



St. Paul's EPISTLE

April 2025 edition



Dead and Buried

In a few weeks, we will come to the final stretch of Lent, known as “Holy Week.” Think about what that title is implying. We normally talk about a “holiday” (short for “holy day”), where one day is set aside for some special observance or celebration. But for centuries, believers have set aside this entire week for special observance. Clearly, what is discussed during Holy Week is important. Indeed, what we see happen this holy week is the foundation of our eternity.

In Holy Week, we see the impossible. The Son of God dies. The Lord of life enters the last place he belonged—the grave. But what we will see this week is that, when Jesus entered the tomb, he did not go alone. He buried all our baggage with him: sin, guilt, shame, condemnation, fear. Jesus will walk out of the tomb. But thanks to him, those things will all stay dead and buried.

As Holy Week begins, we see Jesus bury humanity’s endless attempts at seizing power. What he wanted more than anything else was not power, but you. So, Jesus begins this week riding into Jerusalem on a donkey colt, knowing full well that he was riding to the cross.

On Thursday, Jesus began to execute the terms of the New Covenant. The Old Covenant offered rewards in return for work, but Jesus buried that old contract with unconditional, lasting promises that satisfy the deepest hunger of our soul.

On Good Friday, we remember the crucifixion and death of our Lord with both sorrow and solemn joy. Though the events of this day fill us with horror, the implications of those events give us every reason for praise. Standing in our place, Jesus, our substitute, was forsaken by his Father on the cross so that we could be reconciled to God and have an eternal home in heaven. †

**Reaching out with
the love of Jesus.**

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Worship
Sunday at 8:00 & 10:30AM

www.stpaulswr.org



MISSION RALLY COMING TO ST. PAUL'S

It is easy to become so engrossed in the details of historical events—who, when, where—that we miss their significance. For example, consider World War II. There are many compelling stories. Lots of dates and data to remember. However, for a moment set all that aside, and just imagine the Allies had lost. How would the world be different today? What would life be like for those of Jewish heritage? Would freedom exist in Europe? Would we be speaking German? With historical events, you miss out if you focus only on the details: who, when, where. You also need

to focus what that historical event means. The Allies won. That means something!

In this season of Easter, it is good we review the details: who, when, where. That reminds us that the resurrection of Christ is not fairytale or fable. It is a historical event... the historical event. However, we do ourselves a disservice if we simply recall the historic details of Easter without thinking long and hard about Easter's significance. Jesus won. That means something! Because he lives, not only is our eternity secure, but we have abundant resources to face the present. †

Twice a year, the local circuit of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society holds a mission rally. This is a chance for both men and women to get fired up about mission work in our synod. This spring, St. Paul's will serve as the hosts for the rally, which is on Saturday, April 26 from 9:00 am to noon. The main speaker will be Mr. Greg Shibelhut, who is on the WELS Europe Team Administrative Committee. Come hear about mission work in Europe and get other mission updates. The registration fee is only \$3.00. There will also be a freewill offering for missions.



As the host congregation, some of our duties include preparing rally materials, setting up the facility, registering attendees, providing refreshments, and helping with technology. Our women's group, Sisters on a Mission, will serve as the organizers, but they need more volunteers. If you can help, please contact Kristie Schroeder at 715-421-4202. †



YOUR SCHOOL IS ALSO YOUR CALLING AND MISSION FIELD

By Principal Andy Van Weele

Throughout the 125-year history of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, a priority has been placed on providing a Lutheran education to the next generation. The school, like the church, has become part of the fabric of what St. Paul's stands for as a ministry. We are not just a church. We are not just a school. We are one unified ministry attempting to share Jesus with a multigenerational community. This school has been here long before I arrived. God willing, this school will be here long after I leave. The same holds true for you. However, God and His Word are timeless. It is that timeless Gospel message that binds us together as a church and school into one ministry. Therefore, you and I can legitimately say this is YOUR school. We all share in the mission to spread the Gospel to all people, all generations. God has called us to share it just as much with the shut in as he has with the infant. That is the beautiful thing about His Word and the Gospel message. Another amazing aspect of sharing the Gospel is that the success of that message is not up to us. The act of faith is created solely through the work of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament. Sharing the Word so that the Holy Spirit may work through it is our calling. It is your calling.

You are all teachers.

