

# EPIS<sup>+</sup>LE



*St. Paul's Lutheran  
The Church On The Hill*

Volume 65 No. 3

March - 2021

## Pastor's Message

**"This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:23-24**

If you have been with me at church events, personal time, when I say grace, and most anytime when I am praying; you may notice that I almost always begin prayer with "Thank you Lord for this day." My personal prayers and table grace always begin with these words. These words also begin my morning prayers and my evening prayers and my prayers for each of you.

This may seem odd because some days are dreary and the clouds are gathered around us so that we can't see the sunshine. The fog is thick in our minds and we find it hard to imagine when things will improve.

Many of our days these past twelve or thirteen months have seemed this way with the seclusion we have had to endure away from friends, family and our church. Our mantra for so long has been "when are we going to get back to normal?"

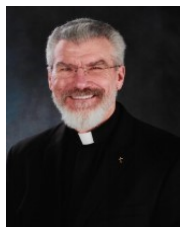
It is a shame that sometimes we allow these negative thoughts and feelings control our lives to such a level we cannot find the joy in life. But the truth is there are many joys and blessings that surround us each day. We just have to part the clouds and clear our minds to see how much God has blessed us each and every day. Sometimes our joy can be found in the blessings of others. We rejoice when we hear of a family, friend or neighbor who has been healed of a medical problem we have been praying about. We find great joy in the birth of a beautiful baby wither ours or someone else's child. The last Sunday of February we had 65 people in church for worship and that included two children who came up for the first Children's Sermon in nearly a year. It also included two babies that everyone including me wanted to hold or just gaze upon in their sweet and innocent beauty.

In February we had a couple of nice little snows and they were that dry fluffy type. I watched the morning sunrise and saw the billions of little reflections in the snowflakes and ice crystals that looked like precious diamonds glittering on the ground and in the trees.

St. Paul's returned to in-person attendance on February 7<sup>th</sup> and I was so thankful to see people sitting in the pews once again. We don't have to be flooded with joys all day long, it is enough to know that God is with us and shows us daily blessings if we only take the time to look around and see them.

**"Heavenly Father, thank you for this day and all you do in your love of us. Amen"**

Blessings to you in Christ Jesus,  
Pastor David



## FINANCIAL UPDATE

### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Jeannette Fischer
- 3 Kyle Crossman
- 4 Glen Stubinger
- 6 Chase Pistel
- 6 Melvin Stubinger
- 7 Charles Ferrell
- 8 Jacob Loesch
- 9 Rich Prosch
- 11 Wendy Barker
- 12 J.D. Murphy
- 13 Cori Soell
- 14 Carol Elliott
- 15 Jayce Tschirgi
- 16 Lisa Beard
- 16 Tom Kirchner
- 16 Elizabeth Russell
- 18 Rosemary Heidbreder
- 18 Sloane Heidbreder
- 19 Richard Heidbreder
- 20 Keagan Strobel
- 21 Paula Linsenbardt
- 22 Laura Plochberger
- 22 Landon Plochberger
- 23 Cameron Freiner
- 23 Dan Tschirgi
- 26 Lauren Stubinger
- 27 David Finch
- 28 Brandon Williams
- 28 Wolfgang Neenan
- 29 Erika Gerth
- 30 Harry Thompson

Month/Day	Attendance Phys./Virtual	Offering
<b>FEBRUARY 7</b>	<b>23 / 380</b>	<b>\$3,723.52</b>
<b>FEBRUARY 14</b>	<b>05 / 214</b>	<b>\$ 775.00</b>
<b>FEBRUARY 21</b>	<b>33 / 215</b>	<b>\$3,260.00</b>
<b>FEBRUARY 28</b>	<b>65 / 160</b>	<b>\$2,165.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>126 / 969</b>	<b>\$9,923.52</b>

### Special Gifts Included:

#### Thank you:

Pat Meller Memorials to Parsonage Roof: \$150.00

#### In Addition:

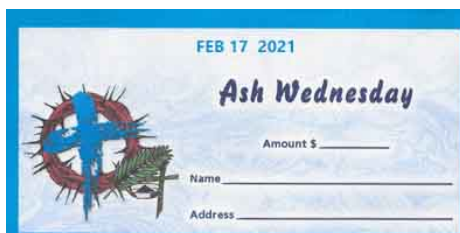
Ash Wednesday Envelopes total to date: \$140.00

