

The Herald April 2021

Grace and Peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As Christians we often talk about the cross and its significance to the salvation of the world. I think that during the spring and Easter time the cross and what it represents becomes even more prominent in our thoughts. It is at this time that I reflect upon the cross and I am humbled by the tremendous gift that is given to us all through the crucifixion and resurrection of our humble Savior Jesus.

"But because of [God's] great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with [God] in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages [God] might show the incomparable riches of [God's] grace, expressed in [God's] kindness to us in Christ Jesus." Ephesians 2:6

We especially rejoice on Easter Sunday that Jesus has risen and redeemed us, through our weaknesses and wounds. But, in fact, we are not supposed to experience the resurrection of Jesus only on a spring morning when we gather to proclaim "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" and share the good news, "He is risen. He is risen, indeed." If we take Ephesians 2:6 seriously, then **the resurrection matters every day**. This verse offers quite stunning resurrection news: We were raised up with Christ. Did you catch that? We were raised up with Christ. This means **you were raised with Christ!**

Have we lost the wonder and awe of our spiritual ancestors because we know the story too well?

We have been re-created for love, for joy, for zeal, and for gratitude, "gladly enduring anything, however hard, in order to be free of death and of this life in the midst of death." We have been granted the freedom to be truly alive. Through his resurrection, Christ takes us by the hand to lead us from a place of death into a new, transformed life. Like the first Christians, we have to unpack that experience, discerning grace and life in the many little miracles of our day-to-day lives. Just as it was for Peter, Mary and John, living Easter is not about being a little better than we've been in the past. Easter life means that the freedom and life restored to us by Jesus shines through and that something of God and of heaven — something holy — is growing within us.

Seek. Hope. Pray. Love. And, above all else, live!

O Risen Lord, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, make us faithful followers of the spirit of Your Resurrection. Grant that we may be inwardly renewed, dying to ourselves in order that You may live in us. May our lives serve as signs of the transforming power of Your love. Use us as Your instruments for the renewal of society, bringing Your life and love to all. This we ask of You, Lord Jesus, living and reigning with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God now and forever. Amen.

God loves you, and so do I, *Vicar Michelle*

Don't Forget !! St. Paul's web site -

The web address is www.stpaulswarren.org

Facebook – “St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Warren, IL”

Announcements, Encouragement, and Insights throughout the week

Lessons for the Month of April

Apr 4 – Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43

Mark 16:1-8 or John 20:1-18

Apr 11 – Second Sunday Of Easter

Acts 4:32-35

Psalm 133

1 John 1:1 – 2:2

John 20:19-31

Apr 18 – Third Sunday Of Easter

Acts 3:12-19

Psalm 4

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36-48

Apr 25 – Fourth Sunday Of Easter

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

Do have you news that you would like to share with the faith community? Email Vicar Michelle at mknight4031@yahoo.com or call 815-535-6177.



DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL??????? If you have not been getting emails from Anita about announcements and worship, please share your email ASAP. We don't want to exclude anyone!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting for February 10th, 2021.

Present: Vicar Michelle, Anita Fry, Roger Kent, Kathy McKee, Daylon Niemann, Danica Skattum, Sue Bourquin. **Absent:** Linda Balbac

We started our meeting with devotion and prayers by Vicar Michelle.

Secretary's Report: Minutes were presented from Council Meeting of January 13th, 2021. Roger moved to accept the Secretary's Report. Danica seconded. Motion Passed.

Treasurer's Report: Report was presented for January 2021. Danica made a motion to approve the reports. Sue 2nd and motion carried.

The budget was reviewed for 2021. Anita made a motion to approve the final budget. Danica 2nd and motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Parish Education: No Report.

Properties Committee: Daylon and Roger continuing to take care of the snow removal.

Stewardship:

Worship/Evangelism: No report.

Memorial Committee: Roger reported a balance of \$8,986.16. The computer set up was \$1,277.84.

Internship Committee: Have been in contact with Denver Bittner. There is no information at this time for Vicar Michelle's replacement. Paperwork will be coming from the Assistant to the Bishop and will need to be filled out.

Welca: Checking: \$1,424.30, Savings: \$5,601.41

Pastor's Report:

- January worship remained online. The planned in-person service alternative has been delayed due to extreme cold weather.
- Lenten mid-week services have been planned and will begin February 24th at 7pm for the season. Ash Wednesday and Holy Week Services will be ecumenical with the Warren United Methodist Church and hosted by St Paul's. These services will also be live streamed.
- Pastoral care has included phone calls, cards, texts, and email to members and families in crisis. I was invited to do a home communion visit and hope as members deem safe, more home visits can occur.
- Attended the board meeting for Caring Neighbors Food Pantry on 1/21.
- Will be contacting the families of the final year confirmation students to assess a doable schedule to gather and work through material in preparation for the Affirmation of Baptism rites.
- Final semester of classes has begun.

Old Business:

- Lawn Care will need to be decided. We will put an ad in the Flash.

