



CHAPEL BELLS

ST. PAUL'S ERIN U.C.C. ERIN

March, 2024

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

I find myself deeply focused on Lent, perhaps more so than other years. Whenever I imaged the Holy Season of Lent in the past, I would get a very foreboding feeling in my heart. It was a time of somber self-examination looking for my weaknesses, my sins, asking myself who did I owe an apology and why I hadn't acted sooner, why was I frightened to ask for or accept forgiveness from God.

It was hard to be that brutally honest with myself. Yet, each year I somehow found the courage to take the journey along the edge hoping ever so dearly I didn't slip and fall into the abyss and be separated from God.

What I had forgotten is that God places a comma where I had put a period. That was quite the awakening for me. I now understand that Lent does call us to the cutting edge but is it like when the wheat falls to the ground and low and behold New Life comes forth.

For many years I would give something up for Lent...never chocolate of course...but Lent calls us not only to give something up, but to change. What habits do I want to change? If I can change one little or even a BIG unwanted habit for the 40 days and 40 nights of Lent, then I can let go of that habit permanently. That is the true meaning of giving something up for Lent. It is about turning my life around beyond Lent. It's that New Life.

Pope Francis claimed "the first proposal, then, is very clear: We need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace" He also said a Lenten penance "is a commitment, sustained by grace., to overcome our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way to the cross."

This Lenten season, remember there is always grace. After all we have done or didn't do, God's love is unconditional. Jesus demonstrated that unconditional love over his lifetime.

Lent is no longer a time of guilt and shame for me. I know how free I am to turn my life around, change a habit, and have that promised new life. As Kate Bowler writes, "I hope I don't have anything else to do for the rest of my life except love God." Amen. Let it be so.

SOMETHING TO SHARE

Kate Bowler in her book, *Have A Beautiful, Terrible Day* writes on week two of Lent, titled finding God's presence: Once or twice the presence of God has fallen on me like an anvil. And I thought, Oh boy, I hope I don't have anything to do for the rest of. My life except love God. (turns out that loving God is very time consuming.)

But those moments of divine interruptions are probably rare. God's nearness will probably pop up in our lives as an act of cultivated attention. It's a little like Oh Look! There's God. How odd that this is precisely the moment when I set aside a few minutes to notice God's presence at all. (This is similar to creation joy moments.)

It's good news and bad news, of course. Good news: God wants to be found by us. Bad news: We might need to go looking. Here's a blessing for the moments when we might need a push.

God of all that we hardly notice, ruler of the ground under our feet and the sky stretched over our heads. Send your spirit to direct our steps and our thoughts as we stumble around this day and night.

We have too much to do, so give us enough silence to hear your voice. We have too much to worry about, so quiet us with a moment of your peace. We have too much to carry, so lighten our hearts with your love.

We are your people, eyes cast down on the ground that you made, wary that the sky will fall again. Remind us again that above and below you are here.

Thomas Merton wrote: "The fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you."

LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

(If you are interested in Kate's daily Lenten devotions check out

<https://katebowler.com/seasonaaldevotional/have-a-beautiful-terrible-len/#daily-email>. And if you would like to purchase her book for yourself, you can order it from <https://katebowler.com/books/have-a-beautiful-terrible-day/>.)

The United Church of Christ Lenten devotional is title Bend. It is written by the Still Speaking writers. There are two copies at the greeters stand and Pastor Bonnie can order more if they are gone.

There are copies of Our Daily Bread located at the greeters stand as well.



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME begins March 10th. We move the clock ahead an hour but it's worth an hour of missed sleep to be to church on time!



BIBLE STUDY is open to all. You do not have to sign up just show up! See you March 14th between 1 and 2 pm?



COFFEE WITH BONNIE This month (March) we will meet at Java Dancer in Richfield around 10 am. Again, no need to sign up, just show up. See you on the 28th!

EASTER SEASON



COMBINED MAUDY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE will begin at 7 pm on March 28th. This is a very powerful service. I have always thought of it in part as Jesus' wake.

