

EPIS⁺LE



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

Volume 66 No. 2

February - 2022

Pastor's Message

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8

February brings us good days.

There is a lot to be thankful for during the shortest month of the year. During these 28 days some people will enjoy Super Bowl Sunday on the 13th.

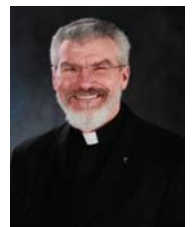
But the next day on the 14th is an all around favorite for most everyone as it is a day of love and romance. It is a day to express our love to the favorite person in our life. It is also special to me since it is the day I married my beautiful, and wonderful wife, Donna 41 years ago.

The next big day in February, we should really pay attention to is the 17th. This is Random Acts of Kindness Day! In our verse from Micah above the Lord requires us to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God. This is one day of the year which is set aside to do kindness. I'm sure people who know about this day will be inspired to do some random act of kindness for someone on the 17th. The beauty of this is the simplicity of doing it. There is no planning or preparation involved. As the title proclaims, it is random. You see someone struggling to carry groceries or some other object and you lend a hand. You come across someone who is a little short of money at the store and you pay the difference. Perhaps someone needs help changing a tire or needs a ride to the store, or perhaps someone looks a little lonely or out of sorts and you could provide a little time and conversation. But perhaps the easiest and one of the longest lasting deeds you can do for someone is to say a few nice remarks. "I love that hat.", "You have some killer shoes!", "That new haircut / style looks fantastic on you.", "That is the most adorable little dog!"

It is a shame only one day is set aside for being kind to others. I'm pretty sure God would be overjoyed if you did a random act of kindness for someone every day, even if it is just a smile and a nod.

Speaking of adorable little dogs, February 20th is National Love Your Pet Day. So don't forget to do something a little special for your pets and show them how much you care for them and appreciate all the love they give you in return. Or if you have a cat then show them your respect for their demands to be treated like royalty.

Blessings to you in Christ Jesus,
Pastor David



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jason Plochberger
- 1 Bridget Dalton
- 2 Kevin Pistel
- 2 Curt Stubinger
- 2 Elroy Stubinger
- 3 Morgan Schroeder
- 3 Mark Strobel
- 6 Ryan Ferrell
- 8 Donita Stubinger
- 10 Abigail Gonzalez
- 11 Wanda Ferrell
- 12 Madison Linnenbrink
- 12 Trevor Collins
- 14 Virginia Linhardt
- 14 Abbie Linsenbardt
- 14 Bob Murphy
- 15 Julie Nelson
- 17 Don Buchta
- 18 Mark Fischer
- 18 Jerry Koestner
- 20 Debby Koestner
- 20 Tyler Soell
- 27 Mark Kalaf

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Month/Day	Attendance Phys./Virtual	Offering
<i>JANUARY 02</i>	<i>04 / 156</i>	<i>* \$1,265.00</i>
<i>JANUARY 09</i>	<i>80 / 115</i>	<i>\$4,731.05</i>
<i>JANUARY 16</i>	<i>55 / 91</i>	<i>\$1,356.00</i>
<i>JANUARY 23</i>	<i>94 / 122</i>	<i>\$1,551.00</i>
<i>JANUARY 30</i>	<i>92 / 78</i>	<i>\$2,216.00</i>

In Addition:

Initial Offering - \$222.00
Epistle - \$50.00

Special Thanks to:

Gift: Dan & Wendy Weber - \$250.00

NOTE: Next month, Ash Wednesday is on the 2nd followed by mid-week Lenten gatherings for Lent. There is an Ash Wednesday offering envelope and five Lenten envelopes in your offering box to provide for those in need. Please consider attending these services and giving toward God's mission in our church.

Announcing the birth of Ellie Kay Morgans, daughter of Heather and Timothy Morgans living in Kansas City and granddaughter of the super excited grandmother Barbara Carrel living in West Fork, Arkansas.