### Sympathy and condolences:

To the family of Roger Thompson whose father Vernon Walther passed away on February 8, 2021  
Obituary: [LINK](#) Freeman Mortuary

To the family of Erwin Soell's wife Margaret who passed away on February 10, 2021 at her home in Texas. Obituary: [LINK](#) Scrivner-Morrow Funeral Homes

### Special Offerings



Please remember to send your offerings for Ash Wednesday and the five Lenten Wednesday's during the month of February and March.



These offerings benefit Oaks Indian Center and the ELCA Hunger Appeal.



### MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 18 Angela & Curt Bracher 2020
- 19 Desmond & Irma Pascoe 1995
- 25 Shawn & Jessica Stoermer 2006 **15 Years.**

### Continued prayers for healing and comfort.

**Roger Thompson and family:** Send a special **'Thank You'** to everyone who sent cards, flowers, food and the many calls of encouraging words and concern after the death of his father, Vernon Walther. They are especially thankful for all the prayers and God's answer of comfort.

Tom Sperling, Jennifer Miller, Rose Strobel, Vanessa Pyatt, Julie Carel, Chris Russell, Donna Viles, baby Jane Grimm, all our family, friends and neighbors with coronavirus and the hope of getting a vaccine.

## Ask the Pastor

**Question:** Why do Christians give up something during the season of Lent?

**Answer:** Lent is a time of sacrifice, repentance and self-reflection. We follow Christ.

**"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. And [Satan] came [to tempt him.] Matthew 4**

After Jesus' baptism, he was ushered into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to spend forty days in a time of preparation. Jesus fasted during this time as well as giving up all the traditional comforts he had known during his life. Jesus spent this time in prayer and devotion to the Father in Heaven. He emptied himself of everything except the divine.

It was during this time of hunger, thirst, loneliness, and sacrifice that the devil himself comes to tempt Jesus in his weakness.

I imagine Jesus thought of the possibilities of using his power to make life easier. After all he is the Son of God and could do anything he wanted to do on his own. This is exactly what the Tempter tried to exploit during this time.

During these forty days of the Lenten season (not counting Sundays) we follow in remembrance of Christ our Lord and what he did during that time.

We do not give up food and the comforts of life wholly as Jesus did but we sometimes give up something during this time in recognition of what Jesus did during that time and also as a way to repent of our excesses of food, drink and the comforts that many people do not have, and that means being a neighbor to them.

The typical thing to give up during this time is something that will be a daily or even hourly remembrance of why we gave it up. It is an opportunity to force ourselves to understand how blessed we are and how grateful we should be to our God who loves us and blesses us daily.

What would be a good thing to give up that would force us to consider how to be a better Christian?

It should be something that you very much enjoy as often as you can have it. Perhaps it is that special drink or treat you allow yourself to have one or more times a day. That candy bar you always have after lunch, the soft drink you have three times a day, the Saturday morning golf for 18 holes with your good friend.

When you reach to have one of those treats or times of fun with a friend, you remember that you have given it up for six weeks of Lent.

Your first thought is how much you miss that pleasure. Your second thought is why you are not able to enjoy it at this time. You remember that it is something you have or are able to do that many people cannot have or do. You consider how you might reach out to help someone, that thing Jesus called, "loving your neighbor as yourself."

Maybe it doesn't spur you to action to do something for someone else. Maybe it just reminds you of how fortunate you are to have not only what you need but the many blessed extras that you have in abundance of your needs.

Hopefully these times of reflection during the loss of what you have given up will encourage you to turn away from the world's gains and spend time in prayer and conversation with God. You might start your prayer with, "Heavenly Father, thank you for this day and all you do in your love of me." Amen

## **Church In-Person Worship has been Reinstated**

The church council members met and voted to reinstate worship services for in-person gatherings with Covid-19 guidelines in place. We will continue to be seated six feet apart between families. Masks are encouraged. Singing is also discouraged although verbal responses are okay, especially with a mask. [Use your own judgement](#) if you are concerned about gathering in person. We have the FM transmitter working now and you can listen from your vehicle in the parking lot on station 104.1 FM. We are also committed to continue broadcasting live and recorded on Facebook, and will do so even after the pandemic is over. So you have three options available now to attend worship services.

