



# St. Paul's EPISTLE

May 2025 edition

## WHAT DOES EASTER MEAN FOR YOU?

Details matter in history. Those details tell you the story of what happened—the who, when, and where of life's events. But even more than those dates and data to remember, perhaps the question of greater importance is "What does this mean?" What's the significance of these events?

That is certainly the case with the historical event of Easter—Christ's resurrection. It's important to know the details because they actually happened. Who was there? What did they do? Where did they go? But of potentially greater importance, especially for us living today, is this question of "What does it mean?" What's the significance of this event? What implications does it have for me and my life?

Our worship series this Easter season, *Because He Lives*, will explore these implications. Here are the remaining Sundays in the series.

### **Second Sunday of Easter**

We Have a Meaningful Mission

### **Third Sunday of Easter**

We Can See Things Clearly

### **Fourth Sunday of Easter**

We Know Jesus is Trustworthy and True

### **Fifth Sunday of Easter**

*Break for Confirmation*

### **Sixth Sunday of Easter**

We Have Deep and Lasting Joy

### **Ascension**

He Reigns Over Everything  
for the Benefit of His Church

### **Pentecost**

Christ Sends Us His Spirit †



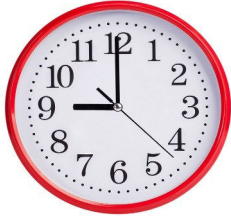
Reaching out with  
the love of Jesus.

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Worship  
Sunday at 8:00 & 10:30AM

[www.stpaulswr.org](http://www.stpaulswr.org)

## SUNDAY WORSHIP TIME CHANGE COMING IN JUNE



**ATTENTION!** Beginning Sunday, June 1st, we will trial a new Sunday worship schedule during the summer months. We will have one worship service at 9:00 am with Bible study following, at 10:30 am. We're undergoing this trial for two main reasons:

### **1. We want to worship together as one family of believers.**

The unity of believers we share is an immense blessing! We are not alone in our faith. We want to reflect that unity in our weekly worship by having everyone in our St. Paul's family together in one service.

### **2. One service will ease the demands on those filling volunteer roles during worship.**

Finding those able and willing to help with technology, ushering, and other volunteer roles on Sunday morning can sometimes be a challenge, especially during the summer months. While we are considering ways to better plug people into these volunteer opportunities, making this change will lighten the load on those already serving in these ways.

We are currently committing to this change only during the summer months. The Boards of Worship and Elders will be evaluating the change as the summer goes on to make a determination for the Sunday worship schedule come September. Stay tuned for future updates.

Please help us spread the word regarding this change! If you have any friends of family at St. Paul's that you see or talk with on a regular basis, please mention this adjustment to them. We want everyone to be aware of this change.

If you have any feedback on this change, please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Plagenz or those serving on the Boards of Worship and Elders. †

## CONFIRMATION NEWS

Historically, the coming of May brings Confirmation here at St. Paul's. This year we will follow that pattern again. There are three youths who have completed Catechism instruction and are ready to be confirmed.

As has been the pattern in the past, Confirmation Sunday will be the third Sunday in May—the 18th this year. However, due to scheduling conflicts among some of the Confirmand families, we will have Confirmation at the 8:00 service this year.

While this may require an earlier morning for some who want to attend this service, it will allow those typically attending the 8:00 service the opportunity to celebrate with these young adults and their families.

Please join us in worship at 8:00 on Sunday, May 18th for Confirmation! †

**COMPLINE SERVICE**  
**May 7 at 6:30 PM**

**A close of the day service**

**HOLY BIBLE**

**Communion offered**

## WE ARE BLESSED

God has given us excellent teachers for our school. With this blessing comes the responsibility of caring for their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. We are privileged to support them in their work, as they share the true Word of God in their classrooms.

WE are helped in this task by the WELS New Teacher Induction (NTI), organized by the Commission on Lutheran Schools and Martin Luther College. It is designed to support and develop new teachers for ministry. NTI works to help new teachers strengthen their skills in their early years of the teaching ministry and to prepare them for long-term service in Lutheran Schools.

The NTI is holding an inaugural Celebration of Ministry Retreat in 2025. The retreat is for WELS teachers and their spouses. (You may recall that we sent Pastor Proeber, Pastor Plagenz, and their wives on a similar retreat for pastors just a couple of years ago.) The retreat provides an opportunity for renewal and rejuvenation, which are essential for the continued growth and resilience of teachers in their ministries.