EASTER SUNDAY Worship will begin at 9:30 am. Plans are being made for a gathering (and food) following worship for those who do not have additional plans. Watch for updates.

EASTER FLOWERS

The Altar Committee is again making flowers available to purchase to decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Order blanks will be available on the greeters' stand beginning on February 25 through March 10.



Purchased flowers may be taken home after the service on Easter. Order blanks and money can be given to any Altar Committee person- Judy, Charmaine, Vicki L., Bernie, or Betty. Checks should be made out to St. Paul's, with Easter flowers in the notation line. All flowers come from Shady Lane Greenhouse.

Welcome, New Members

New Member Reception On March 3rd we will receive several new members during worship with a reception during Coffee and Conversation. Introduce yourself and enjoy cake and other goodies!

Scripture

Readers

March 3rd - John E.
March 10th - Charmaine D.
March 17 - Katie G.
March 24th - Bernice D.
March 31st - Carl R.



PASTOR BONNIE'S OFFICE HOURS have changed to 10 am to 2 pm Thursdays. There are occasions when she will be doing home or hospital visits, attending meetings or drinking coffee on Thursday mornings. However, you can count on her being physically in the office from 12:30 to 2 pm and other times by appointment. Please, Do Not Hesitate to call 262-416-5094 anytime to contact Pastor Bonnie and make arrangements to meet in person. Her days off continue to be Friday and Saturday, but always available in case of an emergency.



THANK YOU

Thank you to the choir for their anthem, Lord, Through These Forty Days, on Ash Wednesday and Jill L. for her musical abilities.

Thank you to our February greeters: Fred D and son Micheal and Steve and Alice M. for assisting with communion; Bernice D and Cheryl F., Eugene and Vicki D., and John and Lynn D.

Thanks to Jill P, Curt H, Eugene D and Polly E. for serving as liturgists.

Special thanks to the 'Rillas' for their birthday greetings.

Thanks to Jill L. for always playing Happy Birthday as a postlude when folks with birthdays are present.

Thanks to Jill P. and Cindy C. for sharing a thought-provoking Reader's Theater, healing of a Leper.

Additional thanks to Jill P. for removing candle wax from a pew with her iron.

Thank you to Connie Johnson for procuring new Chili Lunch and Pie Sale signs. They look great! And, thank you to Roy K. and Jack D. for putting up the signs.

Many thanks to Lucy K. and Cheri and Corey J. for donating all the ground beef necessary for the chili lunch. Your generosity is much appreciated.

Not to be forgotten, a major thank you to the Dieball Families for their chili making skills, Betty Z for organizing a record number of pies, and ALL the volunteers who helped, donated chili ingredients, or baked pies for the Chili Lunch and Pie Sale!!!!

An additional thank you to Betty Z. for cleaning out the closet under the balcony stairs to make room for our new technology equipment.

Finally, thank you to Roy, the "mouser", for faithfully checking the traps and removal of the mice!

CONGRATULATIONS TO Taylor G. earned his Arrow of Light and crossed the bridge from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts!

Madelyn M. who sold her scout cookies to us!

Jeff and Tracy M. who became members of St. Paul's on February 4th. Their children are Madelyn and Jayden. WELCOME!



Check out the new **St. Paul's Community Library!**

Take a Book, Donate a Book - We hope you find something inspirational!

And don't forget to check out the kids art projects in the hallway!

Mark your calendars!

Easter Egg Hunt March 23rd from 10-noon

Donations of candy will be very much appreciated for all the eggs!!





MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

Nothing tastes better on a cold winter day than a warm bowl of soup. The Mission Committee thanks everyone who donated soup for the Souper Bowl of Caring. St. Paul's congregation collected 266 cans/packages of soup for our local food pantries.



Women's Guild

*** **WOULD YOU CARE FOR A PIECE OF PIE?** ***

*Apple/Blackberry * Pecan * Berry * Arizona Lemon * Peanut Butter * Apple * Pineapple * Cherry*

*** **WOULD YOU LIKE ICE CREAM WITH THAT?** ***

One Scoop or Two?

