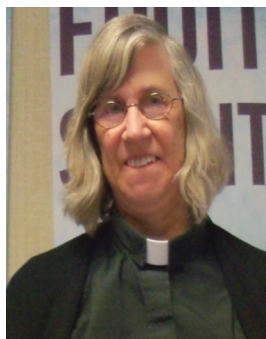


St. Paul's Lutheran
Church ELCA
401 Mill Street
Wilton, Wisconsin 54670
La Crosses Area Synod



March April 2020
Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Christ's Calling Card



**Pastor
Cathleen
Morris**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The sun is shining today. I don't know about you, but sunshine often lifts my spirits. This is especially true during the winter months

whenthere seem to be more overcast days. Doctors tell us that not getting enough exposure to sunshine can lead to depression or what is known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.). We long for the warmth of the sun's rays and for the light.

We long as well, for positive news, which too lifts our spirits. In a recent PBS Newshour broadcast, a panelist spoke of the many challenges facing our world today. She asked how we are spending our time. Are we focusing on the factionalism, divisiveness, partisanship, and other things that divide us? If we spend too much time each day following social media, reading newspaper articles about the negativity and name-calling that is commonplace, and we look at the polarization in our society, we can easily become caught up in it! She suggests instead, that we make an effort each day to look for the good; for the many positive things that people are doing with and for one another. And I would add from a Christian perspective, to read God's word, to look for the light of Jesus, and to remember that Easter is coming!

We have heard in recent Sunday gospel passages about light--Jesus' light shining at his Transfiguration, Jesus' baptism and the light of the Holy Spirit within us through our own baptisms, and letting our lights shine for all to see. These references to light are especially important as we move into the season of Lent.



Church Council

Justin Arndt, President
John Ornes, President Elect
Larry Ballwahn, Secretary
Lori Brueggen, Treasurer
Steve Brandau
Joel Arndt
Tim Deichler
Angie Gruen
Bud Osteboe

Lent is a time that we often associate with darkness, not light. It is a time when we reflect on our lives, our own sinfulness, and our great need for a Savior. We may fast or give up something. We may think of our own need for repentance. We vicariously journey with Christ to Jerusalem during the 40-days of Lent, and perhaps ponder questions of our own mortality. We see dimly, and then more clearly what Christ's great sacrifice means for us and for all humanity.

During our mid-week Lenten Services this year, we will be reflecting on the "I Am" statements of Jesus. Each week we will read and reflect on a Bible passage that reminds us that Jesus brings hope to our lives.

Week 1	"I Am the Door"	John 10:1-10
Week 2	"I Am the Bread of Life"	John 6:35-40
Week 3	"I Am the Good Shepherd"	John 10:11-18
Week 4	"I Am the Light of the World"	John 8:12-20
Week 5	"I Am the Resurrection and the Life"	John 11:17-27

Even during this season of Lent, Jesus is with us every day, walking with us in every step of our Lenten journey and beyond.

The word "focused" is defined in the Oxford Dictionary, as follows: "(of a person or their eyes) adapt to the prevailing level of light and become able to see clearly." This is what we will be doing during the Lenten season--adapting to the level of darkness/light, but not giving up hope, for as we journey together and see more clearly, we will see Christ, who is the "Door", the "Bread of Life," the "Good Shepherd," the "Light of the World," the "Resurrection and the Life." Let us join together as we journey with Christ through the 40-days of Lent, and beyond.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Cathy

It is customary to “give-up” something during the 40 days of lent. Chocolate, alcohol, and deserts are a few that come to mind. Pastor Morris shared the following poem in her Ash Wednesday sermon:

True Lenten Discipline--Author Anonymous
(This is one version of the poem. There are other versions that are longer.)

- FAST from judging others; FEAST on Christ dwelling in them.
- FAST from fear of illness; FEAST on the healing power of God.
- FAST from words that pollute; FEAST on speech that purifies.
- FAST from discontent; FEAST on gratitude.
- FAST from anger; FEAST on patience.
- FAST from pessimism; FEAST on optimism.
- FAST from negatives; FEAST on affirmatives.
- FAST from bitterness; FEAST on forgiveness.
- FAST from self-concern; FEAST on compassion.
- FAST from suspicion, FEAST on truth.
- FAST from gossip; FEAST on purposeful silence.
- FAST from problems that overwhelm; FEAST on prayer that sustains.
- FAST from worry; FEAST on faith.