The teachers are given a space where they can reflect on their experiences, gain new insights for their ongoing ministry, and celebrate the grace of God that has sustained them thus far. This retreat is on June 16-18 in Nashville, TN.



We are blessed to have two teachers who are eligible for this retreat: Mr. Micah Biesterfeld and Mrs. Jane Petoskey. We will have a special collection to pay for the retreat registration, travel, and an extra night in Nashville for them and their spouses. Our goal is to raise \$4000. Any excess funds will be used for continuing education for all our teachers. Baskets will be in the Welcome Center on May 4 and 10 for you to give a donation. You can also drop off your donation in the church office during that week. Thank you for considering this special request. †

## CALL UPDATES

Shortly before Easter, Kevin & Lynn Proeber returned the call to St. Paul's. While they considered taking the call, they did not feel it was the right time to move their family.

The synod granted us a last-minute list to get one more call in prior to the calling deadline on April 15. Our congregation called Kurt & Tina Callaway to serve as our 4-5th grade and 1st grade teachers next school year. Kurt has 34 years of teaching experience, while Tina has 24. Both would make a great addition to the faculty of St. Paul's. Although Kurt serves at St. John's in Two River, WI, where they live, Tina travels to each day to serve at the St. Paul's Lutheran School in Algoma.

Please keep them in your prayers as they deliberate this call. If you are so moved, please reach out to them. Do not give up faith in doing this; it has made a positive impression on every person we've called this calling season.

To contact Kurt and Tina, you can email them at the following email addresses:

Kurt:  
kurtcallaway@yahoo.com

Tina: kattcall4@yahoo.com

If these calls go unfilled, we do have other options. We will let you know those plans as we get to them, right now we are focused on one step at a time in trying to fill these positions. †



**TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK  
IS MAY 5-9**

# HOLD ON!

By Staff Minister Randy Pahl

If you think back to last month's article we discussed the joy of April and how it just might be the best month of the whole year. But "hold on"! Now that the newsletter for May is being put together I just might have to reconsider and state unequivocally that MAY is the best month of the year!! With so many exciting school, church, and family activities taking place, one would be hard pressed to make a case otherwise.

Also, as promised in last month's article, the results are in from the annual "Academic Challenge" which was held at Northland Lutheran and here is how our students fared...

Grades 7-8 = **1st place** in the team math competition was earned by Valentina Dominguez, Mya Sabin, and Nevaeh Stahmann. **2nd place** in the Bible Bowl was captured by Elysia Chapman, Charisma Johnson, and Amelia Shirshac.

Grades 5-6 = **Securing 1st place** in math was the team of Dax Aumann, Jack Eron, and Thatcher Fiecko. Billy Sherd also took the **gold** medal for his efforts in the spelling bee competition. And **2nd place** in the team Bible Bowl portion of the challenge went to Isaac Matthews, Billy Sherd, and Josiah WhiteEagle. Finally, there were a number of ribbons awarded for the artistic ability that was displayed by our students in each of the grades. Congratulations to all of our St. Paul's winners and participants!!!

On April 2nd, an exciting event called "Opera for the Young" was held in the gym as our students worked with a professional theatrical troupe to help present a fun version of Mozart's, "The Magic Flute". The audience was entertained by the students and cast alike to this delightful performance. A big thank you to the teachers for preparing the children and to the Mead-Witter Foundation for their support in bringing this to our school.

So what lies ahead for us in May? A variety of field trips, Glory to God Night, NLHS Track Meet, Confirmation Banquet, Confirmation Sunday, St. Paul's Field Day, Entertainment Night, Closing Service, and Graduation. And speaking of which, we also say good-bye to and wish God's richest blessing on our 8th grade students: Elysia Chapman, Elora Deniston, Mason Dominguez, Kiley Savage and Nevaeh Stahmann.

WHEW! "Hold on" tight as we stated in our title. And, yet, "hold on" can have another meaning as well - don't let go. Hold on - don't let go of that awesome Easter message that we relive every year as we read the words of our Savior in John 14:19, "Because I live, you also will live!" May this serve as a beautiful reminder not just on Easter Sunday, but each and every day of our lives! †



Winners at the Academic Challenge



Opera for the Young



Ready for Palm Sunday

## TO GOD BE THE GLORY NIGHT

By Principal Andy Van Weele

On Thursday, May 1st from 6:30-7:30 pm, St. Paul's Lutheran School will be showcasing its first ever To God Be the Glory Night. The emphasis of this night will be to share the amazing gifts and talents God has blessed our students with throughout our school. Teachers will be assembling projects from throughout the year to be displayed around the school. Each subject area will have a focus as we display projects from art, math, history, science, and so much more.