Ellie Kay was born on January 7, 2022 at 2:32 p.m. weighing 8lbs and 3 oz. and measuring 19 inches in length. Congratulations from your church family at St. Pauls.



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 Glen & Donita Stubinger 1973
- 14 Pastor David & Donna Viles 1981
- 14 Daniel & Paige Olsen 2020
- 24 Patty & Scott Duncan 2014
- 27 Peter & Susan Neenan 1989

Continued prayers for healing and comfort. Marie Fischer, Vanessa Pyatt, Julie Carel, Donna Viles, and Melba Ehm.



Ask the Pastor

Question: *How can we really know God?*

Answer: "Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23-24

We know about God through reading the Holy Scriptures. The Jeremiah scripture above tells us what God is all about, namely love, justice, and righteousness. As we read through the Bible we find in both the Old and New testaments what God expects of us.

We are to have no others gods. Exodus 20:3. We are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and love our neighbors in the same way we love our self. Mark 12:30-31.

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Amos 5:24
There are many verses in our Bible that tell us about God and the relationship we should be having with him and in turn with each other. But that is not the question. There is a difference in knowing about, God and knowing God.

Valentine's Day is coming up in a couple of weeks on February 14th. It is a day we express our love for others in our lives and especially our spouse, or significant other that we love. We would not buy a Valentine's card that says, "You are six feet tall, weigh 190 pounds, and have brown eyes." The card would certainly show we know about the person but that information can be found on a driver's license and a person reading it would still not 'know' the person.

So, how can we really 'KNOW' God?

Similar to the spouse or significant other, it is more than reading statistics or even scriptures. Knowing God is found in the heart as much if not more than in the mind. Knowing God is found in a relationship with him. It is the feeling of love we experience when we watch the beauty of the sunrise in the early morning hours and know God is in that wondrous light and he will be with us throughout the day. Knowing God is the feeling of comfort and peace we experience during times of conflict and even sorrow when we feel the assurance in our hearts that God loves us and has not left us alone. Knowing God is the feeling of joy we experience when we see right triumph over wrong in the world. Justice prevails in setting someone or something free when they or it has been falsely accused and oppressed. When the truth shines bright and overcomes the darkness of the lies of the world, we see and know God has won another victory for our sake and the sake of others.

We know God in our heart of hearts when we witness the righteousness of virtue and morality conquer the temptations and whispers of deceit the world uses to turn us aside.

We know God in the real life moments of drawing close to him in ways that declare, 'God is with us.' When we go to church to worship God, we feel his presence in our soul as we sing hymns together in praise of his goodness. As we walk up the aisle to the front of the sanctuary to receive the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion, God is there. God is present in the body and blood as we commune with him and in him and he in us.

We know God in his steadfast love, justice, and righteousness that overcomes hate, injustice and wickedness for our sake. In these ways, we know God and we know he is in us and we are in him.

Our heart cannot explain God's ways and his presence with us. Our heart cannot reason through mathematical equations or scientific formula to help us know God. We can only truly know God when we completely open our heart to him in prayer, and listening for his response through the Holy Spirit guiding us in ways of steadfast love, justice, and righteousness.

Go out this day and know God.

Grace and Peace to you,
Pastor David

Annual Congregational Meeting, January 16, 2022

Respectfully submitted by Becky Weber

The Annual Congregational Meeting was called to order at 10:05am by Council President Zola Finch. Council members present were President Finch, Delores Vlach, Kathy Meller, Mitch Plochberger, Laurie Koestner, Dan Tschirgi and Becky Weber. Also present were Pastor David Viles and church treasurer Kay Pascoe. The 2022 Annual meeting was held via in person for council members, and church members, and per online attendance via FaceBook live.

The President called upon Pastor David Viles to offer an opening prayer. Pastor Viles gave a prayer for all in attendance.

Attendance was registered by forty people per sign in sheet, and two people per individual notification via FaceBook online. The total of in person and online attendance is forty-two, thus the required quorum was met.