You have all been given the command to go and share Jesus with those he places in front of you. May you ask God to give you the opportunity to share His Word with a little one this month. This church, this school, this community is YOUR calling. May God bless you in your calling to His mission field, whether that is in the pew, at a desk at Vacation Bible School, or at the grocery store. This church, this school, this community is YOUR mission field. Go forth confidently in your calling and in your mission field, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit to affect change in the most amazing of circumstances. †



CALL UPDATES

Mrs. Destinee Fiecko has accepted a call to serve in Doral, FL. On March 18, our congregation extended a call to a husband and wife to fill the two vacancies within our school with the departures of Mrs. Korth and Mrs. Fiecko at the end of the school year.

We called Kevin and Lynn Proeber to teach grades 4-5 and 1st grade respectively. One of the plans for next year is for the junior high to remain departmentalized with Mr. Biesterfeld and myself teaching in the junior high. With those plans, I would potentially take on the role of teaching literature along with the duties I already have within the junior high.

Kevin and Lynn both have a heart for teaching. They are experienced teachers of over 15 years. They currently serve at Peace Lutheran School in Sun Prairie. On top of their teaching skills, Lynn is also particularly gifted in music. This would be a huge answer to prayers.

Please reach out to both Kevin and Lynn. Even if you would not have a child in their classroom next year, it is still worthwhile to reach out to them to talk about your experience with the school, what you appreciate about the school, and just a general encouragement that you're praying for them.

You can contact Kevin via email at:
kevin.proeber@peacewels.org

You can contact Lynn via email at:
lynn.proeber@peacewels.org

Leaning on God with all of our plans next year.

Yet also understanding His plans are always the perfect plans. †



THE MAGIC FLUTE

You will be transported to “a solar system light years away” during the Opera for the Young (OFTY) performance of *The Magic Flute* on Wednesday, April 2 at 1:30 pm in the gym. OFTY brings live, professional opera to elementary schools, with students performing alongside professional artists. This fun adaptation of the classic opera features a flying (inner) tube, a satellite (golf) umbrella, and a couple of 3-headed characters. Students from our school sing the roles of the wise Sarastro and his Alien Council of Wisdom, who help propel the plot to its successful conclusion. This coming-of-age story is about coping with life's trials and learning to forgive. We hope you can come! †

WELCOME CENTER LAYOUT PROJECT

By Laurie Meister

At St. Paul's we are blessed to have a spacious Welcome Center that serves as a gathering area for congregants, guests and visitors on Sunday mornings. It is a testament of the warmth and caring nature of our family of believers that so many arrive early and linger well past the close of services to relax and enjoy fellowship time together in this grand space.

A team is working to review the many uses of this space with the intent of being purposeful about how we set the layout with a focus on outreach and fellowship. Does our Welcome Center contribute to a positive impression for a first time visitor? Does this space feel welcoming to visitors and demonstrate how much we love and care for our church home? The team will use existing furnishings in different ways to strive to reduce areas of congestion and improve the ease of moving to or from bible study or Sunday School. We will evaluate different layouts over several weeks in an effort to learn what works the best.

We are also striving to create a St. Paul's “information center” in the area of the mail boxes and the alcove to the North of the mail boxes. We have identified that this area will need increased lighting and assuming that can be accommodated, we hope to establish a new home for information about the various ministries of St. Paul's.

While our goal is to improve, it is possible we may make a change that doesn't generate the value we targeted. Please share your feedback throughout this process, both negative and positive feedback is valued and appreciated! St. Paul's serves many different “customers” in our Welcome Center, and your feedback is very important to ensure we achieve the best result for all. Please communicate your feedback to Pastor Plagenz, Christine Herrmann or Laurie Meister. †

HURRAY, IT'S APRIL!

By Staff Minister Randy Pahl

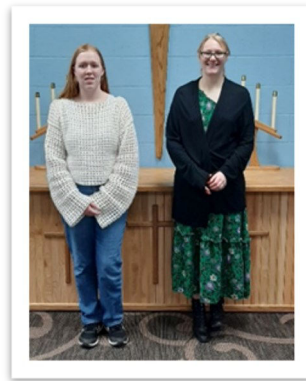
It's not that I'm excited or anything, but can you tell I'm excited?! Maybe ecstatic would be a better word! "April"... it just may be one of the best months of the year...why? Well, just the very word brings thoughts of the vernal equinox having recently occurred as our part of the world turned from the bleak days of winter into spring! The excitement of the NCAA basketball tournament is underway and, of course, that glorious Easter Sunday on the 20th! But before I get too far ahead of myself, let's take a look back at the numerous activities that occurred in March...



