

APRIL 2020

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Olean, Indiana

“The Church with the Glad Heart and Hand”

“Faithful to Our Lord through Changing Times” – Our Mission Statement

“Growing in Faith, Sowing the Love of Jesus” – Our Purpose Statement

Church - (812) 667-6989 Church E-mail olean@seidata.com

Website: stpaulolean.org

Pastor: Pastor Curtis Black E-mail: pastorcurtisinky@gmail.com

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Dear Friends,

Seminary trains rostered ministers for many things. A viral pandemic is not one of them.

We are going through something that is unparalleled in my lifetime. Every professional sports league that is in season right now has postponed or canceled the rest of the season. Restaurants, bars, and coffee shops cannot seat their customers at their tables. Establishments that we assumed would always be open are now closing early or closing altogether until some date in the future.

The church council and I made the decision to cancel all worship services through April 1st. This decision was made before the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (the CDC, for short) released their recommendation that all gatherings that expect 50 or more people in attendance be canceled or postponed for 8 weeks; furthermore, if your gathering includes people in high-risk categories for COVID-19 (including those over the age of 60, those with heart or lung conditions, those with diabetes, and those who are immunocompromised), that upper limit drops all the way down to 10. If we follow the CDC's recommendations, this would mean that we will not gather for worship until May 17th, currently earmarked as our Sunday to honor members of the 2020 graduating class. This would also mean delaying our observance of Holy Week until we can worship together face to face.

All of this raises many questions, more than I can answer in the space of this column. As we have answers, we will get them out to you by all means possible: prayer chain, social media, website, the sign out on the road, etc.

What I can say is this: sometimes, we have to remind ourselves that “the church is not a building; the church is the people.” How can we be the church when we cannot gather together in person? To start, I will be working with others to create videos that you can view from home. These videos will be posted so that they can be viewed at our usually Sunday worship time of 10:00 am. I have also shared a couple of devotional resources in our private Facebook group that we can use to practice our faith at home.

Baptismal Birthdays

24 Sam Powaga

Senior Birthdays

2 Joan Rohrig

14 Tony Diem

16 Frank LaGreca

17 Marilyn Smith

29 Martha Blodgett

We can also be the church by making phone calls to check in on one another. If someone close to you is vulnerable to the virus, ask if you can run an errand for them so they do not have to leave home. If someone gets laid off or furloughed until a future date, ask how you can help them make ends meet until that date. If the school system needs volunteers to help deliver meals to students, ask what role you can fulfill to help their efforts.

The rapid spread of COVID-19 has changed how we are a church community for the time being. However, we will still have the opportunity to worship and pray together. We will still have the opportunity to be the church in the world by helping our neighbors to get through this time of uncertainty. And we will still have the opportunity to celebrate the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Our community may not look the same, but our unity through our baptisms into Christ still binds us together even as we maintain our distance from one another.

Pastor Curtis

ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO POSTPONEMENT OR CANCELLATION

All events described in this newsletter may not happen as originally scheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If and when Pastor and the church council make the decision to extend our cancellation of all in - person gatherings, we will get that information out to you as soon as possible.

SIGN-UP FOR E-MAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES

The quickest way to get the latest information about congregational events is to sign-up for our e-mail chain on our website (stpaulolean.org) and to follow our social media pages.

Towards the bottom of our website, you will find a section labeled “SUBSCRIBE NOW TO RECEIVE THE LATEST NEWS.” Here, you can enter your e-mail address in the given box and then click the “SIGN UP” button. This will trigger a confirmation e-mail to your inbox; follow the given instructions to confirm that you wish to receive future e-mails from the website. Without this confirmation, the e-mails from the website will likely be caught by your spam filter, so be sure to confirm that you wish to receive future e-mails from us!

On social media, you can find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter as [@stpaulolean](#). Click the appropriate “Like,” “Follow,” or “Subscribe” button in your preferred form(s) of social media to see the latest postings from Pastor Curtis and other leaders within the congregation.