New Business:

- A thank you was received from the Sinnissippi Centers for our recent donations.
- Ash Wednesday Service is Wednesday, February 17th starting at 7pm.
- Discussion on establishing the use of a credit care to make it easier for purchases. After discussion Roger made a motion to get a debit card from the Apple River State Bank. Sue 2nd 2nd motion carried. Sue will take care of getting the card. Sue and Anita will take care of purchases.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 16th at 6:30pm. We closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by Anita Fry



SCRIPTURE READERS NEEDED!!

Worship includes the whole assembly - and we love to hear and see one another! You can choose to read in person, or record a video. Recordings can easily be made from your home and used in our Sunday service. Please consider serving the church with your gift of time and presence.

Contact Linda Balbac or Vicar Michelle to sign up and coordinate the recording.

Church isn't where we go, Church is who we are!

While being mindful of the health and safety guidelines during this time of pandemic, we are staying connected as the Body of Christ through different ways to worship, and outreach opportunities.

For the month of April, there will be the opportunity to gather for in person worship inside of the sanctuary at Sundays at 10 am. Please see the in-person worship guidelines provided on our website.



Sunday mornings at 10 am worship will also be live streamed on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulswarrenil/> In the event of internet disruption, a recorded video will be uploaded by 1 pm. Thank you for your grace as we work with new technology.

Worship videos are also uploaded to our web page <http://www.stpaulswarren.org/> and can be accessed by anyone without needing to be a Facebook user.

Every Sunday we will share together Holy Communion in our online worship service 10 am. For those worshipping at home: Before the time of the service you will want to prepare a slice or a small loaf of any kind of bread to share and a cup or small cups of juice — perhaps grape or cranberry — or wine, with or without alcohol. Set these elements in the living room or kitchen where you experience worship electronically with our faith community. Perhaps you want to put them on a lovely cloth or fabric that reminds you of a special time or person. Perhaps light a candle or place a flower or the photograph of someone you wish to bring into the circle of faith beside the bread and the cup.



For anyone NOT connected to the internet, or who does not have the technology resources to join in worship online, please notify Vicar Michelle so other accommodations can be made.

Home Communion Offered:

Vicar Michelle is open to bringing you communion and offering a private time of prayer in your home, as you feel safe to do so. You may also make an appointment to meet privately at the sanctuary. Accommodations can be made to meet the health and safety considerations. For more information, you may call Vicar at 815-535-6177.



Stewardship of Financial Gifts

THANK YOU to those who have sent year end gifts as part of our stewardship drive to fund the ministries of our congregation for 2021! **THANK YOU** to those who are continuing with weekly offering. **THANK YOU** to those who have called and asked how they can continue to give. **THANK YOU** for your continued faithful giving to our ministry.

The church's ability to do ministry is dependent upon your regular gifts. St. Paul's is able to continue in the mission of the Church because of your faithfulness and financial commitment. While you may be joining us from worship at home, you may mail a check to our congregation.

Your gifts may be mailed to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, PO Box 445, Warren, IL 61087
~Vicar Michelle & the Church Council



Ephesians 6:18 *And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

If you are need of prayer
contact Rita Homb,
Prayer Chain
Coordinator
815-745-2232.



CHURCH COUNCIL dates to remember:
Appreciation Dinner April 17th at 5:30 PM
Council Meeting April 22nd 6:30 pm

FINAL YEAR students will remain after worship on April 11, 18, and 25th to continue learning sessions. The Confirmation service (Affirmation of Baptism) is set for May 23rd.

CONTINUING and INCOMING students will regather over the summer for some outdoor activities. More information to come!

Thank you for your support and patience while we sort out safe ways to gather and engage our youth in their faith formation.

*Church
Council*





addictionandfaith.com

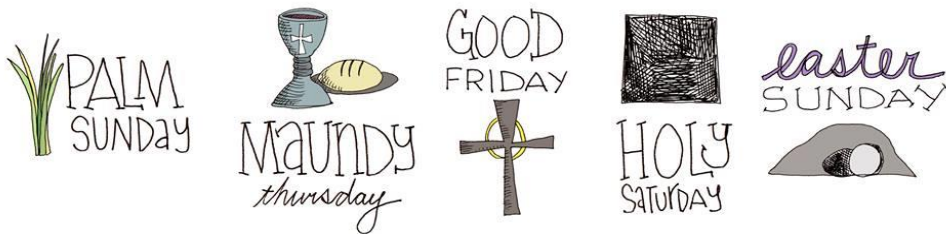
Sunday Night 12 Steps - - A New Meeting for Mainline Christians on Zoom
This meeting is open to anyone in 12-Step recovery of any kind and for those interested in learning more about 12-Step recovery.

The Center of Addiction and Faith and the Fellowship of Recovering Lutheran Clergy (FRLC) host this meeting, offered every Sunday night at 7 p.m. cst

All are welcome.

Follow the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81470899913?pwd=UUd1T1lDTnd1ckFDSS84MXJQeXY5QT09>



Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday, April 1st, 7:00 pm
Good Friday, April 2nd, 7:00pm
Easter Vigil, April 3rd, Worship At Home
Resource available on our Website

Easter Sunday, April 4th, 10:00 am