Church Contact Information (save for reference)

In case of emergency, contact Pastor Cathleen, via text, ** 608-865-1074, or Justin Arndt 414.587.6642

**in addition to sending a text to Pastor at 608-865-1074, you may now reach her at 608-435-0097. The telephone being used on the 435-0097 line has the caption feature. Please realize it takes time between when you speak, the caption appearing for Pastor, and then Pastor being able to continue the conversation.

To activate the prayer chain, please contact Nalani (608-387-2311).

Additional Contact Information: Pastor Cathleen:

cathleenmorris@go.mccormick.edu

Justin Arndt: arndt.now@gmail.com

Church: wiltonchurch@gmail.com

Nalani Bever: nalanib@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.stpaulswilton.com/>

FACEBOOK!!

Home page: St. Paul's Lutheran Church Wilton WI

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9:00 – Noon.



From the Annual Meeting

Complete Annual Meeting Minutes can be found on the church website. www.stpaulswilton.com/

Newly elected Council Members are John Ornes, President Elect, Lori Brueggen, Treasurer, Steve Brandau for his second two-year term and Joel Arndt. They take office immediately.

Steve Brandau has made a temporary repair to the pipe organ. A more permanent repair will cost a minimum of \$8,000 and the organ will be out of service for about 3 months (projected to start sometime after Easter).

The Church Council approved going ahead with the project. There have been some donations and it is a good project for memorial money, but the congregation will need to help.

Contributions should be clearly marked "Organ" on your envelope. A check put in a regular envelope marked Organ Fund would also work well.

WORSHIP NOTES FOR

March, April 2020

March 1 – First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

March 8 – Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121;
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

March 15 – Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95;
Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

March 22 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23;
Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

March 29 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130;
Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

April 5 – Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16;
Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14--27:66

April 12 –Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;
Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 28:1-10

April 19 – Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16;
1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

April 26 – Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16;
1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

THOSE SERVING IN MARCH

Greeters: Anita Steinke and Lois O'Rourke

Ushers: Bob Buchholz, Brian Buchholz,
Ed Ross, Justin Arndt

Altar: Steve and Pam Brandau

Readers: (1) Kirstin Arndt (8) Leonard Arndt
(15) Justin Arndt (22) Barb Bever
(29) Karen Arzt

Communion Server: Justin Arndt

THOSE SERVING IN APRIL

Greeters: John and Barb Ornes

Ushers: Tim Deichler, Bud Osteboe,
Bart Arndt, Greg Bever

Altar: Bev Graunke and Lila Speicher

Readers: (5) Barb Ornes,
(12) Sunrise: Lori Arndt, 10:15 am: Greg Bever.
(19) Joel Arndt, (26) Larry Ballwahn

Communion Server: Barb Ornes

St. Paul's high school and confirmation youth are invited to a social gathering at the bowling alley in Kendall on Sunday, March 8th from 3 to 5 pm. If anyone has questions or needs a ride please contact Justin Arndt at 414-587-6642.

Newsletter editors: Arlis & Larry Ballwahn

email: alballwahn@gmail.com

Calendars & Church information: Nalani Bever

Congregation pictures: April Arndt

****The Website & Facebook page were developed & are administered by April Arndt**

March

Sun 1st Sunday School/Confirmation 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15 am

Wed 4th Lenten Worship 7:00 PM

Thur 5th Quilting 9:00 am

Sun 8th Sunday School/Confirmation 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15 am
Youth Bowling 3:00—5:00 PM

Wed 11th Lenten Worship 7:00 pm

Sun 15th Sunday School /Confirmation 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15 am
Noisy Offering/Children Sing
Birthday & Anniversary Fellowship

Wed 18th Lenten Worship 7:00 pm

Thur 19th W-ELCA General Mtg., 10:00 am

Su 22nd Sunday School 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15 am

Wed 25th Lenten Worship 7:00 pm

Thur 26th Quilting, 9:00 am

Sun 29th Sunday School/Confirmation 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15 am

April

Wed 1st Lenten Worship 7:00 PM
Scholarship Application Deadline

Sun 5th Sunday School/Confirmation 9:00 am
Palm Sunday Service 10:15 am
Children Sing

Mon 6th Yesterday's Youth, Sugar Creek
Leave the church at 8:00 am

Thur 9th Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 pm

Fri 10th Good Friday Service 7:00 pm
Prayer Vigil 8:00 pm

Sat 11th Prayer Vigil 6:30 am – 5:00 pm

Sun 12th Sunrise Easter Service 6:00 am
Easter Breakfast 6:45am – 8:30 am
Sunday School 9:00 am
Easter Service 10:15 am

