

The Link



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

April 2022

Pastor Page:

Grace to you, and peace!

Throughout Lent, we have been talking about *place*, and in particular, finding God in whatever places we may find ourselves.

We started in the dirt, smudging ash on our faces, as we remembered our mortality and entered into a season of self-reflection, penitence, and *metanoia* (turning away from sin and toward God).

We moved to the wilderness place – that place where we lack in understanding or comfort, where we are tempted and challenged in our weakness. There we saw Jesus face the same struggles we do, and in his overcoming them, we found hope.

We moved then to a safer place, beneath the wings of our Stronghold, our Mother Hen. While we may try to seek solace in the very things that cause us to fear (*why* are we so often drawn to that which causes us harm?), Jesus beckons us again and again to find our safety in the shelter of his wings, promising to lay down his life for our protection.

From there, we moved to ground zero, to those places where something so significant happens (often, but not always, tragic) that life is completely reordered from then on. Here Jesus meets us with compassion, urging us to avoid the tragedy brought on by sin, by turning instead toward God.

Not to be left in despair, God then found us at a party! At the end of discernment and wondering and wandering and in-between times, God waits for us with open arms, “rolling back” our shame and loving us just as much if not more than ever before.

There are many more places we will find God, during Lent and well beyond, but most profoundly we will find him this month in the strangest place of all: hanging on a cross. From there he shows us the extent of his love, and his willingness to be with us in *every* place, even the unimaginable ones, even the painful ones, even the humiliating ones. God is here.

But strangest of all is the place we *won't* find God – come Easter, we will *not* find God in the tomb! We will *not* find God stuck in death. And because of what takes place Easter morning, we will not find ourselves there, either!

This month we will go with Christ from places of both love and betrayal on Maundy Thursday, to a place of death on Good Friday, to a place of life and liberation on Easter. Yes, God is with us in all of those places. And God is with you now, wherever you are. Thanks be to God!

In faith,
Pastor Johanna

From the Church Office



I don't have the words to express my deep gratitude for the amazing love and support that

you have showered on me as I step off into my new work adventure. Thank you, thank you, thank you for being as wonderful and amazing as you are! I am so grateful for my time at St. Paul's and feel more like I am moving away from my family to work remotely. That being said, I hope to see you all very soon and catch up on all of the beautiful things that are happening in your lives in the time that we are apart.

Be well, my dear friends. You will remain in my heart and prayers always.

Love from,

Michelle

Articles for the **May issue of the "Link"** must be received by 9:00 a.m. on Friday, April 15th. Please send them to Pastor Johanna until our new Administrator has a chance to settle in and get set up.

Please submit any reports or articles in MS Word format for ease of inclusion in the full report or newsletter. *As always, do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions or concerns.*



PASTORAL ACTS

No pastoral acts for March 2022



Hello! I am so excited to join the St. Paul's community as Office Administrator. A little about me – I have degrees in economics and finance and prior to this position I have worked in the community banking sector. In my free time I enjoy going on adventures with my family (husband Greg and daughters Jocelyn (age 6), and Madelyn (age 2)). I am looking forward to this new journey. Please stop by to say hello – I look forward to meeting you!

Jenna Meyn

New Bookkeeper

Welcome also to Kathie Mariano, our new bookkeeper! Kathie has a degree in business management from Johnson & Whales College in Rhode Island and nearly 30 years of experience in accounting. She lives in Pittsford with her husband, and they have a daughter who is currently in law school. Kathie and her family lived in New Zealand for almost 5 years in the 1990s, an experience for which she will forever be grateful. She enjoys traveling with her husband, especially to the beach in North Carolina or to visit their daughter.

St. Paul's Vision

To spread the Word, build a strong community, and make the world a better place.

Our Mission Statement

St. Paul's is a welcoming Christian family. We are created by God, saved by Jesus Christ, God's Son, and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Through joyous worship and mission commitment, St. Paul's furthers the word of God's saving grace.

Livestream & In-person Service Attendance Statistics for March 2022

Date	Unique Viewers	Est. actual total	In-person total
Mar 6	29	49	58
Mar 13	30	51	30
Mar 20	38	65	36
Mar 27	33	56	48
March totals		393	
Avg per service		98	

**Ash Wednesday: 15 online, 33 in person

“WE COUNT BECAUSE YOU COUNT”

Unique devices viewing multiplied by 1.7 (# used by churches to measure online attendance)

Safety Measures: We continue to encourage vaccination/booster and masks for those at higher risk. We also have two air purifiers continuously running.

In the April Link

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- ❖ Our April Calendar can be found online: www.stpaulspittsford.org

Congregation Council Update and New Staff!

Our council met on March 14 in person. We discussed upcoming events, including Holy Week and Easter, and brainstormed some ideas for encouraging people to attend for these events and future in person gatherings.

We plan to invite different groups in the church to host a coffee hour – and council is kicking it off with a *special coffee hour on April 10, Palm Sunday!* Come for worship, stay for fellowship.

