

Christ's Calling Card



St. Paul's Lutheran Church ELCA
401 Mill Street Wilton, WI 54670

March April 2021
Bi-Monthly Newsletter



Message from Pastor Cathy Morris

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The other day I was driving on Hwy 71 between Norwalk and Wilton. As I looked out of the car window, I saw some horses in the distance. They were standing close together, because of the cold weather. But one of them in particular really stood out for me. Why? Because it was purple! I did a double take, but the color remained the same...it was definitely purple!

As I got closer, I realized that it wasn't purple. (You are probably relieved to hear me say this.) Rather, the horse was wearing a purple blanket that made it look as if it were purple. I thought...this horse is wearing purple; purple is the liturgical color for the Lenten season!

Now, I am guessing there are very few animals donning their purple outfits this season (except perhaps those whose owners are Vikings' fans, and they are wearing purple for a different reason). I am also guessing that you are not wearing purple outfits for Lent in the same way that you would wear your Wisconsin Badgers' sweatshirts, Green Bay Packers' jerseys, Brookwood or Royall athletic jackets, or other sports team apparel.

In ancient days, at times of great significance, people wore certain items of clothing for religious reasons. For example, some wore sackcloth and ashes. They wore these things to demonstrate their mourning and sadness for the loss of a loved one, or their regret and remorse for doing something that they shouldn't have done.

While we do not wear sackcloth and ashes nowadays, on Ash Wednesday during most years, we have ashes placed on our foreheads. We do this: 1) to remind us of our death,



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

Pastor Cathy Con't

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return," 2) to remind us of our sins and to express sorrow for committing them, and 3) to remember that Christ died for us.

Typically, when we meet in-person, inside the sanctuary during the Lenten Season, we see purple paraments, banners, and stoles. The color purple suggests "repentance and solemnity." On Maundy Thursday, the color scarlet or white is used. On Good Friday, no vestments or paraments are used, because of the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday evening. On Easter Day, white or gold is displayed. "The gold color symbolizes that this day is the 'queen of feasts,' unique in the entire church year" ("What is the Meaning and Use of Liturgical Colors?", ELCA).

While most people do not wear purple for Lent or any other color for a particular liturgical season, 1 Peter 3:3 (NRSV) gives this general advice to wives regarding clothing,

Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight.

Neither wives, nor any of us need to dress in a certain way during this season of lent for it is not our outward appearance that is important, but rather, what is going on inside us. We do not need to see the purple colors in the church sanctuary in order to participate fully in the season of Lent. What we do need to remember, is that when we walk with Jesus during these 40-days of Lent, God is with us. We have no need to worry about dressing in a particular color or style. We have no need to worry about what we will eat, or drink, or wear. We need only to focus on our inner selves and our service to God and God's kingdom. In this way, we will indeed "wear purple," during these 40-days.

Interim Bishop Boerger in his Ash Wednesday sermon stated, "I've always seen the season of Lent as a season of brutal honesty; a time for us to look at ourselves and see just who we are, whose we are, and what help we need."

Perhaps during this unique Lenten season during the pandemic, we can think in purple ways. We can be reminded of the season of Lent as we see the color purple in our daily lives--in the flowers on our kitchen table, in the paintings on our walls, and perhaps even in a horse wearing a purple blanket!

Newsletter editors: Arlis & Larry Ballwahn
email: alballwahn@gmail.com

Calendars, Church information & cemetery reports/pictures:
Nalani Bever

Congregation pictures:
Contributed - Facebook

**The Website & Facebook pages were developed & are administered by April Arndt
April also developed the front page of the Newsletter

Newsletters, past and present, are on the Website in Color.



We can see the color purple, and when we do, we can be reminded of our need for repentance and forgiveness.

In all that we do, may this season of Lent bring us greater awareness of who we are, and whose we are, as we ask God to help us and as we help others in need. Thanks be to God.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy

From Council President, Justin Arndt



I hope that everyone is doing well. The cold and snow of the past month have made me long for the green grass and warmer days of Spring. While we are not there yet, the above freezing temperatures this week signal that it will arrive before we know it.

It was 12 months ago that we first learned about COVID-19. What we had hoped would be a short-lived inconvenience has turned into a major disruption in our lives. It has tested us in every way possible and will continue to do so for a few more months.

Although the number of cases has been dropping and roll-out of vaccinations is in full swing, it will take time before things return to normal. That includes here at St. Paul's. The Council has been following the guidance put forth by the LaCrosse Area Synod and the Wisconsin Council of Churches (see executive summary later in this newsletter). It prioritizes life and health and makes recommendations based on preserving those. A key component of their current reopening plan is to have at least 50% of the population vaccinated before moving back into the sanctuary is even considered.

Our first step in getting back to normal is resuming drive-in services on Palm Sunday (March 28th) at 9 AM. Drive-in services will continue until the Council determines that it is safe to re-enter the sanctuary. A major factor in that decision will be the rate of vaccinations. The sooner that people are vaccinated will mean the sooner that the return to in-sanctuary worship will be possible. If you are eligible to receive the vaccine, we encourage you to get your shot(s). They are safe and effective.