Wed 15th Confirmation 6:30—8:00 pm

Sat 18th W-ELCA Spring Conference

Sun 19th Sunday School 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15

Wed 22^d Confirmation 6:30—8:00 pm

Thur 23rd Quilting, 9:00 am

Sun 26th Sunday School 9:00 am
Worship Service 10:15 am

Wed 29th Bishop Eaton @ First Lutheran,
Onalaska 6:30 pm



March

2nd Pat Von Haden

3rd Krista Cook, Dennis Dougherty

5th Matt Bever, Katie Pagel

9th James Brandau

11th Darren Gruen

15th Callie Fleming

16th Vanessa Ornes

17th Don and Gail Riedesel

19th MaKenzie Powell

20th Joel Arndt

21st Curt Dougherty

22nd Dean Brandau,
Jan and Phyllis Brandau

23rd Bria Gruen, Lila Speicher

24th David Stanek

28th Ken Koebernick, Gary Bever
Kaylin Gruen



April

1st Caitlyn Stanek

2nd Vicky Pasch

5th Pam Brandau, Kimberly Buchholz

9th Madalyn Dougherty

11th Richard and Kathy Cale

12th Jack and Mary Ann Arndt

16th Louise Buchholz

17th Julie Acker,

18th Rick Brueggen, Jared Gruen,
Ronald Savall
David and Jennifer Gruen

21st April Arndt, Katie Gruen

24th Eloise Evans
Scott and Tanya Niedfeldt

28th Carol Brandau, Matt Ornes

W-ELCA NEWSLETTER

The 2020 Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper was held on Tuesday, February 25 from 4:30-6:30 pm. Hope all enjoyed the delicious pancakes, sausage and apple sauce. Valentines and cookie plates were assembled and delivered to approximately 20 senior members of St. Paul's. Thank you to all who donated cookies and helped prepare the plates. They are much appreciated by the recipients.



There will be a General Meeting on March 19 at 10:00 am in the church basement. All are welcome. Quilting continues through March and April. Watch the bulletin for dates. We are also working on quilts for our High School graduates. W-ELCA members will be helping at the March birthday party at Heritage Manor at

Elroy.

The Spring Rummage sale will be coming up in May. Start cleaning out closets now. Leave your items on the stage area of the basement. This is one of the main fundraisers each year.

The decision has been made to purchase a new electric range for the kitchen, since the two presently used are decades old. W-ELCA will also match 2 Thrivent Grants of \$250 each to Days for Girls and American Red Cross shirts to promote our Blood Drives.

The \$450 profit from the fall Quilt Raffle will be donated to World Hunger as our fall Mission emphasis.



Remember: Please check your mailbox in the narthex for your 2020 booklet or pick up one on the table there. **All women of St. Paul's are members of W-ELCA and new faces are always welcome at any and all events.**

The W-ELCA group will be collecting items during Lent to complete **Personal Care Kits** for Lutheran World Relief. Baskets are on the south side pew to place your donated items. Monetary donations are also welcome for the purchase of items to complete the kits. Donations can be given to Louise Buchholz, Treasurer of W-ELCA.

Needed items are: Bath size bar soap, Large tooth combs;
metal nail clippers.

Every Member

Conversation

Committee EMCC

Membership:

Bud Osteboe, Chair

608-435-6158

Justin Arndt,

608-435-6642

Larry Ballwahn,

608-435-6401

Steve Brandau,

608-797-7888

Louise Buchholz,

608-435-6435

Thadyn Conner,

Rachel Conner,

608-343-3565

Pastor Morris, "caption call"

608-435-0097

Mission Statement:

The purpose of Every Member Conversation Committee is to listen to you, both as an individual and collectively as a Congregation, to discover what needs to be done to make St. Paul's a Church where a majority of the congregation attends on a regular basis.

See the Special congregational Meeting summary on the next two pages

FYI

From ELCA website children and family

We are a church that values and encourages diverse voices and lively dialogue in our faith and life. Living Lutheran is an opportunity for church members to express individual perspectives and does not necessarily reflect official positions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Epistles - Wartburg Seminary

This yearlong devotional journey is available at the following website and hard copies are available in the narthex. Check this out. It is clearly written, each day is brief, and it clarifies and focuses thinking. You don't have to do them all to benefit.