The President asked for congregational approval of the minutes of the January 17, 2021 Congregational Meeting as printed in the Congregational Annual Meeting Report, page 2. A motion to approve the January 17, 2021 minutes was put forth by Jerry Koestner, seconded by Kent Nelson, and passed via voice vote.

President Finch asked Pastor Viles to present his report of the past year of his service to St. Paul's church. Pastor Viles informed the congregation of his upcoming move into the home previously owned by Hugo and Gert Strobel following completion of its renovation. He then reported on his activities and referenced his report as printed in the Annual Report, page 7.

President Finch reported the Mutual Ministry committee updated the Church Handbook. She noted the addition of the Blessing Box located atop the church hill. President Finch referred attendees to the Presidents report, page 5, and the committee reports as printed in the Annual Report.

Evangelism and Outreach: Delores Vlach. See Annual Report, page 10.

Worship and Music: Kathy Meller. See Annual Report, page 12.

Parish Education: Laurie Koestner. See Annual Report, page 22.

Mutual Ministry: Jana Thompson. See Annual Report, page 16.

Church Improvement: Mitch Plochberger. See Annual Report, page 17.

Technology: Dan Tschirgi. See Annual Report, page 24.

President Finch called on Jerry Koestner for the Audit Committee report. Jerry reported the financial audit was in order, and commended Kay Pascoe on her meticulous attention to detail with regards to the treasurer's records and reports. President Finch called for any discussion or questions. Seeing that there were no questions, discussion or opposition voiced/noted, she called for a motion to accept the Financial audit committee report. Motion was offered by Richard Heidebreder, seconded by Donald Weber and passed via voice vote

Old Business: Safety and Security: Jerry Koestner. Jerry reports that his committee is looking into replacing the wood doors with metal doors along the side of the church. He also reports that these doors are locked just prior to the beginning of the service. His committee will continue to meet to discuss changes needed for improved security, to include security cameras for our church.

New Business: President Finch reported on the generous donation from the Hugo and Gert Strobel estate of \$96,000.00, with no specific designation, and thus to be put into the church general revenue fund. Frank Pascoe made the recommendation that church council members discuss possibly donating ten percent of this donation to a local charity or a designated charity. Church council will discuss this further.

President Finch called upon the Nominating Committee member Becky Weber to report on elections. Becky Weber reported on the nomination of Stacy Bubach to fill one of two vacancies on the church council. She thanked Stacy for considering this nomination. Becky then asked for any nominations from the floor to fill the second vacancy, that of council secretary. Seeing there were no nominations, she

called for a motion to approve Stacy Bubach for church council. A motion to approve was made by Gus Fischer, seconded by Kathryn Linsenbardt, and passed via voice vote.

President Finch informed Dan Tschirgi to keep her posted of any online questions and comments put forth by FaceBook attendees. Dan informed her that one attendee was unable to hear the suggestion put forth by Frank Pascoe concerning the donation by the Strobel estate. President Finch then repeated this aforementioned suggestion per Frank Pascoe.

President Finch referred attendees to the financial report and budget as per Annual Report (see pages 26 and 27.) She then called for any questions or discussion of such. Seeing that there was none, she put forth a request for a motion to approve the 2022 budget. Motion to approve was put forth by Jason Plochberger, seconded by Laurie Koestner and passed via voice vote.

President Finch reported on church council discussion and decision that the upcoming vacated church parsonage be used as a church annex, for church meetings, youth group gatherings, etc. President Finch reports we will keep the utilities on following Pastor's vacating the parsonage, and that guidelines will be established for its use.

President Finch called on Mitch Plochberger to give a report on the kitchen renovation. Mitch reports the committee to remodel the kitchen will continue periodic meetings to organize and plan the renovation.

President Finch offered her appreciation to Pastor David for his leadership and willingness to continue to serve our church family, the church staff, the church volunteers, church council members, and outgoing council members.

President Finch called for any other business. Seeing no further business, she made a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Kent Nelson, seconded by Gary Bunch and passed via voice vote.