We met again briefly on March 28 over Zoom **to officially approve our two new hires:**

BOOKKEEPER:

Kathleen (Kathie) Mariano will serve as our interim bookkeeper. She has much experience doing accounting for various sized organizations, and was happy to take on St. Paul's finances. Michelle was able to train her before she left at the end of March.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR:

Jenna Meyn (pronounced “mine”) began as our new office administrator on March 30. Michelle left copious notes for her, so she is learning the ropes quickly. Jenna has experience in banking and finance, as well as real estate. She is eager to help us fulfill our mission in our community.

Kathie will be working mostly remotely, 10-12 hrs a month.

Jenna will be in the office at the following times, at least to start:

Monday, 9:30-5:00

Wednesday, 9:30-5:00

Thursday, 9:30-4:00

Be sure to stop by and introduce yourself! Both will be wonderful additions to our St. Paul's family.

Planning Ahead

Lenten Bible Study, April 3rd

Following service

Both in-person and online

Every Wednesday in Lent

Prayer at noon, Zoom

Sunday, April 10th

Palm Sunday Service, 9:30

Thursday, April 14th

*Dorcas Rachel Circle luncheon
And Maundy Thursday service/program
at 9:45 a.m in Dorcas Room*

April 14th, 7:00 pm:

Maundy Thursday Service

*Holy Communion and
Stripping of the Altar*

Friday, April 15th, 7:00pm

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

*Reading of John's Passion
with musical reflections*

Friday, April 15th

Link Articles due

(Please email them this month to
pastorjohanna@stpaulspittsford.org)

Sunday, April 17th

Easter Worship at St. Paul's

8:30am and 11am

**Light Easter Reception and Egg Hunt
between services**

Tuesday, April 19th

Congregation Council at 7pm

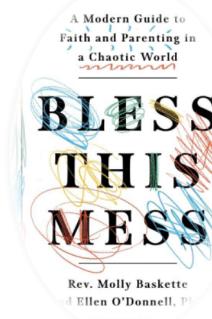
Thursday, April 21st

Mom Group Gathering

6:30-8:30pm at St. Paul's, foyer

Mom's Group Meet-up

April 21 @ 6:30 p.m. in the foyer



Mothers with kids living at home are welcome to join us for an evening of fellowship and encouragement. We will be discussing developing moral character in our children as outlined in Chapter 3 from *Bless This Mess*. Snacks, tea, candles, flowers, and more...come retreat and receive blessings on your journey through motherhood.

An option to join virtually is available.

Email Andrea.Sauer@Live.com or PastorJohanna@stpaulspittsford.org for more information, or a link to join on Zoom.

**Is someone you love
GRADUATING this year?**



If someone in your family is graduating in May or June or has already graduated early in 2022 let us know!

Please send the graduates' name and the name of their high school, college, university, vocational school, program, military, etc. so that we can acknowledge and celebrate their accomplishments in our May/June Link!

You can email them to
mberndt49@gmail.com

Deadline for names to be turned in is May 1st.

Final Lenten Bible Study: Apr. 3

For our final Lenten Bible study on Luke, we will engage in the text creatively with some biblical story-telling!

While Luke shares more details than others, he leaves plenty to the imagination. In this workshop-style Bible study, we will imagine a story from Luke by placing ourselves into the story, and looking around. Then we will write the story as prose, using the details, back story, and subtext we have imagined, and share with each other what we come up with.

This will be a hybrid Bible study – you may join in person after worship, or from home via Zoom. We have a device that allows those at home to see and hear the whole room, and those in person to see and hear those at home.



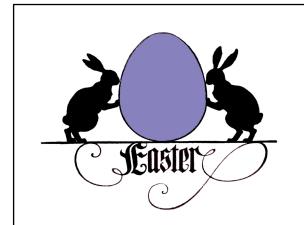
Wednesday Noon Prayer

Each Wednesday of Lent, join us for prayer over Zoom during your lunch hour. Pastor Johanna will lead a short liturgy that will include a time of open prayer for people to bring their own prayer requests, which the group will hold together. This will last no more than half an hour.

Join us on Zoom at:

www.tinyurl.com/StPaulsWednesdayPrayer

Easter Egg Hunt



We are looking for someone to coordinate the Easter Egg Hunt in between service and folks who would like to fill plastic Easter Eggs.

Please contact Mara Berndt at mberndt49@gmail.com if interested.

Holy Week Needs



It takes many voices to proclaim Christ crucified and risen each Holy Week! Can you be one of them?

Consider serving on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, or Easter Sunday (2 services). There are many possibilities:

- Acolytes (Sundays and Thurs)
- Cross carrier (Sundays)
- Lectors (all days)
- Communion Assistants (Sundays and Thursday)
- 6-8 Passion Readers (Palm Sunday and Good Friday)
- Stripping of the altar (Maundy Thur)
- Communion Set up and Clean up (Sundays and Maundy Thursday)
- Ushers and Greeters (Sundays)

Sign up in the foyer, on SignUpGenius, or by contacting Mara (mberndt49@gmail.com) or Pastor Johanna (pastorjohanna@stpaulspittsford.org).