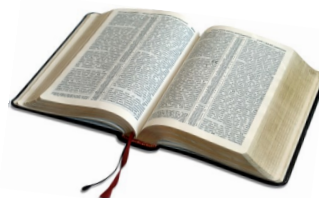
<http://www.wartburgseminary.edu/download/daily-devotions/>

A Yearlong Devotional Journey through the Epistles

By Norma Cook Everist

Editorial Partners: Christopher deForest and Gloria Stubitsch

This is a resource to be used individually, with a companion, or in a small group. The Epistles are divided over 365 days. Each unfolds just as one would open a new letter, beginning in January with Romans and concluding in December with Jude. This is not a bible history, commentary or collection of stories. The purpose is to reflectively engage the text and let the text engage you day by day. (If you miss a day, it is easy to go back and catch up.) The intent of the author is to not veer far from the text, but to prayerfully explore its core message. The Letters speak for themselves. NRSV is the primary version used, occasionally supplemented by other English versions with aid of the original Greek.



A summary of the January meeting that kicked off the Every Member Conversation follows. The individual member conversations are well under-way. They, too, will be summarized and made available as will the questionnaires. Hopefully what will result from this effort is a plan to move forward. More than likely there will be several alternatives for the congregation to examine.

-If you have not been contacted by now, please call a member of the EMC committee.

-Pastor Cathy is reviewing the information and adopting some of the suggestions.

Special Congregational Meeting 1-5-2020 ; Begin 11:10 am L. B.

People who made comments:

Justin Arndt, Kirsten Arndt, Lori Arndt, Karen Arzt, Arlis Ballwahn, Doreen Beyer, Greg Bever, Nalani Bever, Pamela Brandau, Lori Brueggen, Carolyn Dougherty, Richard Krause, Bud Osteboe, Lois O'Rourke, and Jerome Von Haden. Plus the young woman who added to the conversation several times: (Katiya Tormoen. Her husband is Seth. Kristi and Scott Tormoen are his parents)

President Justin's introductory comments (and a couple inserted later during discussion):

- Shrinking attendance occurs at many churches, been very pronounced here recently
- Weekly attendance has dropped from 78 in 2012 to 54 in 2019 (24 person decrease in 7 years)
- Possible reasons:
 - 3 full time pastors & 3 interim pastors in last 7 years
 - Older congregation with several deaths
- On current trend, congregation may not be here in 5 to 10 years.
- We know the effect (decreased attendance) but seek your help in finding the cause/problem.



Comment summary:

- People need to realize that God must be a priority in their lives.
- Grandson goes to church in Onalaska and loves it; some churches can draw. It's not that we are necessarily doing anything wrong. Most young people lack commitment to church and service organizations. Too much competition.
- Young people feel judged in this church; noisy children, etc. Was different when Pastor Kathleen was here. As the church is at present, she wouldn't transfer from Brush Creek.

Special Congregational Meeting - continued



This church lacks friendliness.

Must get something out of church related to everyday life. The sermons don't relate enough to this.

The world has changed; the traditional generation doesn't exist anymore. Traditional churches will have to change, but how, to what. The traditional pastor is not likely to be able to become the change agent.

It's the difference in generations.

Let's do something different. Seconded.

When is the last time we had a new member service?

Some larger churches have two services; a traditional and a modern; I don't know how a church of our size does that, but ...

Sports is the priority now, not church - club sports.

Steinbrecher was a traditional pastor but was able to maintain active members with his knowledge and dramatic sermons. Current sermons tend to rehash, explain the Bible verses.

There is no laughter in the church anymore. Everything is too serious.

There is not enough effort to involve the children, no children's sermon. Even Pastor Lindberg didn't do many.

Emphasis of this church is wrong. Need to be an emphasis on what we do during the week. People need to respond to Christ; personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Lutheran churches are teaching the wrong thing - need adult baptism. Not saved by child baptism.

Any time there has been an attempt to change - uproar.

Assembly of God mentioned several times.

Do we need to get rid of the ELCA?

We are a congregation that likes drama in our sermons: Pastor Steinbrecher, Pastor Lindberg (background in acting). Can't make the young people come to church; sometimes life gets in the way.

St. Paul's has tried various things before; even putting invitation on doors. No real gain.

How do you get kids to change? Volleyball (sports) has taken over.

Number of young people in Sunday School, etc. going down.

What happened to the possible merge with Fountain and Hustler?