We will still use the prayer chain to get announcements and information out to those who do not use e-mail and social media sources.

LENT AND EASTER OFFERINGS

Offerings from the midweek Lenten services as well as the special Easter envelopes will be designated to South Ripley Sunshine Society Food Pantry.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SPECIAL OFFERING

The Sunday School Special Offering for the Second quarter of 2020 (April thru June) will go to South Ripley Ministerial Assoc.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Join us for Children's Sunday School held the first Sunday of every month. Children's Sunday School is for children through sixth grade. It is held in the basement, and begins at 9:00 a.m. Come join Bentley, Camdyn and Tucker for Sunday School!

At any other time you know your child would like to attend Sunday School, please let us know ahead of time, and we will make it available to your child on that Sunday.

If you have any questions, please contact Teresa (812) 621-0320 or Alayna (812) 621-0266.

VBS

JULY 5-9, 2020

Mark your calendar for July 5-9 for VBS! Our theme is year is "On Earth as in Heaven". We will be focusing on the Lords' Prayer. Planning for this event is in the beginning stages. Look for more info to follow. Please volunteer to be a part of the VBS Team this year! Question? See Pastor Curtis, Teresa or Alayna.

"BACK DOOR FRIENDS OF FAITH"

Backdoor Friends of Faith is a Mission Outreach of the Tyson United Methodist Church in Versailles. This is made possible through volunteers donating their time and organizational skills to keep it running smoothly. Community support through prayer, donation of products and/or money can go a very long way toward making a big difference in the lives of families in this community. Thank you for being a part of this mission. The next pick up is the evening of **April 12**. Items needed are Personal Products. Items for May will be Paper Products. Contact Lois Vogel if you have questions.

CONDOLENCES

Our Christian Sympathy to:

- * Lois Vogel and family on the passing of Ralph Vogel on March 5, 2020. Funeral Service was held at St. Paul Lutheran Church on March 9 with burial in St. Paul Cemetery.
- * Dan and Liz Geisler and family on the passing of Liz's father, John Shelton. Funeral services was held at Morgan-Nay Funeral Home in Madison, March 14.
- * Doris Droege and family on the passing of her brother, Harold 'Ike' Thomas on March 10, 2020. Funeral service was held at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Madison with burial in St. Paul, Olean.
- *the family of Eric Huntington who passed away March 15, 2020. Funeral service was held March 19, 2020 at the Friendship Baptist Church with burial at a later date. Eric was the uncle of Greg Huntington and Lynnette Young.

THANKS

- Thanks to everyone for their prayers, cards, and thought for me. It meant a lot. *Gracey West*
- Thank you to whoever has put the fun books in my Church bag. I love them. Thank you for thinking of me. – *Tucker*
- To the Olean Church family and friends: I would like to give a Big thank you to all of you that signed my get well cards and sent prayers during my tonsil surgery and being sick. I really appreciated the cards, which meant a lot to me. Thanks again! May God Bless you all!
Brandon Wood

PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE MILITARY

Jacob Menchhofer and his wife, Erin, daughters Ella, Ava, and Willow: Has been transferred to Hawaii, waiting on permanent housing. *Jacob's Birthday: January 24, Erin's Birthday: August 7, Ella's & Ava's birthday, March 18, 2016, Willow's birthday February 9, 2019.*

Col. Whit Wright and family: 1 Couchman Street, Fort Bragg, N.C. 28307

Adam Thieman, son of Randy and Rhonda Thieman, deployed

James Bardine, brother of Mandy Black, at Robins AFB, GA

Tristan Ralston, grandson of Pat Ralston, stationed in Hawaii.

David Black (Pastor's brother) back in the states.

Travis Cornelius (Steve Althoff's nephew) deployed.