On the very first day of the month, our Panthers participated in the annual NLHS basketball tournament. Even though they came up short in all of their contests, it still provided valuable playing time in which they were able to grow and hone their skills. March 7th-9th was tournament number two taking place at Luther Prep. St. Paul's was victorious in game one by the final of 37-12, but came up short in the rest of their games, including the finale by a single point and finishing in 6th place. At the conclusion

of the season, our coaching staff noted the improvement that was made by our young squad throughout the year, which bodes well for the future! We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our coaches, Mr. Biesterfeld and Mrs. Gear, as well as to bid farewell to our lone 8th grade student Navaeh Stahmann. Also a huge thank you to Mr. Gear and Mr. Ibarra for being our officials as well as to Mr. Verjinsky and Mrs. Schroeder for preparing and serving (and buying – thanks All!!!) all of those wonderful concessions for our home games!

The very same weekend saw former student Jamie Meister participate in the National Band Fest at Martin Luther College. She and fellow student Adrianna Hengst joined 100 high school musicians from 24 of our WELS high schools across the U.S. to perform in New Ulm, MN.



Adrianna Hengst & Jamie Meister

Next, grades K-8 had the unique opportunity to take a joint field trip on March 14th as they enjoyed the play *Peter Pan* as presented by the Drama Club at NLHS. Following this delightful

adventure, the entire group participated in a game of bowling at Coral Lanes in Rothschild as a great day was had by all!

The following Friday it would be a return trip to Northland for grades 5-8 as they would participate in the annual Academic Challenge. Due to the fact that it took place after the deadline for this article, details will be forthcoming next month.

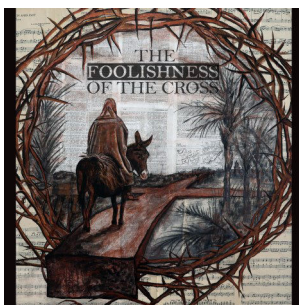
And, finally, the month will conclude with some well-deserved time off for students and faculty alike as Spring Break will occur from March 24th-28th.

We'd be remiss if we didn't also share a few thoughts with regard to Mrs. Fiecko accepting the Divine Call to teach in Doral, Florida. It reminds me of the Lenten season--sad that our Savior had to suffer, yet eternally grateful that He did! And, so too with Destinee. We are sad to see her depart from our humble abode, yet grateful for all of her efforts in both our school and church and the exciting opportunities for her and her family! May she be a blessing to her new Calling just as she was to us!

And, so, as we turn the calendar to April, we also turn our attention to the end of our Lenten journey and Holy Week culminating with Easter Sunday. If you're excited like me for April, you too cannot wait to sing hosanna and shout out, "The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!" Happy April everyone! †



Our regular and junior handbell choirs will joins other handbell choirs for a regional Handbell Festival in Brillion on Apr. 5-6. Saturday is a full day of fellowship, learning, and rehearsals with other handbell choirs as part of a mass choir. Then on Sunday at 2:00 pm, they will perform a public concert at Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Brillion. †



HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONS

a devotion for each day of Holy Week, April 13-20

read or subscribe at mlc-wels.edu/publications/seasonal-devotions/

SPECIAL GIFTS & MEMORIALS

through March 16

Amazing Grace

- In memory of Larry Klish given by Roger & Lisa Crump
- In honor of Veronica Klish's 10 years cancer free given by Roger & Lisa Crump
- In honor and memory of loved ones, family members, and friends given by Roger & Lisa Crump
- In thanksgiving of God's continued grace on us and 125 years of God's true Word being taught and preached. May God grant the continuation of this here, in WELS (175 anniversary) and throughout His Kingdom given by Roger & Lisa Crump
- In memory of Carol Jackson given by Ronald & Georgene Provost

Current

- In memory of Linda Lucht given by Family & Friends
- In memory of Joe Feaster given by Randy & Pat DeBoer

Pastor Teacher Fund

- In memory of Dianne Lau given by Edna Haferman

School Athletics

- In memory of Carol Jackson's birthday February 25th given by Herb, Terri & Mike Jackson

School Library Fund

- In memory of Rosie Van Weele given by the Van Weele Family

St. Paul's School

- In memory of Debb Stensberg's brother, Gary Pavloski, given by David & Robin Koeshall

St. Paul's Tuition

- In memory of Debb Stensberg's brother, Gary Pavloski given by Edna Haferman

St. Paul's Tuition Assistance Fund

- In memory of Jeanette Junk, Steve Schroeder's mother-in-law, given by Edna Haferman

FINANCIAL MINUTE


By Michael Anderson – Financial Secretary


Weekly envelope giving rebound from the month of January to near-normal levels in February. It was gratifying to see that gifts given to the Amazing Grace campaign did not impact

our regular giving. Tuition dollars coming in are lessening as we approach the end of the school year. Fees for service (hot lunch and childcare) are on track to match their expendi-

tures. Total giving for the month of February was \$63,056. Thank you for sharing your blessings with St. Paul's to help us do the ministry we have set out to undertake.