The evening will begin in church at 6:30 with a devotion on how we can proudly boast in Christ alone. Following the devotion, you are free to walk around the school and see all of the different work on display from our students in pre-school - 8th grade. The evening will conclude back in the church as we sing a hymn of praise and thanks to God for all of the underserved blessings he showers upon His children.

We invite each and every one of you to join us for this special night where we place the focus on God and His goodness in our lives. †



## THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

Life is full of ups and downs, from the annoying little things to the soul-crushing big things. Resilience is the quality that allows us to bounce back from setbacks. May is Mental Health Month, and Christian Family Solutions is offering enrollment in The Resilience Project at no cost, thanks to generous donors. You can work through this 6-module course at your own pace, learning reality acceptance, mindfulness, emotion regulation, and more. Best of all, The Resilience Project is Christ-centered, encouraging good stewardship of the mind, body, and spirit God gave you. To learn more and enroll, visit [CFSlearning.org](https://CFSlearning.org).

## AFTERCARE REQUESTS HELP

By Mrs. Jane Petoskey

Over the years, St. Paul's Lutheran School and Pre-school has been blessed to offer a Before Care and Aftercare program that has provided invaluable support to our school families. This year, we were grateful for the dedication of various volunteers and aides who helped keep the program running.

As we begin planning for the next school year, we are facing an urgent challenge: we simply do not have enough staff to continue the Aftercare program in its current form. Despite our efforts—including job postings here at St. Paul's and at other WELS churches in the area—we have yet to find the additional support we desperately need. In addition, our Board of Education is working on putting job classifieds online for the community.

For Aftercare to remain available to our students, we need two to three adults to supervise the children. We are turning to you, our church family, for help. If you know someone who is looking for a part-time or volunteer opportunity, please encourage them to contact Mrs. Petoskey at 616-534-5634 or contact the school office for more information.

As a small school, with limited resources, we do everything we can to provide needed resources to our families. However, without additional help, we will no longer be able to offer Aftercare next year—an outcome we truly hope to avoid. Your support, prayers, and assistance in spreading the word could make all the difference in keeping this vital program alive for our students.

Thank you for being a part of our St. Paul's family and for any help you can provide. †

**LEARN TO BOUNCE BACK**

**THE RESILIENCE PROJECT**  
BY CHRISTIAN FAMILY SOLUTIONS

Sign up for self-paced courses

[CFSlearning.org](https://CFSlearning.org)

CHRISTIAN FAMILY SOLUTIONS  
Counseling Care & Support

# THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

## EASTER FOR KIDS

Our congregation has undertaken this outreach effort for several years. It's a way to share the true meaning of the Easter season with children, their parents, visitors, and friends who may not know the significance of Christ's life, death, and resurrection culminating during Holy Week. Many volunteer hours go into planning and preparing for this event, with registrations of around 60 children each year. Our prayer is that seeds are planted, and that the Holy Spirit's work reaps a harvest of souls. May this event help make our congregation evermore outreach-minded. Thank you volunteers.

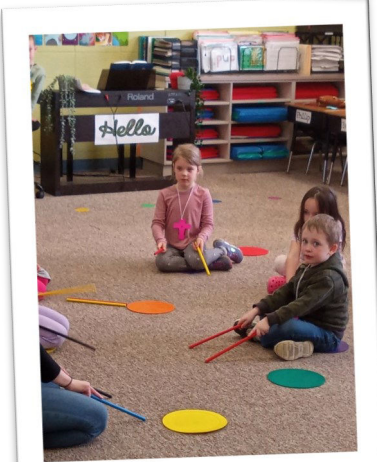
## USHERS

In the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he devotes verses 26-40 to the topic of "Orderly Worship", ending with "but everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way" (v.40). This happens through the dedicated work of our ushers as they prepare the sanctuary before and during each service by adjusting lighting, posting hymn numbers, distributing bulletins, lighting candles, assisting members and visitors, directing congregants for communion, and, in general, helping maintain an orderly flow of worship. Thanks ushers for your efforts.