We all want to gather in the sanctuary again very soon. If vaccinations continue at the current rate, that could be by May or June. In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you for drive-in Sunday services starting March 28th.

Finally, in this very unusual time, I thank you for your continued support of St. Paul's.



WORSHIP NOTES FOR MARCH/APRIL

The following are the Scripture readings that we will be sharing in worship during the months of March and April, 2021

March 7 – Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19;

1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

March 14 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22;

Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

March 21 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12;

Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

March 28 – Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16;

Philippians 2:2-11; Mark 14:1-15:4

April 1 – Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14; Psalm 1-2, 12-19;

1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35

April 4 – Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;

1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Mark 16:1-8

April 11 – Second Sunday of Easter

April 4:32-35; Psalm 133;

1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31

April 18 – Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4;

1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48

April 25 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23;

1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18I

Birthdays and Anniversaries

March/April

2 nd	Pat Von Haden
3 rd	Krista Cook, Dennis Dougherty
5 th	Matt Bever, Katie Pagel
9 th	James Brandau
11 th	Darren Gruen
15 th	Callie Fleming
16 th	Vanessa Ornes
17 th	Don and Gail Riedesel
19 th	MaKenzie Powell
20 th	Joel Arndt
21 st	Curt Dougherty
22 nd	Dean Brandau, Jan and Phyllis Brandau
23 rd	Bria Gruen, Lila Speicher
24 th	David Stanek
28 th	Ken Koebernick, Kaylin Gruen

April

1 st	Caitlyn Stanek
2 nd	Vicky Pasch
5 th	Pam Brandau, Kimberly Buchholz
9 th	Madelyn Dougherty
11 th	Richard and Kathy Cale
12 th	Jack and Mary Ann Arndt
16 th	Louise Buchholz
17 th	Julie Acker
18 th	Rick Brueggen, Jared Gruen, Ronald Savall David and Jennifer Gruen
21 st	April Arndt, Katie Gruen
24 th	Eloise Evans Scott and Tanya Niedfeldt
28 th	Carol Brandau, Matt Ornes



W-ELCA NEWSLETTER

W-ELCA
MARCH/APRIL 2021



In place of our annual Valentines “cookies for seniors”, Valentine greeting cards were composed and sent by Louise Buchholz. Thank you, Louise, for using your “crafty” talents.

There will be a General Meeting on March 18 at 10:00 am in the church basement. All are welcome. Quilting continues through March and April. We are also working on quilts for our High School graduates. The 2021 booklets are ready and may be picked up in the office.

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. Donated items may be left at the office. Call Nalani (387-2311 or 435-6647) for availability. 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 soap; bath towels (lt. weight, between 20x40 to 52x27, dark color);

Tooth brushes (adult, in original package); Large tooth combs; metal nail clippers

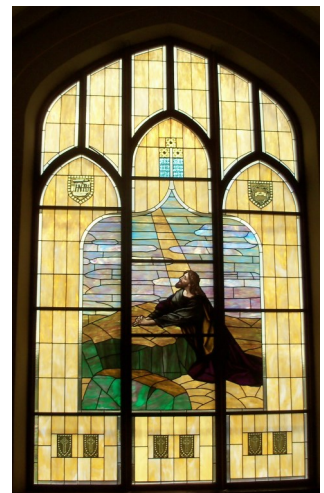
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

March

Thur 18th W-ELCA General Mtg., 10:00 am
Sun 28th Palm Sunday Drive-in Service 9:00 am

April

Thur 1st Scholarship Application Deadline
Sat 3rd Blood Drive 7:00 am – 11:30 am
Sun 4th Easter Sunday Drive-In Service 9:00 am
Sun 11th Drive-in Worship Service 9:00 am
Drive-in Chicken Dinner
Fundraiser, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Sun 18th Drive-in Worship, 9:00 am
Sun 25th Drive-in Worship 9:00 am



Take Note!

FAMILY FARM PROJECT

La Crosse Area Synod 2020-2021

The emphasis for the 2020 Synod Assembly was to have been “Synod Barn Raising”. Since the Assembly was not held last year, the Project has been extended into 2021. Each Congregation was given a barn cut-out to decorate and use as a goal. The cost of a “Family Farm” through ELCA Good Gifts is \$715. Each Congregation is encouraged to raise at least that amount toward World Hunger.

St. Paul’s has to date raised about \$1,700 through the Christmas Angel Project and personal donations toward World Hunger. That will purchase approximately 2 ½ Farms. Can we do better? The 2021 Assembly will be held virtually in June. Please consider a donation for World Hunger. Each farm includes a cow, two goats, two pigs, a dozen chickens, seeds, tools and agricultural training.

Arlis Ballwahn, Hunger Leader



CHICKEN DINNER FUNDRAISER

We had such great support from our members, as well as community members, that we have decided to give it another go!!!

Please mark April **11** on your calendar and plan to let St. Paul’s “do the cooking” for your noon meal. Same cost as last year, \$10.00/plate. Same menu as last year, bar-be-que chicken, potato salad, cranberry sauce, baked beans, and dinner roll.