A quick look at the numbers for the month

	Weekly Envelopes	School Tuition	Fees for Service
	July	\$51,441	\$ 1,124
	August	\$69,460	\$4,524
	September	\$56,802	\$4,019
	October	\$57,836	\$ 3,949
	November	\$55,559	\$ 3,596
	December	\$66,852	\$ 2,417
	January	\$42,972	\$ 5,921
	February	\$51,882	\$ 3,204



Amazing Grace: As of this writing, the 125th anniversary campaign has generated more than \$72,000 in gifts. We are over halfway to our goal of \$125,000 in only 51 days (as of this writing) so our "impossible" goal may be reached before our May 31st, 2025 end date. God be praised!!

Because these funds are designated to help us eliminate our mortgage, an **additional \$40,000 principal payment** was added to the \$13,650 April 1 mortgage payment. Our current mortgage balance today is \$750,376.15 and will be below \$700,000 next month!

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me in person, via email at 5JAnderson@charter.net, or my cell at 715-321-3541. My goal is to help you better understand where we stand financially as a church. †

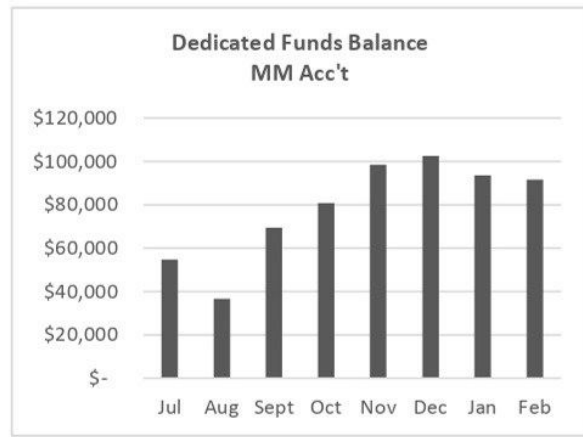
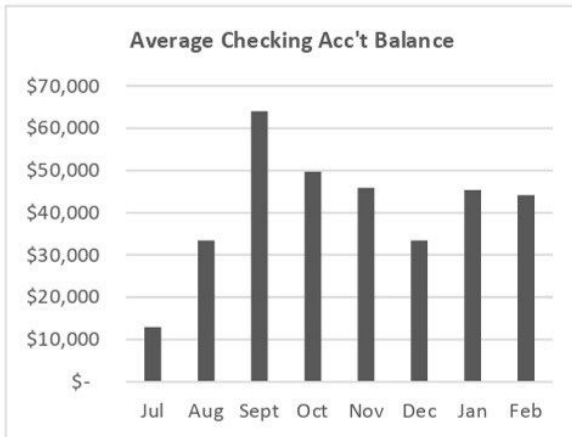
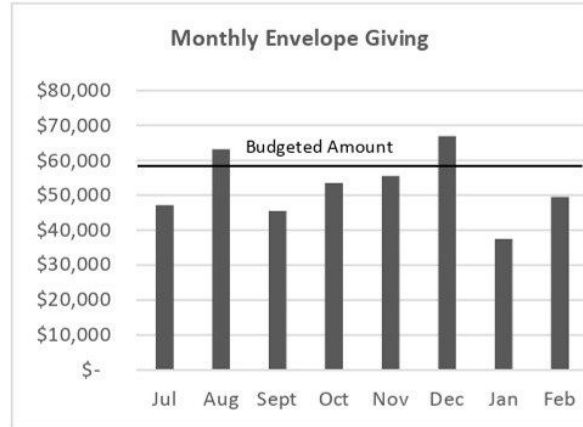
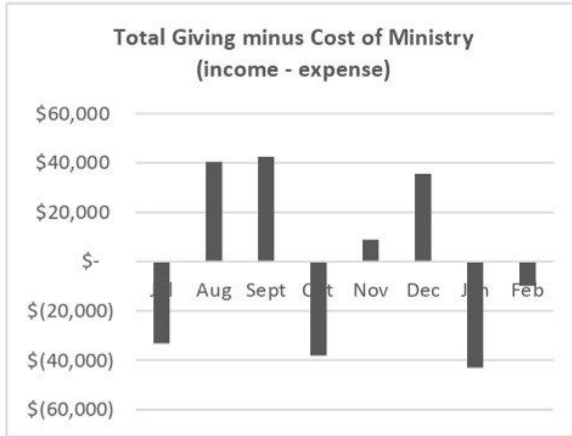
THANK YOU, ALTAR GUILD