Suggestion that we plan one service a month that is not so traditional. Pastor said that would be possible if we stayed within the basic Lutheran theology.

Concluded with the Lord's Prayer at 12 pm.



St. Paul's Organ Restoration

While folks are pretty used to wrong notes and unusual key changes coming from the organ (not the fault of the organ), a few months ago it sounded like a windstorm. The leathering on the bellows had pulled away in a few spots and air was escaping. When the organ is turned on, the bellows are filled with air. The picture we have included is an example of a bellow that contains air. It just looks like it is held together with duct tape, but that is not the case.

We have done our best by applying gorilla tape in the areas where air is escaping, but that is about as good as the kid putting his finger in the dike!! The air pressure regulator bellows (technical term for them) need releathering.



Releathering is a key component of pipe organ restoration. Regulator bellows, which are found in pipe organs of every type, require releathering in order to provide a stable supply of wind from the blower motor to wind chests and other components. As leather ages it becomes brittle, causing bellows to leak and eventually blow-out.

The cost of releathering both (large and small) regulators is \$8,000.00. The folks at the annual meeting approved proceeding with the repairs, along with asking for donations to cover the repair costs rather than using existing funds. The approval was for repairs up to and including \$10,000.00 because, and if any you have done remodeling, oftentimes

additional costs are determined once repairs begin.

The bellows will be removed and taken to the repair shop after confirmation on May 17, and we anticipate the repairs will take the entire summer.

To date, a total of \$3,410.00 has been donated. If you wish to make a donation using your offering envelope, please indicate the amount and "organ fund" in the designated "Other" section of the envelope. All other donations, appropriately marked, should be mailed to the church at P O Box 129, Wilton, WI 54670.

Thanks in advance for your consideration in assisting the church in raising these funds.

FINANCES

January is traditionally a tough month for church offerings. Christmas bills are coming in, with property tax either paid at the end of last year or due in January. For the month of January, our **expenses exceeded our offerings** by \$1,414.28.

Please consider a regular donation to the general fund, which covers the day to day expenses of the church, through online giving. That way, whether you are able to attend service, or not, your financial support will be in attendance, so to speak! An example might be to think about donating \$10.00 a week through online giving and perhaps supplementing your donation, using your envelope, when you are able to attend worship. If you are interested in establishing online donations, please see Nalani for the necessary forms.

PEWS

Many of us have a habit of sitting in the back couple of rows of the church underneath the balcony. It's a tradition; it's our comfort zone. However, over the last decade, the average weekly attendance at Sunday service has decreased by 20-25 people. The conversation of removing pews at the back of the church has occurred for a couple of years. Finally, at the Annual meeting a month ago, the possibility of removing the pews under the balcony was brought up. Generally, the idea was well received, so the back 4 rows of pews will be removed a week or two after Easter.

Why are we doing this? The easy answer would be to say that we want people to sit closer to the front, but it is more than that. A few comments during the Every Member Visit meeting indicated that the congregation is not always the most welcoming. Visiting with guests, friends and neighbors is hard to do when everyone is confined to the pews. This will create an open area to meet and greet people before and after the service. We will potentially have coffee/snacks in this area as well.

Initially, the area will remain open to the sanctuary. In the future, a curtain or wall with windows may be installed. However, we want to keep the area usable for seating for Christmas Eve and larger weddings and funerals. If you have any questions about this, please contact Church Council president Justin Arndt.

To the Parents of our Young Children:

Relax!! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's House. A Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

May we suggest...

- Sit toward the front where it is easier for little ones to see and hear what is going on at the altar. They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads.
- Quietly explain the parts of the service and actions of the pastor, acolytes, ushers and others involved in worship.
- Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn how to worship by copying you.
- If your child become too disruptive and you need to leave the service, feel free to do so. But, we hope you come back. All are welcome!
- Remember, the way we welcome children in our church directly affects how they respond to the Church, God, and one another. Let them know they are at home in this house of worship..
- Allow your child to use the coloring books provided, draw, doodle, or write in the books as well.

To the Members of our Congregation

The presence of children is a gift to the Church and they are a reminder that our congregation is growing. Welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

Children:

Thank you for coming. Jesus loves you!



Inviting people to journey with Christ's
family in spreading God's love and
mercy.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

"A Welcoming Place for over 125 years"

PO Box 129

401 Mill Street

Wilton, WI 54670

608-435-6647

wiltonchurch@gmail.com

