

St. Paul
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Missouri
Synod

Rev. Matthew D. Troester
PASTOR
rtroester@stpaulsonline.org



February 2024

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

The word Lent means, "*spring*." While we remember the darkness of what Jesus endured for us and the darkness of what we often do, like with winter, we always know that spring is coming! There is light and Jesus is our Light! Unless we remember how dark things really are, we won't know the brightness of the Light. Jesus is our everlasting, all power, enduring forever Light! Easter is coming! Thank God for Jesus! We do what we do because we have confessed our sins, repented and have come to know the Light of Christ. As you read about some of what we do together, thank God for His Light and go be that light.

From Vicar Larry's Desk

My next class will focus on defending the faith against the errors that contradict what the Bible says. We will continue our deep dive into the Book of Concord, which contains the documents explaining what we believe is the proper understanding of what God says in His Holy Word. 50 years ago, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis received feedback from congregations that they were concerned that the training at Seminary was not in line with God's Word, nor the Lutheran confessions. The Seminary responded and found issues that needed to be addressed. Unfortunately, many have rejected the truth of the Word of God in favor of teaching that was not biblical. Those few who remained faithful to the Word of God and to the Lutheran confessions held fast. It is in their legacy that I study today.

What happened 50 years ago was that a group of students and professors, known as Seminex, walked out of the Seminary. While painful for many reasons, this highlights the importance of our congregations holding fast to the Word of God, and to the confessional faith that has been handed down to us. It is this confessional faith that brought me to the LCMS and St. Paul Matteson. I love that so many of you have asked many different questions about faith, worship, and the Word of God (including the youth of our congregation), because this reminds me to be in the Word, and staying true to that Word.

Continue to humbly hold fast to God's inerrant Word. Be strong in the face of challenges to our faith, both from believers and non-believers. As the congregation of St. Paul, continue to shine the bright light of the truth of Christ to a world that so desperately needs to hear the Gospel message. See you in church!

6201 Vollmer Road
Matteson, IL 60443
CHURCH
708-720-0880
www.stpaulsonline.org

Head Elder – Dennis Pieper

Three crosses - *Matthew 27:38* "Then two thieves were crucified with him (Jesus) one on the right and one on the left." God doesn't do things by accident. Three crosses show us that Jesus was treated as a common criminal. Both of the thieves reviled Him as the crowd was doing. However, Luke relates the fact that one of them – the one on the right – repented asking Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His Kingdom. Through Jesus on the cross in the center, He bore the sins of the whole world, including the sins of both thieves. By the power of the Holy Spirit the thieves heard Jesus offering forgiveness even in the face of ridicule. Both heard Jesus care for his mother. Both saw the power of Jesus' love keeping Him on the cross for our sake. Through the power of the Holy Spirit one repented, while the other rejected the Spirit. As we go through this Lenten season, be ever be mindful of your sins which should bring us condemnation and also remember that through the cross of Jesus, we gain forgiveness!

Paul Szymanski, Treasurer

January giving was down, due in part to some cold weather that limited attendance to our Sunday services. Please remember you have the option to use Simple Give to submit your tithes and offerings if you would like. There is a link to do this on our website if you don't already use the app. You may also make up that offering the following week.

The new sign our front of church has been ordered. Thank you to the Lessmann family and their Memorial gift for providing the funds for this project.

Paul Szymanski, Youth Director

As we go into Lent, we will be having Bible study & Discussions on Wednesday nights in lieu of the evening worship. This is a great opportunity to come as a family to hear and learn more about God's promises for you. We will also be watching the movie, "*The Passion of the Christ*" on Wednesday, March 13th. While this film is graphic in nature, it is a realistic portrayal of the suffering that our Lord endured on our behalf and a gut-wrenching reminder of what our salvation cost. Keep watching the bulletin for other updates.

St Paul Live Stream – Worship Services

We want to remind you that a live broadcast of our Sunday and our Wednesday worship services is available each Sunday at 9 am, and on Wednesday at 11 a.m., on both YouTube and Facebook. The link for the service is on our webpage (www.stpaulsonline.org) and on our St. Paul Lutheran Facebook page. AND, if you are not able to watch the worship service live, a recording is always available anytime afterwards on YouTube and Facebook. For some worship services there are technical issues with the live stream. When this happens, you can catch the worship service later on that week. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Daily Bible Reading

Each week you can join your sisters and brothers in Christ as we read through the Bible, book by book, one chapter a day. You will know what we are reading by looking at the calendar on the back of the bulletin, and also by going to our webpage. Each day Pastor Troester records a commentary for the chapter that day, to help explain and give focus to the chapter. You can find that commentary on our Facebook page and through your favorite podcast app.

