy Room. Grab a cup of coffee and something to eat and join us!

Thursday Evening Bible Study is held in the Timothy Room at 7pm. The topic for discussion is the Travels and Events of Jesus and the Disciples. The Chosen Study will also resume in early February. All are invited!

# 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. Pastor would love to visit with you.

## EMAIL ADDRESSES

We know that some of our members and St. Paul friends do not have computers. But for those who do, we would love to have your email address. If you have an e-mail address and you would be willing to share it with the church office, or if you've changed your email address, please send your new information to [sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org](mailto:sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org).

## FLOWERS OR PLANTS FOR THE ALTAR

Thanks to everyone who purchased or provided flowers for our altar in 2023! It's a New Year and a *NEW CALENDAR* has been posted in the narthex. There are many available spots to sign-up for your special date to have flowers or a plant placed on the altar in celebration or remembrance. If you would like to put flowers or a plant on the altar to celebrate a special occasion or "just because", please reserve your date on the calendar or call the church office (708) 423-1040 to place an order. Please make your check payable to *Terry Hornburg*.

## LENTEN DEVOTIONS

Our Lenten Devotions this season are entitled "*Lamb of God*". In *Lamb of God*, we see Jesus as both human and divine. He is concerned about people's everyday lives and their eternal welfare. But meeting our need goes further than our daily concerns. As God's Son, He bore the weight of our sins, each and every one, so you and I in faith can carry His mission to the world. Lenten Devotions are in the narthex and on the counters in the east and west wings. Please take a copy for your family to share. Devotions can also be viewed online or downloaded at [www.adventdevotions.net](http://www.adventdevotions.net).

## LUTHERAN WITNESS MAGAZINE

It's time to renew your subscription to The Lutheran Witness! For those who don't know about this publication it was written by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod especially for the lay person and talks about living the Christian life today, worldwide missions, ministries of various congregations and encourages you in your personal walk of faith. If you would like to become a subscriber, or renew your subscription, please submit **\$20.65**. Make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church and enter *Lutheran Witness* Subscription in the memo of your check. You can put your envelope in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. **Deadline for submissions is Friday, March 1, 2024.**

## COLLECTION OF MISSION MATERIALS

Robert and Annette Powers stopped by the church office on Christmas Day and picked up **22 boxes of mission materials** that St. Paul congregation provided for their ministry. They were truly grateful for your donations and are excited to deliver the *Love Packages* to missionaries all around the world. Donating used Bibles, Hymnals, Portals of Prayer, children's Bible story books, children's Christian coloring books, puzzles, and finger puppets, makes a huge difference in the lives of those hungry for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Please continue to donate any unused materials you may have in your home. There is a box to accept your donations in the Founders Room. You can also drop off any donations to the church office at your convenience.

# OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

## POP TOP TABS

St. Paul saves pop top tabs to help benefit Ronald McDonald House which is a place to call home for families of children who are ill and in the care of Advocate Children's Hospital. Please save your tabs and bring them to the church office. A bright green box for collecting your donations is on the table in the narthex. Every tab makes a difference. Thank you for your donations.

## BEDS-PLUS ~ SOUP & BREAD EVENT

The Soup and Bread Event benefiting Beds-Plus will take place on Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> from 3-7pm at the Holiday Inn Countryside. Tickets are \$25 per person and children under 8 eat free! Raffle tickets are also available for purchase - 1 ticket for \$25 or 5 tickets for \$100. This family-friendly event will feature live music, approximately 20 soups from area restaurants/chefs, and new this year, try a variety of craft beers, wines and spirits. For tickets, visit [www.beds-plus.org](http://www.beds-plus.org) or call (708) 354-0858.