Now that we have your attention – At Coffee and Conversation following church service on March 10, the Guild will celebrate PI Day to thank St. Paul's members for all your generous support of our events throughout the year. Join us for pie, ice cream and coffee. Thank you!!

We discussed the Homemade Pie Sale at this year's Chili Lunch and other events we can participate in this coming year.

The next Guild meeting will be Thursday, March 21, at noon. All St. Paul's women are invited to bring a lunch and join us.

CLEANING



Wanda Dieball is now our new cleaning person here at St. Paul's. We are happy to have her doing this important job and hope you will be patient with the cleaning procedures as she establishes a routine for cleaning the church.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Did you know that the church council reviews our membership list each January (based on church attendance and financial support) and often faces the hard decision to drop some persons from our active membership list or move them to inactive membership?

- Why?
1. Our by-laws state that this review be done once a year.
 2. We pay dues to the Association based on our "active" membership
 3. The level of a pastor's salary is partially based on "active" membership

Please remember, even if someone is no longer a "active" member of our church they may still attend services, take communion, receive pastoral care, and participate in other activities. *All are welcome at St. Paul's.* Non-members cannot, however, hold office, vote at meetings, or receive a free grave upon their passing. Throughout the years, there have been many person's who called St. Paul's "their" church, but were not on the "active" member list.

More detailed information about this 2-year process can be found in the church by-laws. These can be found on our website or a copy can be obtained through the church office. Council members are also a valuable resource to understand these rules.

COUNCIL NOTES

The 2024 St. Paul's Church Council consists of 7 members. Charmaine Duehring is President. Kim Kersten is Vice President. Kay O'Keane is Secretary. Trustees are Janene Kluever, Vicki Dost, Cindy Cain and Fred Dieball. Connie Johnson continues as Treasurer and Sharon Schlafer is Financial Secretary. If you ever have any questions about matters that might concern the Council, please feel free to contact any of these members.

Cindy Cain has agreed to be the Council Representative on the PPRC. Eugene Dost and Peggy Ahles have agreed to serve 1-year terms on the Endowment Committee.

Be sure to look at the new greeters list for April -June in this issue of Chapel Bells. Thank you to everyone for faithfully showing up when it has been their turn.

Each member family should have a box of envelopes to use for their offering. Please remember to put your name on the envelope, as we are no longer using the number system. Also remember that using your envelope (or using the bank giving option) is the only way the financial secretary can keep track of your offerings. Placing cash in the offering plate won't give you the credit you might need for tax purposes. Pew envelopes are also available if you forget your envelope. If anyone needs another box of envelopes, please let Sharon Schlafer know.

A "loop" key for the handicapped bathroom (if needed in an emergency) is now hanging on outer door frame of that bathroom.

Thank you to Jodi Staus and Debbie Schlafer for all the work they have done in rearranging rooms, painting rooms, and creating a small library area in the back hallway. We all appreciate your work ladies!

Snow shoveling might seem like it is almost done for the year, but a special thank you to the Weber/Kersten family for helping to remove some of the heaviest snow we've ever had after the January 12th storm. Thank you too, to Roy and Jack for assembling and putting out our signs for the Chili Lunch.

Our next Council meeting will be on Monday, March 11 at 6 p.m. in the Conference Room. Visitors are always welcome to attend.

GREETER'S LIST- APRIL – JUNE 2024

Thank you for volunteering to serve your church as a greeter. If there are only 2 persons assigned for a Sunday you will be expected to greet, light candles, take offering, and distinguish candles.

If 4 people are assigned, some may only be greeters or doing candles and offering or some may only be serving communion. G – greeters only, C&O – candles and offering, Com. – Communion servers

If you cannot serve on your date, please switch with someone else. Dates of serving are published in each weeks bulletin for the next week and the monthly list will be in Chapel Bells.

April 7 Sunday School G, C, O, Com.
April 14 Bonnie H. & Rachel H. G, C, O
April 21 Isabel H. & Lucy K. G
 Curt & Karrie H. O & C
April 28 Connie J. & Bernice D.