Mattheus Bittick deployed to Kuwait

LWR BLANKETS

Lutheran World Relief Blanket making happens on Tuesday's beginning at 1:00. No experience or sewing skills necessary. If you can tie a knot then we can put you to work. Come share the fellowship while making a difference in the world.



The Agape Meal will be served on April 9 at 6 pm in the educational building. We hope you will join us.

Olean will host the Spring Cluster gathering on April 18. Pencil the date on your calendar and plan to attend. See the SPRING CLUSTER section in this newsletter for more details.

Prayer shawls are available for those who need them. The shawls now have a new home in Chester's Closet. If you need assistance with prayer shawls, please contact Barbara Eades or Phyllis Armbrecht.

Our Mother/Daughter/Friends/Kids evening will be held on Tuesday, May 5 at 6:30 pm. We will once again go to Little Golden Fox in Madison for our night out. Watch next month's newsletter for complete details.

School kits will be assembled again this year for LWR. Church council has approved for us to place baskets at the door on Sunday, May 17 to receive monetary donations from those congregational members who would like to help fund this project.

Our next general meeting is June 2 at 6:30 p. m. in the educational building.

Devotions: Phyllis Armbrecht

Hostess: Phyllis Armbrecht

Visiting Committee for April: Ruth Tebbing and Vicki Diem

The Mary Circle will meet on Wednesday afternoon, April 1st at 1:00 p.m. Devotions: Vicki Diem

Bible Study: Kaye Hunger Hostess: Mary Ann Geisler (*postponed*)

LUTHER LEAGUE - EASTER ACTIVITIES

The annual Easter Egg hunt will be held on Saturday afternoon, April 11th at 1:00 P.M. All kids invited.

Easter Breakfast Easter morning at 8:00 a.m.

SPRING CLUSTER

APRIL 18, 2020

Olean will host the Spring Cluster gathering on April 18th. We hope you will join us! Registration will begin at 9:00 am. We will serve coffee and Danishes in the educational building as everyone gathers to worship together.

9:30 AM Worship Service w/Communion

10:15 AM Backdoor Friends of Faith

10:30 AM General Meeting

11:00 AM Lunch

We will be collecting donations of items for Backdoor Friends of Faith. Suggested items include personal hygiene items (tampons, maxi pads, deodorant, etc.) and laundry detergent.

We encourage you to bring a friend that is not a member of St. Paul Olean. If you do, you and your guest will be entered into a special door prize drawing.

We hope to see you at the cluster gathering on April 18! (*Subject to postponement or cancellation*)

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE

“Tenebrae” comes from the Latin meaning “shadows” or “darkness,” so it is a service of shadows. The Tenebrae service makes use of gradually diminishing light through the extinguishing of candles to symbolize the events of Holy Week from the triumphant Palm Sunday entry through Jesus’ burial. This increasing darkness symbolizes the approaching darkness of Jesus’ death and of hopelessness in the world without God. The service concludes in darkness with worshippers leaving in silence to ponder the impact of Christ’s death and await the coming Resurrection.

This year, the choir will lead the service with the presentation of “It Is Finished” by Mary McDonald. It includes readings, selections by the choir, and congregational singing.

If we must cancel in-person gatherings, this and all other Holy Week Services will be postponed until it is safe for us to gather again.

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

FEBRUARY 16, 2020

After Worship on February 16, 2020, the Church Council met in the educational building. Those attending were David Lawrence, Bob Hunger, Joan Rohrig and Amy Hoskins

Joan Rohrig presented the secretary’s report and the financial secretary’s report. Both were approved as presented.

The treasurer’s report was submitted and approved.

A report submitted by Pastor Black was submitted to council and approved unanimously.

The Severinghaus-Beck grant has been submitted to help with the cost of updating the church computer.

A mowing bid was presented and accepted.

A special Congregational Meeting will be held on February 23, 2020 to discuss the drainage system.

Respectfully submitted, *Amy Hoskins, Church Council Secretary*