## VOLUNTEERS FOR LENTEN MEALS

What a wonderful time for fellowship! If it weren't for numerous groups who set up the cafeteria, prepare the soups, salads, sandwiches, the variety of desserts, AND do the clean-up, we'd miss this great opportunity to spend time with our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Your help does not go unnoticed, thanks for your service. †

Pictures from Easter for Kids



Register today for Taste of Missions. This celebration of gospel outreach and the commissioning of new home and world missionaries takes place on June 14 at the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon.

The event begins with a special worship service, where we'll joyfully send these missionaries to share Christ's love around the globe. Following the service, enjoy ethnic cuisine from mission fields, connect with fellow attendees, and hear firsthand accounts from missionaries about their work. Explore mission displays, participate in interactive activities, and ask questions during a panel discussion for deeper insights into the joys and challenges of mission work.

The worship service is free and open to all. Registration is \$15 per person for those who wish to receive food tickets. Children 13 and under attend for free. If you can't attend in person, tune into the livestream and join virtually! Learn more and register at [tasteofmissions.com](http://tasteofmissions.com). †



# WELCOME CENTER LAYOUT PROJECT UPDATE

By Laurie Meister

The project team was asked to review the Welcome Center with a focus on outreach and fellowship. Our goal is to ensure everything in this space contributes to a positive impression for a first time visitor and that we are presenting a warm and friendly environment to guests, visitors and our membership.

To date the project team has worked through a series of layout changes with the goal of opening up the center of the space for people to move freely. A new setup is being used for the service of coffee and morning treats, enabling easier movement to and from Sunday morning bible study. The 'banana bar' has been repurposed back to Scrip sales.

We are working through some structural challenges to providing lighting over the Ministry Table

in the alcove across from the mailboxes. We are planning a small table for a supply of Connect Cards and a means to collect Connect Cards and weekly offerings that didn't make it into the collection plates. Additionally, the team is working towards a donation center that will be located either in the library or the Welcome Center.

We kindly request feedback and ideas from anyone. St Paul's serves many different ministry partners in our Welcome Center, and your feedback is very important to ensure we achieve the best result for all. Please communicate your feedback or ideas to Pastor Plagenz, Deb DeWilde, Christine Herrmann, Kristi Perry, Chris Williams, or Laurie Meister. †

## "MISSION" SAFARI TRIP



You have a unique opportunity to be a part of mission work in Africa as you explore Kenya and Tanzania next March. The "mission" part is helping to get a new church built, but not actually doing the construction work. Local people will do the work, and donations from the travelers and others will provide the materials. Construction should be accomplished by the time the trip takes place.

During week one of the trip, you will visit multiple congregations that are part of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)—Kenya. LCMC is in fellowship with WELS. One of the churches will be a new build supported by a \$750 tax deductible donation from those who books this trip. (Donations will be managed through WELS.) The church visits are being arranged with Mark Onunda, President of LCMC. Lodging will be in local hotel (s.) This leg of the journey also includes a visit to an animal park.

The next eleven days are spent in Tanzania on a safari adventure trip with Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT). To learn more visit [www.oattravel.com](http://www.oattravel.com), and check out Safari Serengeti: Tanzania Lodge & Tented Safari.

The cost is a little over \$9000 in addition to the \$750 donation for the mission. All meals are included while in Africa. The price also includes travel insurance and obtaining visas.

This trip is being arranged by Tom Thiele, a former member of Good Shepherd Lutheran church. You can contact him at 262-560-0750 for details. †

# FINANCIAL MINUTE

By Michael Anderson – Financial Secretary

Total giving for the month of March totaled \$104,124. This is indeed a blessing for which we are very thankful. This total does NOT include the offering for the Amazing Grace campaign for

mortgage reduction, so we are especially glad that these “over and above” gifts have not had an impact on our regular giving. To God be the glory!

**Amazing Grace:** As of this writing, the 125th anniversary campaign has generated \$98,651 in gifts. We are thankful for the progress that has been made in a very short period of time.