## MESSAGES FROM OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

**MESSAGE FROM THE ELDERS:** Dear Fellow Members of St. Paul Lutheran Church: It is a blessing to begin a new year of worship and praise. The Elders pray that you greet 2024 with confidence in God's forgiveness, gratitude for the promise of salvation, and excitement over the assurance of resurrection—all gifts from God through Christ Jesus. The start of a new year might be the cause of uncertainty and anxiety for non-believers, but it should be a time of joyful expectation and love for Christians. We know that God remains true to his word and character ("*I the Lord do not change.*" *Malachi 3:6*). And we know that God's many gifts to believers—faith, redemption, salvation, and resurrection—stand the test of time ("*Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.*" *1 Kings 8:56*).

The Elders give thanks for the wonderful pageant of Advent, Christmas, and New Year's Eve services that took place this past December. We thank Pastor Moeller for his messages and Ruth Sievers, along with the choirs and musicians, for their inspiration. We are grateful to the various church boards and committees for their assistance, the trustees for their care and maintenance of our festive church home, and the members of St. Paul for their participation. May God bless each of you!

The season of Lent begins this month; Ash Wednesday is February 14. While many people view Lent as a period of sorrow and melancholy, there is reason to rejoice at this time of the church year. Christ accepted and endured punishment for all our sins, died, and then rose to show absolute power over death and the devil. The suffering and death of Christ, along with his resurrection, open to us as believers the possibility of eternal life in Heaven ("*But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.*" *Psalm 13:5-6*). The Elders have finalized the schedule of Lenten and Easter services, and a detailed listing can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Several congregational events, program modifications, and worship service changes are in discussion and preparation as this letter is being written. Arrangements for a Volunteer Appreciation Brunch are being finalized; the date and time will be announced shortly. Activities related to Operation Barnabas

## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

continue to draw much support and enthusiasm from members of the congregation; however, we are actively seeking more volunteers who can solicit donations, sort items, pack boxes to ship, and take care of postal and customs formalities. Thursday Evening Bible Study resumed in late January after a short break, and in early February, the popular series, *The Chosen*, became the focus of meetings once again. Each week, participants have the opportunity to view a series video, take part in informal discussions, and socialize with St. Paul members and visitors. Finally, starting on Sunday, February 11, St. Paul will once again offer Holy Communion at the rail. Members are asked to be patient as the Pastor, the Elders, and the ushers get reacquainted with this beloved traditional means of receiving Christ's body and blood.

The Elders urge the congregation to support St. Paul's community outreach programs, its work to spread God's word here and abroad, and its efforts to care for church members. Consider offering your time and financial resources to assist the Board of Parish Education/Evangelism, the Board of Stewardship, Faith in Action, the Ladies Guild, the LWML, or the Board of Trustees. Keep all LCMS missionaries in your prayers.

2024 is a gift from God. Whatever problems, worries, or fears each of us might have, we can trust God to be aware of our concerns and to offer us comfort and relief (*"The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion."* Psalm 116:5). Let's take the opportunity as we enter 2024 to initiate a dialogue with God, one in which we approach him unabashedly with our requests and desires and are receptive to his responses (*"God...is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinately beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes."* Ephesians 3:20). Yours in Christ, David Witkosky, St. Paul Board of Elders

**MESSAGE FROM THE PASTORAL CALL COMMITTEE:** The Call Committee has met with members of the Northern Illinois District staff who will assist St. Paul congregation in the calling of our next pastor. Thank you to St. Paul members who participated in the congregational survey. While the Call Committee has received results of the survey, we are in the process of asking District personnel to provide a concise interpretation of the survey.

The next step is to receive results of a demographic study which the District office has prepared.

Names of candidates who St. Paul members wish to nominate for pastor will be accepted, but just not yet. Hold on to those names and soon they can be submitted to the Call Committee on an official form.

Call Committee members are: Bill Leise, Chairman; Jean Racek, Secretary; Ruth Sievers; George Oberg; David Witkosky; Betty Shamasko; Kevin Kenealy; Sue Lilja; and John Lilja. Our Pastoral Advisor is Rev. Dr. Valdes Ausra, our Circuit Visitor.