## **Sunday School for Children and Adults**

Sunday school has also restarted as of February 28, 2021. The time will be from 10:15 a.m. until 11:10 a.m. Please bring your children to church so they can enjoy fellowship with each other and Jesus as they hear and learn his word of life and hope.

We are in need of volunteers for teachers, crafters and musicians. If you are willing to serve our Lord in caring for the spiritual growth of these children please let Laurie Koestner know and she will find a place for you. Adults will meet in the Friendship Hall downstairs about 10:15 a.m. for discussion of the day's gospel and sermon. Everyone is welcome to join this group to dig a little bit deeper into the lesson and ask questions or just participate in the discussions led by Pastor David.

## **Easter Lilies**

If you would like to purchase a Lily for the Easter Season, please contact Kathryn Linsenbardt at 782-4683 to place your order. Please let her know if the Lily is in memory or in honor of someone so they can be recognized in the bulletin. They are \$7:00 each this year, and orders are due by March 22nd.

## **Congregational Council Meeting, February 8, 2021**

### **Respectfully submitted by Becky Weber, Church Council Secretary**

A Congregational Council meeting was called to order by President Zola Finch via electronic format Cisco WebEx at 6:05pm on Monday February 8, 2021. President Finch called for motion to nominate Jana Thompson to replace the vacated position held by Scott Soell, to serve as chairperson of Mutual Ministry. Motion was made by Mitch Plochberger, seconded by Paula Linsenbardt, and passed via voice vote.

Present at council meeting were council members President Zola Finch, Kathy Meller, Dan Tschirgi, Delores Vlach, Mitch Plochberger, Paula Linsenbardt, Jana Thompson and Becky Weber. Also present were Pastor David Viles. Absent was Council Treasurer Kay Pascoe, who submitted her report electronically prior to the meeting.

Pastor David opened the meeting with a prayer. Pastor then shared a devotion based on Psalm 50, verses 1 through 4. Pastor David shared with council members that God speaks to us in times of trouble. Often we may wonder where is God, and why He isn't here to help us in our times of trouble? When things are good, we recognize God is near, and that He is with us in our good times, such as the birth of a new baby, or those special looks of love our spouses give us, reserved only for us. When things are bad, we tend to concentrate on the bad, and we look inward to ourselves, and not outward to God. But we must know God is there for us at all times. God is never silent. We need only to open our eyes; not look inward, but rather look outward towards God, and in doing so, we will feel God's love. While 2020 was a bad year due the many challenges wrought by the Covid 19 virus, many of us were shut in with our spouses and children. We can be thankful for that extra time spent with them, time we would not have had if it weren't for Covid.

President Finch called for approval of the previous council meeting minutes. A motion to approve the January 2021 council meeting minutes was made by Dan Tschirgi, seconded by Kathy Meller, and passed via voice vote.

President Finch reported on Council Treasurer Kay Pascoe's report. President Finch reported a special account has been set up to receive donations for the \$11,395.22 remaining balance following the insurance payment required for the parsonage roof replacement after a 2020 hail storm. Following no further discussion, President Finch called for a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Motion was made to approve the treasurer's report by Jana Thompson, seconded by Laurie Koestner, and passed via voice vote.

Pastor David reported a total of 12 miles for the month of January, and wishes to donate the cost. Pastor David was thanked for this. Pastor David reported the following activities for January 2021: Worship and Music meeting, Church Council meeting, City Council, Lions Club, Mutual Ministry and Ministerial Alliance. Pastor performed three visits, two phone visits, one counseling visit, multiple phone conversations and multiple phone calls made to members in need of outreach. Pastor held two communion and three non-communion worship services. The worship services were broadcasted live via Facebook. He held our first in person service in compliance with Covid 19 guidelines on February 7, 2021. Pastor created, emailed and post mailed the February Epistle. Pastor's other January activities include the preparation, printing and emailing of the weekly bulletins, and the posting on our Facebook website daily photos he took of beautiful subjects in our Lohman area. He included a bible verse and message to serve as an inspiration for all. Pastor David also prepared, printed, emailed and post mailed the January 2021 Congregational Annual Report.