The President declared the 2022 Congregational Annual meeting adjourned at 10:20am. Pastor Viles closed the meeting with a prayer.

After the Annual Meeting, a church council meeting was held. Frank Pascoe has graciously agreed to serve as the new council secretary. It was mutually decided council members will continue to serve on the same committees. After a brief discussion, council members will revisit possible charities for the ten percent of the Hugo and Gert Strobel estate donation.

Margaret Circle: Erika Gerth

Due to the high positivity rate and increasing numbers of Covid cases in Cole County, we have decided to cancel the February meeting of Margaret Circle and hope for a better Covid climate in a couple of months so we can meet on April 5, 2022 for our next scheduled meeting. Thank you for your understanding, stay safe and be careful.

Quilt Day: Jeannette Fischer

On Wednesday, February 16, we will gather to tack and hem quilts for Lutheran World Relief mission work. We were not able to do this last year, so we look forward to accomplishing a lot of work, plus enjoying good food and fellowship this year. If you are available that day, please plan to come and help. Traditional quilting skills are not required. If you can tie a knot, you qualify. Donita has volunteered to provide a pot of soup and the rest of us will bring our own sandwich, cookie or whatever for ourselves. Freundschaft Gruppe will have all the equipment set up and ready to go and we will begin about 8:30.

Jr. Lutherans: Donita Stubinger

Jr. Lutherans gathered Sunday afternoon, January 30, 2022 to skate across the ice at the Washington Park Arena. We had 16 brave skaters to slide around on the cold ice. Twelve parents and grandparents watched with excitement to see which new skater would fall first. Lindsey Plochberger and Morgan Schroeder were first time skaters and they did not want to leave. Everyone stopped long enough to enjoy snow cones and desserts. Please feel free to join this group for lots of interesting adventures as we enjoy many activities. Thanks to Donita for putting this all together and Jamie Plochberger for sending me a few pictures.



Jr. Lutherans usually plan a trip to a local Nursing Home in February and taken them a craft or something. This year we will visit a special kind of friend at the Jefferson City Animal Shelter. The trip is planned for President's Day on Monday, February 21, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. We can shower the animals with dog bones, dog and cat food, toys, bleach tablets, dog treats, and old towels.

Afterward we will visit the Moreau Meat Market where we will tour the facility and see how animals are processed for our food, and where the dog bones come from. While there, we will enjoy snacks and drinks to complete our day. All ages are welcome to join our group so please feel free to come along.

WELCA: Donita Stubinger

President Donita Stubinger of the WELCA called the annual meeting to order, January 16, 2022. Minutes were read by Marlene Carlson and treasurer report was given by Audrey Bunch. Thank yous were acknowledged from different organizations and members that had received donations at the closing of 2021. Makayla Enowski was thanked for conducting the December meeting in the Presidents absence. Elda Pistel was thanked for auditing the 2021 treasurer's books.

Marlene Carlson secretarial duties were replaced and filled by Julie Nelson who accepted. With motion being made and seconded, she was elected by acclamation. Audrey Bunch was thanked for all the commitment she has to keep the books balanced for the WELCA.

A decision was made to purchase another vacuum sweeper so Kathryn Linsenbardt would have a sweeper for each floor. In addition, she is to purchase necessary supplies for the kitchen and cleaning.

Monday, February 14, the Freundschaft Gruppe will set up the quilting frames for Blanket Tacking Day, which will be held Wednesday, February 16. Soups, drinks and desserts will be furnished for the Blanket Tacking Day event. Everyone can also bring their own sandwich to complement their meal. Lutheran World Relief has also requested Personal Care Kits, which will be discussed at our next meeting.