Please continue to pray for the Call Committee, the call process, and for Pastor Moeller and the future pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

**MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:** We were privileged to have a number of men sing with our St. Paul Men's Choir on Sunday, January 28th. The anthems were sung in memory of Stan Wirtschoreck, who often served as a vocalist for our services and was also a faithful member of

## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

St. Paul's choirs for many years! Thank you to the Men's Choir, to the Adult Choir, and to Sandy Barry and Mandy Signorelli for their participation in our January worship services.

After a short winter recess, the Adult Choir will again resume their weekly choir rehearsals at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 7th, following the Wednesday evening church service. All adults of all voice parts are welcome to join us. We will be singing for the 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday service on February 14th. Our handbells have been boxed and shipped to a handbell company in PA for a much-needed refurbishing of them. We are hoping that we will have them returned to us in time to use them for our Easter service. Thank you to the bell ringers and their director, Martha Moeller, for their beautiful selections this Christmas season. Members are also needed and welcome to join the Southwest Lutheran Chorus, which is directed by Ruth Sievers and rehearses here at St. Paul. The next rehearsal of the Chorus is Monday evening, February 19, at 7:00 p.m. and will continue each Monday at 7:00 p.m. For further information, see Ruth or call her at 708-952-9902!

**MESSAGE FROM EVANGELISM/PARISH ED:** I hope you had a wonderful and blessed holiday season! Now, we just need to get through these cold, snowy days of winter. Our job is to stay warm and upright on the slippery slopes!!

This past week we started the month-long campaign in support of the Southside Pregnancy Center. The table in the narthex includes a list of items the center needs. Feel free to take one. There are also envelopes available if you choose to give a monetary gift. If you write a check, please make it payable to: *Southside Pregnancy Center*. There is a slip included in the envelope to fill out if you want a receipt. The campaign runs until Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Please consider helping the Southside Pregnancy Center and the little ones they save.

Our board will host the Lenten supper on Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-6:30pm in Fellowship Hall, prior to the hymn sing in the church around 6:40pm and our worship service at 7pm. The menu is still a mystery but be assured, it will taste good!

We hope to plan a potluck in the Timothy Room when the Kitchenette is complete. So many of our functions are in the Timothy Room and the kitchenette will be a real blessing.

We are looking at dates for the Parking Lot Party and are deciding on two dates: August 17<sup>th</sup> or August 24<sup>th</sup>. We need to decide soon so we can reserve the date with the various vendors who add to our event.

There is something for everyone so enjoy the day and bring family, friends and neighbors. We are always happy to hear any ideas you might have to make the day more enjoyable.

Well, that's all for now. Stay safe and warm. Spring will be here before we know it. Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Cheryl Horan, Board of Evangelism / Paris Education

**MESSAGE FROM THE LADIES GUILD:** The St. Paul Ladies Living for Christ Guild invites all members and their friends to our annual Ash Wednesday Continental Breakfast on Ash Wednesday, February 14, at 10 a.m. in the Timothy Room. Ladies Guild members and others interested are asked to bring their donations of food items such as muffins, fruit, coffee cake, bagels, etc. by 9:45 a.m. that day. Please also sign the food donation sheet on the clipboard outside the church office so we can plan



## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

ahead. The breakfast hour will also include some singing of favorite hymns before the 11 a.m. Ash Wednesday service in church.

This year, the women of the Guild will again serve beef vegetable soup, salad and desserts at the Lenten supper on Wednesday, March 6th at 5:30 p.m. Please see Ruth Sievers to sign up to bring a specific ingredient donation towards the soup or another part of the meal. Our January meeting was cancelled due to the icy conditions the day of the meeting. We were looking forward to playing bunco and hope to be able to reschedule that later this spring. With the above two cooking/baking events taking precedence, there is no February general meeting. For our next general meeting on March 26, our guest speaker will again be Attorney Jonathan Groll, who will present the latest information on ID theft and scams - always a very informative meeting to which you may want to invite other friends to join you in attendance.