### **President Finch then called for the committee reports.**

**Evangelism:** Delores Vlach reports her committee have decided not to have the annual pancake breakfast that is normally held the third Sunday in March. They have not ruled out the possibility of having it at a future date, adding it will depend upon the Covid status of our area. Delores also reports she sent out Congratulation cards to our mid-year graduates.

**Technology:** Dan Tschirgi reports the FM radio transmission is working well, and people should be able to pick up the Sunday worship services on their FM radios, adding it should work throughout the Lohman area, and in our church parking lot. Dan requests additional volunteers to help with Sunday worship video services. Dan also reports he placed the plaque in honor of Jackie and Albin Linsenhardt. Pastor David discovered the cause for the glitch in the Facebook live broadcast of our worship service on February 7, 2021 around noon that day, and fixed the glitch to where people can view the service on Facebook.

**Worship and Music:** Kathy Meller reports the hymns for our March worship services have been selected. She reports we will be using Setting Three for Lent. We will have in person Ash Wednesday Lenten Service on February 17, 2021. It was decided by council to purchase small containers that will be prefilled with ashes to be distributed by Pastor David on Ash Wednesday service, with instructions to take home and apply ashes if church attendees so desire. Pastor David reports he will have online mid-week devotions on all Wednesdays following Ash Wednesday, in place of mid-week in person Lenten services. Kathy reports Sutton Loesch will be baptized this Sunday, February 14, 2021. It was decided by council to also have the installation of church council members on February 14, 2021.

**Parish Education:** reports she will place an order for Lenten Activities and then mail out these activities to our Sunday School students to do at home. It was decided to begin this activity February 21, 2021. President Finch reports she would like to offer her home to host Sunday School youth to

watch John Legend's version Jesus Christ Super Star, and serve pizza, snacks and soda, adding that Covid 19 precautions will be observed by all students and adults in attendance.

**Church Improvement:** Mitch Plochberger reports the downstairs water fountain will be replaced with a new one, at the cost of about \$800.00. He reports our furnace needed water which has been done by our service person, which should now ensure its proper function. Mitch reports snow removal is going well. Pastor David suggests we have a team to assist with snow removal the night before and on the morning of Sunday worship service. The decision to cancel church will be made by 6:00pm the Saturday before worship, in accordance with our Inclement Weather policy.

**Stewardship and Finance:** Paula Linsenbardt, absent. No report.

**Mutual Ministry:** Jana Thompson. Pastor David reported Jana Thompson will now chair Mutual Ministry, and she was thanked for doing this. There will be no meeting this month. Pastor reported there was a review of all committees last month. There is still one vacancy on this committee. Pastor David reports it has been decided to cancel the mid-year staff evaluations due to Covid.

**Old Business:** President Finch reports Cross Training of paid staff positions will be addressed this spring or summer. There is no report on the Security camera.

**New Business:** Pastor David requests council to consider purchasing a subscription to Sundays and Seasons for \$90.00/year to allow access to music online that can be downloaded for the weekly bulletins to eliminate blurring of songs that has occurred in the bulletins. Pastor David reports that if we find this is not working, we can cancel the subscription and our bill will be prorated. Following some discussion, President Finch called for a motion to approve this purchase. A motion was made by Dan Tschirgi, seconded by Laurie Koestner, and passed via voice vote.

Pastor David reports he spoke with Tony Miller, with GFI about the current copier/printer. The copier is old and due to its age, will become increasingly costly to repair. It was suggested a newer one be purchased. A sizable donation has been made by a husband and wife who are church members, towards the purchase of newer one. Following this generous donation, a balance of up to \$800.00 may be needed. After discussion, a motion was made to purchase a new multi-function copier machine to include the customary service agreement and passed via voice vote.