When Jesus instituted the sacrament of The Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday evening He offered these words for the bread: "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me", and these words for the wine: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:19b, 20b). Pastor speaks these words whenever Communion is offered to us, but someone needs to prepare this meal just as they did in Jesus' day. We appreciate and thank the Altar Guild for all their work – ordering supplies for Communion, preparing for the distribution, changing banners and paraments for the season, maintaining the altar candles, and all other duties pertaining to having the "altar area" bring glory to His name. Paul reminds us in I Corinthians 14:40, "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." Thank you, Altar Guild. †



Oliver Paul Radtke
Kennedy Ann Weber

**St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church
February 2025 YTD Financials & Comments**



**St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church
February 2025 Comments**

- > Weekly envelope giving for February was \$49,516, much improved from the very low total of \$37,491 received in January, but still far short of the \$59,500 needed on average to cover the Ministry Plan expense each month. After eight months the total level of Weekly Envelope giving is at \$426,059, which is 89.5% of the budgeted target level of giving of \$476,000.
- > School income for February was \$7,970 bringing the total at month-end February to \$200,040. The targeted level of school income over this same period is \$228,548. School income is now at 87.5% of budget (was 91.1% at month-end January).
- > Total expenses for February were \$72,956 bringing the YTD total to \$728,680, which is 83.0% of budget. The top 2 expense categories (salary, health premium) were at 87.4% and 69.5% of budget respectively. The 3rd major expense item is the mortgage, which remains right at budget.
- > Overall, the month of February concluded with an operating deficit of (\$9,900). Though a recovery from January's alarming monthly deficit of (\$43,131) there still remains concern. At this same point last year there was an operating surplus of \$3,600.

Amazing Grace Update



The mission of the Amazing Grace campaign is to pay down our mortgage debt so that we may equip the future ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School for this generation and the next.



THANK YOU Willing Workers & PTO

I want to personally give an encouragement of thankfulness to the Willing Workers and PTO who worked together to get the school water bottle filling stations from this fall's bake sale. The students absolutely love and appreciate them. God bless you on your work for His Kingdom and our church and school ministry.
-Mr. V



CATECHISM CORNER



Often when we get something new that we really like, we pay a lot of attention to it. But after a while, we tire of it and may even forget about it. God doesn't feel that way about his creation. The universe exists because God created it. It continues to exist only because he continues to care for it and provide for it. The depth of God's love for his creation is demonstrated by the way he continues to care for it.

What are all the things God does to provide for his creation?

Psalm 36:6,7 Your righteousness is as high as the mountains of God. Your justice is as deep as the ocean. *You save both man and animal, O Lord.* How precious is your mercy, O God! So all people find refuge in the shadow of your wings.

Psalm 147:8,9 He is the one who covers the sky with clouds. *He determines rain for the earth. He makes grass sprout on the mountains. He gives their food to the cattle and to the young ravens when they call.*

Psalm 147:4 He counts the number of the stars. *He calls them all by name.*

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature. *He sustains all things by his powerful word.*

Matthew 6:25-34 (Jesus assures us that we have no need to worry, because God provides our food and clothing.)

Psalm 37:25 I was a young man. Now I am old. But *I have never seen a righteous person forsaken or his children begging for bread.*

Psalm 50:15 Call on me in the day of distress. I will deliver you, and you will honor me.

Psalm 103:2,3 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits— who pardons all your guilt, *who heals all your diseases,*

Psalm 121:3 He will not let your foot stumble. He who *watches over you* will not slumber.

Psalm 139:14 I praise you because *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* Your works are wonderful, and my soul knows that very well.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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April 2025 edition

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Passion Sunday at 8:00 & 10:30 am
Holy Thursday at 5:00 pm
Good Friday at 12:10 & 5:00 pm

Pastor Peter Plagenz · 920-689-3036 · pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org