Our Lenten Ingathering, which begins Ash Wednesday has been designated to the Samaritan Center. The Ingathering will start on Sunday, March 6, and runs through Palm Sunday, April 10. A list of items needed: non-perishable items including paper supplies, peanut butter, or any canned goods. Hygiene items including combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes and toothpaste. Other items that can be donated are gently used bedding or throws, in season clothing and gently used shoes. In 2021, St. Paul's members gave 563 pounds of non-perishable food items to the Samaritan Center. They are so grateful for these items because many cannot get these items at the many charitable organizations. Thanks to St. Paul's of Lohman for your support and donations throughout the year.

The Spring Cluster meeting will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2022 at Christ & Trinity in Sedalia, MO. This is open to all women, so please plan to attend any and all of these gatherings. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

Mobile Food Pantry: Audrey Bunch

The January 11th Mobile Food Pantry was held in the Trinity Lutheran Church parking lot on a warm sunny afternoon. So thankful for the good weather to volunteer and help in our community. We were able to serve 172 families with 498 total people. Items given out were French fries, assorted crackers, assorted cookies, marshmallows, produce boxes, (salad kits, cabbage, milk, cheese slices, tomatoes, cream cheese, brussel sprouts, potatoes), and assorted variety of frozen items (beef, chicken, pork, turkey, cakes.) Thanks to all the volunteers, from the Lohman Lions club were Alberta and Gary Zumwalt, from St. Paul's Lutheran were Rosemary Heidbreder, Dan Tschirgi, Becky Weber, Gary and Audrey Bunch. Next Mobile Food Pantry will be February 15th at 1:00 P.M.

Freundschaft Gruppe: Jeannette Fischer

Thanks to the 10 helpful people who gathered on January 5 to take down all the Christmas decorations, un-trim the tree, dismantle it and safely store it away. Our job was made much lighter thanks to Les and Kathryn who put away all the outdoor greenery several days earlier. After all our hard work, we enjoyed a wonderful wine, cheese and soup supper. Thanks to Erika and Jeannette for providing the soup and to everyone who brought wine and snacks to share. We will return to our regular meeting schedule on February 14. This will be a busy evening as we set up quilt frames, sewing tables and etc. in preparation for quilt tacking day on Wednesday, February 16. If you plan to attend, please make reservation with Jeannette at 782-4594 by 9 PM on Sunday, February 13th. Thank You.

STARS: Jeannette Fischer

We will resume our meetings on **February 9th** with lunch at 11:30. Please make reservations with Rose Strobel at 782-4553 if you plan to attend. Casseroles will be provided and guests are asked to bring a dish to share. Our program will be given by Jana Thompson who has worked in education since 1974 in a variety of positions with the Russellville School District. At the present time, she is involved with the Parents as Teachers program. Her role is to help parents prepare children for their upcoming school experience. My, how things have changed! I suspect there are numerous STARS attendees who started first grade not knowing how to count to 10 and, for sure, we did not know how to sing the ABC song. We will all have a lot to learn from Jana and we appreciate her sharing the information with us.

Luminaries on the Hill:

The annual setting out of the luminaries on the road up to St. Paul's is a big task and requires lots of help. Fortunately, help is abundant in our congregation and this year included Thea, Jackson, and Frederica with a little help from Gus Fischer, Alan Scheperle, and Mark Fischer. Thank you all for making the hill beautiful with the lights on Christmas Eve.

St. Paul's is very appreciative for these wonderful folks who make Christmas on the hill extra special.



Gus Fischer prepared all the bags and Richard Heidbreder, Gary Bunch, and Gary Elliott lit all the candles inside the bags on Christmas Eve making for a beautiful lighted path to worship on the Hill. Gus and the Fischer family picked up all the bags the next day and packed everything away until next year.

The Hill side Nativity Scene: We give a special thanks to Leroy Plochberger, Alan and Jackson Schepeler for their work assembling the large nativity scene on the lower part of the hill so all driving along the road are able to see it and be reminded of what Christmas is all about.



Snow Removal: Our first snow of the season came the night before January 16th's worship and Annual meeting. Thank you to Mitchell Plochberger and others who cleared the parking lot and church steps early Sunday morning. I'm not sure what we would do without Mitchell's hard work and dedication to keep us safe and able to attend church during bad weather.