We will need help selling tickets (we sold 548 last year). Call Lori Brueggen (435-6512) or Nalani Bever (608-387-2311) if you are willing to help sell tickets.

PS The chicken dinner fundraiser kept St. Paul’s in the black las year. LB

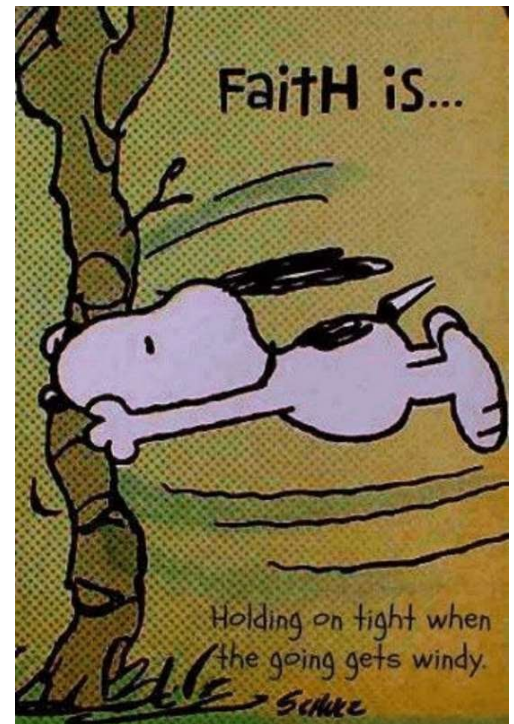


Job Opening St. Paul's Scholarship

JOB OPENING

The job of janitor is open at St. Paul's. The wage is \$15.00/hour with the average number of hours each week between 5 and 10. In addition to cleaning the church on a weekly basis, you would be required to mow and trim the lawn. The church provides both the mower and trimmer. We currently do not require snow removal, but that would be negotiable if you desire more hours during the winter.

If you are interested, please contact Council President Justin Arndt (414-587-6642).



St. Paul's Post Secondary Education Scholarship

Are you graduating from high school this year? Are you planning to continue your education at a university or technical college or other post secondary school? If so, you might consider applying for the \$500.00 scholarship offered by St. Paul's. If you are interested, please send an email to the church (wiltonchurch@gmail.com) or call the church office 608-435-6647 and leave a message. We will mail the application to you. Please return the completed application, along with your essay, to the church office by April 1. Feel free to place it in the drop box if the office isn't open.



WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
Returning to Church 2.0
Released January 14, 2021
Executive Summary

1. We recommend prioritizing life and health of neighbor in all ministry decisions as a Gospel witness.
2. Concurrent values include creativity (holy experiments), urgency and care in meeting human needs, and attending to diversity and accessibility.
3. Norms of these recommendations include taking seriously the church's role as community leader and trusting in the resilience of the church.
4. Churches should take a two-step approach to gathering, tracking the following data:

FIRST, watch vaccination rates. When more than 50% of the population has been vaccinated, we can expect that it will begin to have an impact on viral transmission (although "herd immunity" will not likely be fully reached until vaccination rates exceed 75%).

THEN, track COVID cases per 100,000 population and the rates of positive tests. Our safer threshold for gathering is when cases are less than 5 per 100,000 population and positive tests less than 10%. Safest would be even lower.

Unsafe to Gather

Make it Safer

Safest

Vaccination rates <50%

Vaccination rates 50-70+%

Vaccination rates 70-85+%

5. Some of the most important things churches can be doing until it is safer to gather in person is to encourage people to be vaccinated, debunk myths about vaccinations and vaccines, and encourage continued protective behaviors.

6. When you begin gathering in physical space again, plan on event modifications, mitigations, and protective behaviors until COVID in the community is very low. Expect these modifications to continue for a significant amount of time, perhaps this calendar year or longer. See full text of this document for information about phased plans, mitigating especially risky behavior, and healthy decision-making.

Unsafe

Make Safer

Safest

All at once

Unmasked

No distancing

Full capacity

Assembly

singing

Eating together

Face masks mandatory

Physical distancing

Low-touch environment

Outdoors or increased
air exchange

Shortened time of
service

Singing by worship
leaders only

Focus on sanitizing high-
touch surfaces Sign-in /
attendance list

All of the “make it safer” plus
no or minimized singing

Hybrid, phased plan

Wait 1 month+ between phases

Fallback plan for outbreaks
Communication plan

Team responsibility

NOTES ON THEOLOGY, ETHICS AND VALUES

Prioritize protecting the life and health of your neighbor

Let yourself continue to be provoked into holy experiments

Follow the call to love and good deeds urgently and care-fully

Prioritizing accessibility honors the diversity and one-ness of Christ’s church

Take seriously the church’s role as community leader

Believe in the resilience of the church



**THE ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER
WE RETURN IN-CHURCH WORSHIP.**

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

Christ's Calling Card
St. Paul's Lutheran
Church



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



Name

Address

Wilton, Wisconsin