**MESSAGE FROM THE LWML:** This year's Lenten Inspiration will be held on Saturday, March 2, 2024 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1045 Belvidere Road in Belvidere, IL. Registration and breakfast begin at 8am and the Inspiration is held from 9am-2pm. Come hear from Rev. Kris Whitby as the ladies reflect in the Lenten season. The LWML is collecting food, sheets, and blankets for Empower Boone!

Lutheran Braille Workers freely supplies large print and braille materials for blind and visually impaired people around the world. The 2023-2025 Mission Grant No. 4, *Fortifying Faith in those with Vision Impairment*, is a \$100,000 LWML grant that will help in developing, formatting, producing, and distributing fifty to one hundred new Scripture-based and theologically related materials to people in need around the world.

If you've come to know and love LWML, you recognize the Mite box as a major component in supporting missions around the world. Since 1942, Mite box offerings have funded tens of millions of dollars in mission grants and continue to be a focal point in raising women's mission consciousness. Please take a Mite box (found in the church narthex and wings) and commit to filling one with coins so the work of the LWML can continue meeting their grants and spreading the love of the Gospel around the world.

**MESSAGE FROM OPERATION BARNABAS:** Four Chaplains Day is observed on the First Sunday in February. Four Chaplains, who trained together and became friends at Army Chaplains School, were assigned to serve aboard the USAT Dorchester, a converted civilian liner. Those chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Methodist Minister; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Jewish Rabbi; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic Priest; and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Reformed Church in America Minister.

On January 23, 1943, a three-ship convoy that included the Dorchester left New York to steam to a base in Greenland with 902 aboard. During the early morning hours of February 3, 1943, at 12:55 a.m., the Dorchester was torpedoed by the German submarine U-223 off Newfoundland in the Atlantic. The torpedo knocked out the Dorchester's electrical system, leaving the ship dark. Panic set in among the men on board, many of them trapped below decks. The chaplains sought to calm the men and organize an orderly evacuation of the ship and helped guide wounded men to safety. As life jackets were passed

## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

out to the men, the supply ran out before each man had one. The chaplains removed their own life jackets and gave them to others. They helped as many men as they could into lifeboats, and as the Dorchester sinks, the Chaplains locked arms on the rising bow, in prayer for the others. The survivors in the water heard then singing hymns in Hebrew, Latin and English.

Grady Clark, a survivor said: "As I swam away from the ship, I looked back. The flares had lighted everything. The bow came up high and she slid under. The last thing I saw, the Four Chaplains were up there praying for the safety of the men. They had done everything they could. I did not see them again. They themselves did not have a chance without their life jackets." Only 230 of the 902 men aboard the ship were rescued. Life jackets offered little protection from hypothermia which killed most men in the water. The water temperature was 34 F (1 C) and the air temperature was 36 F (2 C). By the time additional rescue ships arrived, hundreds of dead bodies were seen floating on the water, kept up by their life jackets. 'From the American Legion Magazine'.

The Care Package Program is ongoing. The year started with 13 boxes sent in January, that number of boxes will be going up in February when we get names and addresses of LCMS chaplains and other troops being deployed.

There is a puzzle books drive to collect sudoku, crossword, and word search books. These can be easily gotten from your favorite dollar store. They help maintain or slow down the loss of cognitive abilities. The drive is starting now and will be ongoing through the middle of May when they will be delivered to the Manteno Veterans Home and Hines V.A. Hospital.

If you are interested in helping with one of the various aspects of Operation Barnabas, please call Rich Przybycien on 708-420-9525. Bring a friend, they don't have to be a St Paul member to help. Helping the morale of the troops can leave you with a good feeling inside.

To the Congregation of St Paul: "THANK YOU" for your support of our care packages. It is greatly appreciated by the deployed troops, Veterans, and the Operation Barnabas group. MAY GOD BLESS US ALL!