Holy Week at St. Paul's

Palm Sunday, April 10th

Palm Procession and Dramatic Reading of the Passion According to Luke

The service begins with a reenactment Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, singing and waving palm branches. The excitement of our entry will shift to the drama of Jesus' last days, with a dramatic reading of Luke's Passion, before we share together in the Holy Supper.

Maundy Thursday, April 14th, 7:00 pm
Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altar

As we remember this last evening of Jesus' life, the night he was betrayed, we will partake with the disciples in the Last Supper. The service concludes with the somber Stripping of the Altar – a practice that provides a poignant visual of all that God gave for our sake.

Good Friday, April 15th, 7:30pm
Tenebrae Service

The word "tenebrae" is Latin for "shadows," and indeed we will gather in candle-lit shadows to hear and reflect upon the Passion According to John, told through word and music. As the sun goes down and the candles are extinguished, we remember that dark day when Jesus died, even as we maintain the hope of what we know is coming next.

Easter! April 17th
8:30am and 11am

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Come and celebrate the resurrection in person for the first time in three years! (This service will also be streamed.) Two services at 8:30am and 11am. While we will not be holding our traditional Easter breakfast, we will have a hearty coffee hour between services with festive finger foods – grab a bite, enjoy it inside or outside. We will have an Easter egg hunt for the kids between services as well.

Light Easter Reception



Please join us on Sunday, April 17th in between services for a light reception with small bites, mini desserts and refreshments.

Anyone interested in helping out with this gathering, please feel free to contact Mara Berndt @ mberndt49@gmail.com

It can be as simple as providing an item or helping to set up for the light reception.

Many hands make light work ☺

Easter Lily and Spring Flower Sponsorship

Spring is in the air and Easter will be here soon. Envelope sponsorship for Easter lilies/spring flowers are in the pews for you to fill in and donate to. If you like to donate online you can go to St Paul's website, click on the "online donations" button then scroll down to miscellaneous and donate there. Please make sure you type in the box next to it if your donation is in memory of someone or in honor of someone along with their names.

We will be providing a mix batch of flowers to pick from this year (Easter lilies, tulips or daffodils) for folks to take one or two back with them after the second service that day. They all will need a home and no donation is too small.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mara Berndt, mberndt49@gmail.com or Leisa North, leisanorth@gmail.com.



Dorcas Rachel Circle

May Book Review

The Book of Longings, by Sue Monk Kidd

This compelling novel imagines that Jesus was married before his ministry began, to a woman named Ana. This meticulously researched work is historical *fiction*, yet draws us into imagining not only Jesus' humanity, but also the lives of women around him, and one woman in particular, as she finds her voice and destiny alongside her relationship with Jesus ben Joseph of Nazareth.

Pastor Johanna will help facilitate our discussion.

The book is available at local libraries. Brighton, Fairport, Irondequoit, and Chili have large print. It is also available for \$17.00 at Barnes & Nobles or \$11.50 on Amazon.

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Dorcas Rachel Circle

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 14th

9:45 a.m.

Fellowship

10:00 a.m.

Prayer service with Communion

11:00 a.m.

Luncheon- Bring a dish to pass

Place:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Dorcas Room

Hostesses:

Sandy Link and Leisa North

Bring your paper good donations
for the Pittsford Food Cupboard

Items needed: paper towels,
facial tissues, toilet paper and
napkins

As always..... all are welcome!

*Please RSVP to Leisa North via
email or phone
By: Monday, 11th-
leisanorth@gmail.com*

Dorcas Rachel Circle Lent Collection

Every year the Dorcas Rachel Circle organizes a service project. This year we have decided to support the Center for Youth of Rochester. The members of the circle would like to open this opportunity to the congregation to help us support the Center for Youth.



We will start the collection during Lent starting on **Sunday, March 6th** through **Easter Sunday, April 17th**. There will be a collection bin in the church lobby and on the white bench outside the church. You may drop off your items at your convenience. We will be collecting the items below:

Week of 3/6 and Week of 3/13: Items for Men (ages 18-24) Men's boxer shorts, Men's socks (All kinds- athletic, ankle, cozy winter socks)

Week of 3/20- 3/27: Feminine Hygiene products

Week of 4/3-4/10: Teen Friendly Food items:

- Chunky soups
- Canned fruits
- Boxed cereal
- Granola/fruit bars
- Applesauce cups/fruit cups
- Mac and cheese

**Items can be dropped off at any time, this is just a simple guide :o) **

Seafarers International House

Seafarers International House is a social agency of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a ministry partner of the ELCA synods of Metro New York, New Jersey, New England, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Southeastern Pennsylvania, Upper Susquehanna(PA) and Delaware-Maryland.

While its roots are decidedly Lutheran, Seafarers International House's mission clientele are multi-national and multi-faith. We offer pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance, advocacy, and prayer to all seafarers and immigrants without trepidation.

Women of the ELCA are knitting hats for Seafarers and sending them to the Seafarer's International House to be distributed ALL YEAR LONG!

Most of the recipients are men so darker colors are appreciated. The preferred yarn is Red Heart Super Saver or any worsted weight yarn- NOT WOOL.

There is a collection box in the Fellowship Hall, you can also find pattern directions attached to the box!

If you have any questions please see Leisa North.

Thanks!