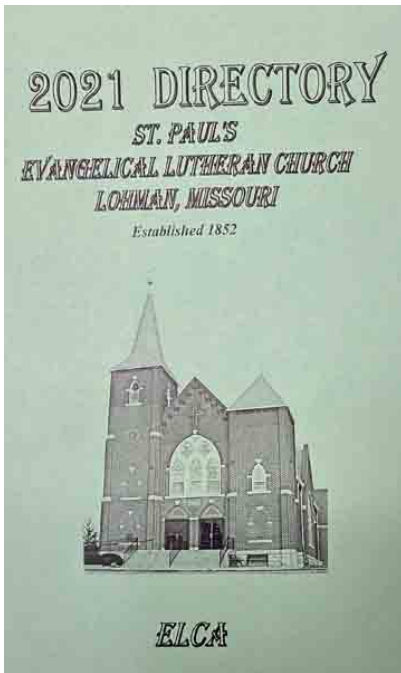
President Finch called for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Laurie Koestner, seconded by Mitchell Plochberger, and passed via voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Pastor closed the meeting with prayer, and special prayers for the family of Roger and Nancy Thompson for the death of Roger's father today, and for the family of Mark and Kathy Meller for the death of Mark's father.

**Mobile Food Pantry:** Audrey Bunch

The February 9th Mobile Food Pantry had to be cancelled to February 23rd due to the very cold weather. The weather was very nice on the 23rd lots of sunshine and warm temperatures. Thanks to all the volunteers that served 96 families with 299 people in those families. Some items given out were a box with yogurt, carrots, apples, oranges, cheese slices, hot dogs and onions. Plus, frozen pizzas, milk, crackers, Capri drinks, cereal, Boom Chicka Pop, Nutri Grain bars, smoked sausages ready to eat in packages, strawberries, chicken, roasts and steaks. Volunteers from the Lohman Lions Club were Gary and Alberta Zumwalt, and from St. Paul's Lutheran were Rosemary Heidbreder, Dan Tschirgi, and Becky Weber. Next mobile Food Pantry will be March 9th at 1:30 P.M.

**St. Paul's 2021 Directory:** Bill and Erika Gerth completed the St. Paul's Directory for 2021.



This booklet is filled with information you will not find elsewhere without a lot of due diligence and detective work.

You will find not only all of your fellow members of St. Paul's congregation but also everyone who is serving on a committee (So you know who to contact if you have a question or would like to volunteer.) Plus information about the committees.

The beneficiaries of all of the special offering envelopes are on page 7 if you have wondered where your donations are going.

Plus, birthdays and who is responsible for different areas of the church.

The directories may be picked up in the Narthex. Each one has your family name on it and if you are able to pick up other family households and drop them off that would be great.

**Adopt A Highway:** The family of Inge Gauck has taken care of the trash and litter on Hwy D for the past few years. Inge let us know she and her family were no longer able to keep up with it and asked if the members of St. Paul's would like to take it over. It is the stretch of [Route D from the intersection of 'C' to Kim's Hair Salon in Lohman.](#)

Inge has contacted MODOT to release this section to us and have the signage at both ends replaced with St. Paul's name as the benefactor of this project.

Jacklyn Wood and Pastor David worked for two hours on February 28<sup>th</sup> and picked up all the trash from Kim's Hair Salon on both sides of the highway to the second hill toward highway C. This was fairly easy to do and was just a little more than halfway, and looks so much better now. We will find another day to finish up. If you are interested in helping with this project, please let Pastor David know so he can get you on the list. The more people working the easier and quicker it can be done. Although MODOT suggests this to be a quarterly event, Pastor anticipates twice a year after having watching the accumulation of litter over the past few months.

**Schedule for Online Services:** 9:00 a.m. Sunday mornings on FaceBook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/StPaulsChurchOnTheHill> and on **FM Station 104.1** in the church parking lot and many homes in Lohman, MO. area at 9:00 a.m. Sundays.

All services can be viewed at any time on our St. Paul's website: <http://www.stpaulslutheranlohman.org> just scroll down to the middle section and click on the service of your choice under "In Case You Missed It." Below that is another section for current and past bulletins.