A quick look at the numbers for the month



	Weekly Envelopes	School Tuition	Fees for Service
July	\$51,441	\$ 1,252	\$ 1,124
August	\$69,460	\$57,774	\$4,524
September	\$56,802	\$69,143	\$4,019
October	\$57,836	\$ 8,923	\$ 3,949
November	\$55,559	\$ 10,349	\$ 3,596
December	\$66,852	\$ 21,028	\$ 2,417
January	\$42,972	\$23,599	\$ 5,921
February	\$51,882	\$ 7,970	\$ 3,204
<b>March</b>	<b>\$90,919</b>	<b>\$ 8,900</b>	<b>\$ 4,305</b>



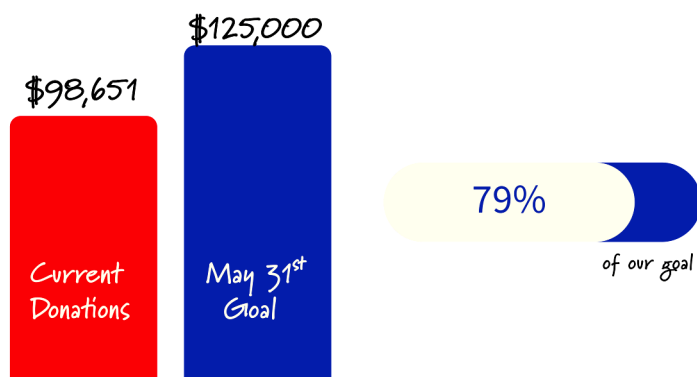
It is our prayer that the remaining \$26,000 will be donated before the May 31st deadline. Because of these generous gifts, **our mortgage balance now stands at \$699,210!** My plan is to send another \$25,000 payment for mortgage principal with our next regular payment.

The 2025-26 Ministry Plan has been approved by the recent Congregational Meeting. If you have any questions, or were not at the meeting but would like more details, please feel free to contact me or Kevin Meister, our treasurer. The Ministry Plan is a driving force behind our ability to share the gospel with our

members, our neighbors, and our world!

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. †

## 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.*





## EASTER JOY?

It's spring. We just had Easter. Everyone seems joyful, but your heart is still sad. As a Christian, you know you will see your loved one again. We are supposed to rejoice that they are in heaven, right? But you miss them and don't feel anything close to joy.

Maybe you need a Stephen Minister to walk beside you during your journey through grief and loss. They will meet with you one-on-one and all your discussion will be confidential. There is no cost. Stephen Ministers are trained lay people from our congregation; they serve in this ministry out of Christian love.

If you want see if a Stephen Minister would work for you, please talk to Pastor Plagenz. †



**SPECIAL GIFTS  
& MEMORIALS**  
given through April 20

### Amazing Grace

- In memory of Marv Raasch's sister, Marion Oleson, given by Marvin & Dorothy Raasch
- In memory of Larry Klish's birthday given by Delores Becker
- In memory of Russ Pollnow and in honor of Linda Pollnow given Jan Pollnow

### Current

- In memory of Marv Raasch's sister, Marion Oleson, given by Randy & Pat DeBoer

### For our Health Reimbursement Account

- In memory of Russ Pollnow and in honor of Linda Pollnow given by Jan Pollnow

### St. Paul's Tuition Assistance Fund

- In memory of Marv Raasch's sister, Marion Oleson, given by Edna Haferman
- In memory of Don Schoenick given by Faith & Edna Haferman

## CATECHISM CORNER



### In what ways did Jesus humble himself?

Mark 15:37 - Jesus cried out with a loud voice and *breathed his last*.

Though Christ has power to give life and though he alone did not deserve to die, he willingly submitted to death in order to conquer death for us.

Isaiah 53:9 - *They would have assigned him a grave with the wicked*, but he was given a grave with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, and no deceit was in his mouth.

Mark 15:46 - Joseph bought a linen cloth, took him down, and wrapped him in the linen cloth. *He laid him in a tomb* that had been cut out of rock, and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.

Though he is the Lord of life, Christ took his place in the grave as part of his plan to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil.

### How was Christ exalted?

John 2:19 - Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again."

Mark 16:6 - He said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. *He has risen!* He is not here. See the place where they laid him.

John 10:17,18 - "This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it up again. This is the commission I received from my Father."

Christ exercised the power he possessed as God and came to life just as he said he would.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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May 2025 edition



#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

May 1 ~ To God be the Glory Night  
May 5-9 ~ Teacher Appreciation Week  
May 7 ~ Evening Compline Service  
May 18 ~ Confirmation  
June 1 ~ Summer Worship Schedule Begins

Pastor Peter Plagenz • 920-689-3036 • [pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org](mailto:pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org)