Synod Assembly:

Synod assembly will be held on June 9th through the 11th this year at Embassy Suites in Olathe, Kansas.

This will be the first in-person assembly since 2019 before the Covid-19 situation disrupted all events and gatherings for the following two years.

St. Paul's church is looking for volunteers to attend this assembly and represent our congregation. If you are interested, please let Pastor David know so we can determine the arrangements to be made before the dead lines in April and May.

Thank you for your consideration.



To All Congregations in the
Central States Synod, ELCA
Central States Synod Assembly

June 9-11, 2022

Beginning late afternoon on Thursday
Ending at noon on Saturday

Embassy Suites Kansas City, Olathe

10401 S. Ridgeview Rd., Olathe, KS 66061

Our keynote speaker will be Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Ph.D., Professor of Theological and Social Ethics, at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. Registration materials, forms and information will be available in February on the Central States Synod website: www.css-elca.org/assembly

- Deadline for submitting "voting Member Waiver Request Form" is **March 1, 2022**
- Deadline for submitting nominations and resolutions is **April 15, 2022**
- Early Assembly Registration ends **April 15, 2022**
- Register for lodging through Embassy Suites Kansas City, Olathe via the link on the assembly webpage; or by phone (800- 362-2779) Use the code, "CSS" to receive the conference rate. Reservation deadline: **May 2, 2022**

More information will be included in the Synod E-Newsletters and on the Assembly Webpage.

Central States Synod, 420 W. 14th St. - Suite 101, Kansas City, MO 64105

Phone 913-948-9701 or 866-915-3548 Email: assembly@css-elca.org

Calendar of Events

February 8th, Tuesday: Music and Worship meeting.

February 8th, Tuesday: Food Pantry Volunteers at Trinity Lutheran in Russellville at 1:15 p.m.

February 9th, Wednesday: S.T.A.R.S. Pending Snow Event

February 14th, Monday: Church Council meeting at 6:00 pm in the church basement.

February 14th, Monday: Freundschaft Gruppe will set up quilting frames for Blanket Tacking Day.

February 15th, Tuesday: Basement reserved for Lohman City Council meeting at 5:30 p.m.

February 16th, Wednesday: Blanket Tacking Day

February 16th, Wednesday: Mutual Ministry will meet at 5:30 pm in the church basement.

February 20th, Sunday: Epistle Deadline for News and Articles.

Bulletins are normally printed on Wednesdays.

Pastor David normally plans Fridays as his day off.

Usher Schedule

Feb-06	Laurie Koestner	Stacy Bubach
Feb-13	Kathy Meller	Mitch Plochberger
Feb-20	Jana Thompson	Dan Tschirgi
Feb-27	Delores Vlach	Frank Pascoe

Acolyte Schedule

Feb-06	Kiefer Freiner
Feb-13	Oliver Stoermer
Feb-20	Madison Linnenbrink
Feb-27	Kara Freiner

Greeter Schedule

Feb-06	Audrey Bunch	Gary Elliott
Feb-13	Devin Koestner	Jerry Koestner
Feb-20	David Russell	Trish Russell
Feb-27	Frank Pascoe	Donald Weber

Readers Schedule

Feb-06	Donald Weber
Feb-13	Trish Russell
Feb-20	Lori Meyer
Feb-27	Carol Elliott

Song Leader

Feb-06	Cameron Freiner
Feb-13	Dan Tschirgi
Feb-20	Kathy Meller
Feb-27	Dan Tschirgi

Audio / Video Technician

Feb-06	Dan Tschirgi
Feb-13	Roger Pennell
Feb-20	Dan Tschirgi
Feb-27	Roger Pennell

Communion Assistants

Feb-13	Laurie, Jerry Koestner
Feb-27	Trish Russell

Altar Flowers for the Month

Audrey Bunch

* Communion Days noted in Yellow