May 5 Roy & Carol K. G, C, O, Com.
 Jeff & Tracy M. Com.
May 12 Kim & Mark K. G, C, O
May 19 Cheri & Corey J. G, C, O
May 26 Janene K. & Carl R. G, C, O

June 2 Gerald & Vicki L. G, C, O, Com
 Peggy & Bill A. Com.
June 9 Steve & Alice M G,C, O
June 16 Judy N. & Kay O'K. G, C, O
June 23 Brett & Susan M. G, C, O
June 30 Laura & Tom P. G, C, O





Another of our friends is having a blood drive.

St. Johns UCC, N67 W28321 Sussex Rd., Merton. Monday, March 11, 1 PM - 6 PM. For appointment call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit

RedCrossBlood.org and enter sponsor code: North Lake.

Church Council Meeting Minutes

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

January 8, 2024

Meeting was called to order by President, Charmaine Duehring, at 6:00pm. Those in attendance were Charmaine Duehring, Kay O'Keane, Lucy Krapfl, Cheryl Fischer, Connie Johnson, and Carl Rock.

The meeting minutes for December were approved. The large amount of money we collected for the changing table was returned as we could not provide this gift to anyone, hard as we tried. The financial reports were approved.

Pastor Bonnie requested vacation days starting Monday, January 27th through February 3rd. We will need a minister sub for Sunday, January 28th. New members' meeting is scheduled for January 14th. Ash Wednesday service will be held on Wednesday, February 14th, at 7:00pm. Pastor Bonnie's office hours will be Thursday from 10:00 am until 2:00pm and she can make other times available when and where necessary. The amount of time was decreased as Pastor Bonnie's husband, Jeff, should not be left alone a long time. She may have to change the first and third Thursday when she also has other meetings to attend and possibly be available on Tuesday for those weeks.

We discussed whether we needed greeters at the Rooster door, but it was decided we do not have that many parishioners that use that entrance. We discussed the Chili Lunch signs and Connie had a sample to show us which was very bright and clear to see from the road as you drive by. The sign would cost \$80.00 and it would not have a date but indicate the last Sunday in February. The sign would need to be coated to extend its life, which would cost \$40.00. Betty Zimpleman is heading up the pie sales on Chili Day. The pies will cost \$10.00 each. The hamburger for the Chili Lunch will be donated.

Sunday School needs two rooms and the teachers are rearranging and updating the rooms for the change. The nominating committee is looking for three people to replace those who are leaving Council, Cheryl, Lucy and Carl and we thank them for their Council services. We have \$102,000 in pledge cards. 33 pledges have not been received. The financial budget cannot be completed until after the annual meeting when we know if we should add the \$7500 for the technical changes and \$36,000 for the steeple shingling repair/update.

Membership was reviewed and President Charmaine will send out a letter to those people who have not stated or replied that they would like to continue being a member. We went over the Annual Meeting agenda. Our cleaning lady, Blondie, checked off her list as to what she performs when here at church, but we have not seen her yet,

Our next meeting will be February 12, 2024. Meeting was adjourned at 7:03pm.

Like us on Facebook: "[St. Paul's United Church of Christ](#)" AND "St. Paul's Mission Maniacs"

Receive our E-Blasts: Please let us know if you would like to be added or have a new email address

If you would like to ask for prayers, share a joy or have an announcement, when attending worship via Zoom, please enter it in the chat or email Pastor Bonnie prior to service.

Check out the Church Website: stpaulserin.org. Visit the News & Resources tab and click on Worship Resources for a recording of Sunday's Worship.

Church Email Address: saintpaulserin.pastor@gmail.com

Church/Pastor's Phone Number: 262-416-5094

Church Address: 495 St. Augustine Road, Colgate, WI 53017

Pastor Bonnie's Office Hours: Thursdays from 10 AM to 2 PM. Stop by for a visit. Friday and Saturday are Pastor's weekend.





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