2024 Alaska Mission Trip

The dates for the 2024 Alaska Mission Trip are July 27th (10-day Team) or July 29th (7-day Team) to August 4th. It's not too late to sign up. **If you are curious about being a part of the team this year, please plan to attend the next information meeting on Monday, April 15th at 6:00pm at the church or on Zoom.**

Grandparents

We will celebrate Easter on March 31st and it is the perfect opportunity to share the meaning of the Gospel with your Grandchildren. Do not assume someone else will share the Gospel message with them. Studies show that the window of following Christ gets smaller as Grandchildren become older and leave home and the influence of family. See your 2024 Grandparenting Planner for more activities and ideas to have a greater spiritual impact on your Grandchildren in March.

Men

For thousands of years, men have gathered around a fire for many reasons including celebrations and supporting each other. You are invited to join other men **Thursday, March 14th at 7:00pm** as we come together to relax, celebrate our victories, and support each other around a fire. You only need to bring your favorite outdoor chair and your favorite campfire consumables (beverage, snacks, etc.).



Buona Beef – February Alaska Fundraiser

The **February Fundraiser** is at Buona Beef on Crawford (or do you say Pulaski?) just north of Vollmer Road, in Flossmoor. When you place your order between 10:30am and 10:00pm on **Thursday, February 29th** and 20% of your purchase will go to the Mission Team. Tell your family, your friends, and your neighbors and support your Alaska Mission Team. The next fundraiser will be **Tuesday, April 2nd at the Matteson Culver's**. Details will be available soon.

BUONA
CHICAGO'S ORIGINAL ITALIAN BEEF

Community Resource Fair, March 16 – Noon to 3 pm

More than 30 organizations have committed to come to address the needs and concerns of our attendees. Each organization will host a table; some will give 30-minute presentations and Q & A sessions for more in-depth information. Topics include senior services, family health care, food, safety, housing, and more. A Comfort Dog from LCC will also be in attendance. Versiti Blood Service will be here with their mobile unit. We will sell hot dogs and pulled pork sandwiches as well as salads for lunch. You can help to hand out some flyers or put a yard sign in your yard, work with setting up tables on Friday evening or taking them down on Saturday afternoon, help with food or hosting - please sign up on the sheet in the narthex or call Rosanne Tadsen (708-209-5335). Our purpose is to reach people with needs who might have trouble navigating the red tape often involved in getting help. We want to be the hands and feet of Jesus to people in need.

Voice of Care – Spiritual Respite Companion Care Workshops

We are thrilled to present Spiritual Respite Companion Care Workshops across the Northern Illinois District. One of the workshops will be here at St. Paul's on Saturday, May 18th from 12:00pm – 4:30pm w/lunch. If you know of a family with someone living with special needs, seeking Christian fellowship, spiritual growth, and a sense of belonging, our workshops are designed to meet those needs. For more information, contact Dennis Pieper, Director of Ministry Facilitators 708-759-4954 or register at voiceofcare.org. Thank you to the LWML of the NID for their invaluable support in making these workshops possible.

St Paul Food Pantry – Ruth & Rich Treichel

The St. Paul Food Pantry continues to grow, with between 175 and 190 families being served each week. Recently, the food pantry was the recipient of a food collection from the Menards Store in Matteson, which was very much appreciated. The food bags are filled every Friday morning, and food is distributed on Saturday mornings. Join our group if you can on either Friday or Saturday! Just show up, and you will be assigned a place to work!

Prayer Shawl - Diane Wille and Peggy Smutny

Being a part of the Prayer Shawl Ministry does not require previous skills. We have people that knit and crochet at all levels and would be glad to teach you. We also need people to tag and package finished projects. This is a good time to network with fellow believers. In February, we blessed 50 military pocket squares, 36 prayer squares, 7 confirmation squares, 28 baby hats, 5 baby blankets and 13 prayer shawls during the Prayer Shawl time.

Recipients have said, "Thank you for taking the time to pray for me and make me a prayer shawl. with God, all things are possible. I felt your prayers." Or, "I needed to sit at the table immediately, find the right card, and say thank you. It was just the right time to receive the prayer shawl and the message. Today, and always, we will feel wrapped in His love." Talk to someone in the Prayer Shawl ministry if you know someone who would benefit. If you take a shawl, please remember to fill out a card to enable us to better track the inventory. We meet every Monday at 12:30 except holidays. Onward....

In Closing.....

We still need to raise up Leaders for St. Paul. The Officers for Chairman of the Congregation, and Chairpersons for Education, Stewardship, and Fellowship are open. It takes faith, time and commitment and if you step forward, God is faithful to you. Remember Jesus. We are His church, His people! Pray about it. That person could be you or someone else you might pray for. Jesus gave His life so that you might have life eternal. We are Christ's Body, and each of us is a part of that Body. What part of that Body are you?

Peace,

Pastor T.

Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday Service – March 28 - 11:00am & 7:00pm
(1st Communion for Confirmation Class at our 7:00pm Svc)

Good Friday, March 29 – Noon & 7:00pm

Easter – March 31 – 6:30am SonRise, 9:00am & 10:45am
Breakfast will be served between 7:30am – 10:00am