### **Mid-Week Lenten Services**

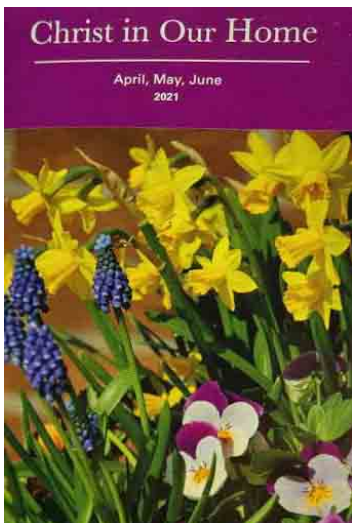
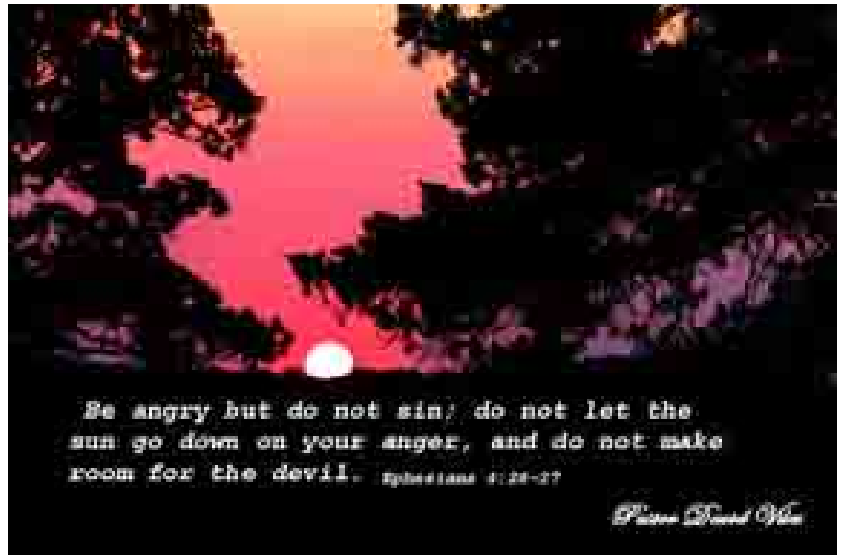
Each Wednesday during Lent, Pastor David will have a devotional on FaceBook Live at 7:00 p.m. This is a five week series on what it means to be "Community with God" in: Creation, Saints, Neighbor, Poor, and with Christ. Join together online as a Community in Christ with one another. These devotions will be ten to twenty minutes in length.

## Daily Devotions:

At the end of December 2020, Pastor David started posting a daily scripture with a photo he has taken with his camera or something from the ELCA or other religious sites he monitors. If you have not kept up with these you may begin by going to the St. Paul's FaceBook page located at the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/StPaulsChurchOnTheHill> This is a public site so you do not have to be a member of FaceBook in order to see these posts or the weekly worship services.

If you do have a FaceBook account and watch St. Paul's worship services or these posts in the future, Please leave a comment and/or click the 'Like' or 'Heart' icon to let us know you are watching. Also contact Pastor David if you have a question, suggestion or other comments. We often get hundreds of views on our posts and services but only a few engagements to let us know who is watching and maybe your opinons of what you see.



It is a little early but the devotion books have arrived for the second quarter. You can pick them up in the Narthex.



Don't Forget, but if you do, just pretend you are walking out with everyone else that is leaving as you arrive.

Then go home and watch it on Facebook so you will know what you missed.

Thank You to Mitchell Plochberger for clearing the snow this year from the steps and walkways around the church. Mitchell also arranged for Campbell Snow removal service to take care of the parking lot and much of the sidewalks the night before. They did a great job.



## Special Project Fund Drive: Parsonage Roof Replacement

A fund drive has been approved for the replacement of the church parsonage with a metal roof similar to what is currently on the church building. The parsonage roof is old and has seen damage from hail storms in the past year. Shingles are being blown off during high winds here on the hill and contractors have been called out to replace them. The amount being raised is \$11,395.22 after insurance payments although this amount could change if underlying damage is found to the main structure or other concerns.

If you are able, and would like to contribute to this fund, please send your tax deductible gift made out to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and a notation in the memo field for (Parsonage Roof). Checks can be sent to P.O. Box 15, Lohman, MO. 65053. Your help is needed and very much appreciated.