**MESSAGE FROM FAITH IN ACTION / SOCIAL MINISTRIES: This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. We love, because he first loved us. 1 John 4: 10 & 19**

St. Paul congregation, thank you so much for your support for those in need during the Christmas holiday. You have touched the hearts of many with your generosity. Here are the words from the heart of one of our clients through his email.

**He states, "I started paying attention to God and His ways. You are in his hands...I woke up this morning and I said I need food. And then you called me that's being used of the Lord, those things just don't happen ... they're orchestrated if you're in the faith and you're allowing yourself to be used of the Lord. Thank You!"**

These are the words of only one of our clients. So many of them thank you for giving with your heart. We could not help them without your help. You are not only helping feed their bodies, but you are also feeding their souls with Jesus' love. We have been sharing Portals of Prayer with our clients; our

## OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

clients have then been drawn closer to God, and share His love with others through these prayers and devotions.

February is also dental health month at the food pantry. In the past, we were able to receive gifts from dentists in the community, but as we all know things are different today. We have been shopping for months watching for dollar deals on toothpaste and buying toothbrushes for our clients. We will also be sharing the toiletries and hygiene items you and the community have given us. Our clients look forward to this special month when they get something a little extra in their bags.

We are already preparing our shelves for the Easter holiday in March. This year our Easter distributions will be March 6th and 27th; this is the 1st and 4th Wednesday. Mike and Debbie will be spending spring break in Colorado with their family. We changed our food pantry schedule slightly for March to make it a little easier on the team. If you know someone that is in need of our pantry, please feel free to send them to us.

We are also thankful for our food pantry partners. We have been able to include meat, eggs, dairy items, and juice because of their donations. With thankful hearts, we acknowledge our sponsors. In December & January, we received over 245 pounds of bread and pastries from Kevin McCarthy with Panera, over 1320 pounds of vegetables and fruit from Operation Blessing, over 3732 pounds of frozen items including meat, beverages, flour, cereal, and snacks; fresh produce & bakery items, and shelf stable groceries from Jayne Siou with "Put Your Hands Together" Immanuel, Hillside. Along with these sponsors we also received 362 pounds of groceries from Oak Lawn Library, and 571 pounds of groceries from Thompson & Kuenster after their holiday remembrance drive. We also thank Linda Kosary for her constant support by supplying us with toilet paper for all our food pantry bags. Thank you to the board of Evangelism/Christian Education for their holiday children gift bags and to Operation Barnabas for the cookies they did not use. Because of you and our sponsors, we served 85 families and 236 individuals in **January**; and 91 families and 244 individuals in **December**.

The St. Paul's men's cook team will continue to cook and deliver meals for the BEDS at the Summit Service Center; they are preparing a turkey dinner on February 19th. The new BEDS-Plus shelter on 85th & Cicero, previously Aloha Hotel, is always looking for volunteers. They are in need of two types of volunteers, those who want to make meals and bring them over and those who want to help serve the meals and staff the shelter. If you have questions about being a volunteer contact Bill Burke at [burke@beds-plus.org](mailto:burke@beds-plus.org) or call him at 708-831-2237. You have been invited to make an appointment to take a tour before you commit. BEDS-Plus is still doing great things.

Again, thank you for your generosity, and sharing the love of Jesus. **We love, because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19**

**In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:9-11)**

## Stewards of St. Paul

*God constantly cares for us, provides for us, and surrounds us with His love. And yet sometimes, we're slow to give thanks or even acknowledge that constant care. So this month, our Stewardship message takes the form of a prayer, asking for His help and guidance in seeing His gifts and expressing our appreciation for all He does for us.*

Most merciful God, your love is as constant as the shining of the sun beyond the clouds. Your ways are deeper than any ocean depths. We bow again before you to ask your continued guidance, that we may live according to your will and in your grace.

Let your Spirit come freshly upon us, that our lives may be different in the days ahead. Teach us humility, that we may not act in our own conceit. Instill in us a sense of wonder, so that we may see your presence everywhere.

Give to the worried new confidence and to the fearful a sense of trust. Give to the sick and the troubled the power to praise. Comfort the mournful heart and reveal friendship to the lonely. Quicken our senses, deepen our compassion, and stir up our commitment, that we may live this day and always as children of the new covenant in your grace filled family.

Help us to see ourselves as created, called out, and commissioned, in order to create new ties that bind human beings to one another. Help us to see your face, grow in your grace, and serve others in your place—as your hands and feet in our neighborhood and in our world. We pray in the mercy of Christ, Amen.



*Prayer by John R Killinger  
The Stewardship committee*



## MEMORIALS & THANKOFFERINGS

### MEMORIALS – (CONTINUED)

**Given by:**

Janice & Bill Leise  
The McNicholas Family  
Renee & Rick Hull  
Ruth & Dennis Gilgen  
Ruth Sievers  
Karen & John Mueller  
Sharon Rochlitz  
Sue Browne  
Jean & Karen Racek  
Marilyn & Glenn Bitner  
Sandy Barry  
Terry & Emily Hornburg  
Kevin Hickey

**In Memory Of:**

Sue Volk  
Sue Volk  
Sue Volk  
Sue Volk  
Sue Volk  
Sue Volk  
Sue Volk  
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Sue Volk

**Designated for:**

General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund  
Handbell Fund  
Scholarship Fund  
Scholarship Fund  
General Fund  
FIA / Operation Barnabas

### THANK OFFERINGS

**Given by:**

Sandy Barry  
Sandy Barry  
Janice Leise  
David Conrad  
Elizabeth Shamasko

**For:**

Mandy's Birthday  
Blessings Received  
Janice's Birthday  
Alumni Donation  
My Birthday

**Designated for:**

Operation Barnabas  
FIA/Op Barn/Erbers  
General Fund  
General Fund  
General Fund

**TRUST IN THE LORD FOREVER, FOR THE LORD GOD  
IS AN EVERLASTING GOD.**

*(Isaiah 26:4)*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 9am - Communion Service 10:15am - Adult Bible Class	29 7pm - Swt. Luth Chorus Rehearsal	30	31 6pm - Communion Service 7:15pm - Adult Choir Rehearsal	1 <b>FIRST DAY OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH</b> 6:30pm - Stewardship 7pm - Bible Study	2	3
4 9am - Communion Service 10:15am - Adult Bible Class 3pm - Beds-Plus Soup & Bread Event.	5 7pm - Swt. Luth Chorus Rehearsal	6 10am - L. Eld. Board Mtg. 6:30pm - Elders & Trustees 6:30pm - FIA & Evangl/Par Ed	7 2pm - Food Pantry 6pm - Communion Service 7:15pm - Adult Choir Rehearsal	8 7pm - Bible Study	9	10
11 Transfiguration of Our Lord 9am - Communion Service 10:15am - Adult Bible Class	12 7pm - Swt. Luth Chorus Rehearsal	13 10:30am - Op. Barn. Care Packages 6:30pm - Council	14 <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> <b>VALENTINE'S DAY</b> 10am - Lenten Breakfast 11am - Communion Service 7pm - Communion Service 8:15pm - Adult Choir Rehearsal	15 7pm - Bible Study	16	17
18 <b>1st Sunday in Lent</b> 9am - Communion Service 10:15am - Adult Bible Class	19 <b>Presidents' Day</b> 3pm - BEDS - Cook Team 7pm - Swt. Luth Chorus Rehearsal	20	21 2pm - Food Pantry 5:30pm - Supper 7pm - Communion Service 8:15pm - Adult Choir Rehearsal	22 7pm - Bible Study	23	24
25 <b>2nd Sunday in Lent</b> 9am - Communion Service 10:15am - Adult Bible Class	26 7pm - Swt. Luth Chorus Rehearsal	27 7pm - Voters' Meeting	28 5:30pm - Supper 7pm - Communion Service 8:15pm - Adult Choir Rehearsal	29 7pm - Bible Study	1 <b>FIRST DAY OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH</b>	2