

St. Paul's News

February 2023

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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A CROSS -- MARKED IN ASHES!

There are three good reasons why Lutherans should receive ashes on Ash Wednesday.

First, the ashes remind us of our sinfulness. Second, the ashes remind us of our mortality. Third, the ashes remind us that they have been redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Since ancient times, God's people have used ashes as a sign of repentance (e.g. Jonah 3:5-9; Job 42:6; Daniel 9:3; Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13). This tradition was carried on by the early church and is still important today. When we willingly receive ashes, we are admitting that we are sinners in need of salvation. The ashes remind us of our need to repent and confess that we may turn back to God. Ashes are a tangible and visible sign of our failure to love God -- as God loves us.

The receiving of ashes on Ash Wednesday also reminds us of our mortality, which is the direct result of God's condemnation of our sin. God said to Adam, "You are dust and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). Ashes serve as a solemn reminder that the price of sin is death and that we simply cannot escape death. Ashes provide a very physical reminder that God created humankind from the dust of the earth and one day we all will return to the dust of the earth.

Ashes also point to the good news of the Gospel for we receive ashes in the shape of the cross.

In receiving the ashes this way, we remember that our Lord Jesus took on our flesh and became human. He who was sinless also took on our sin and upon a cross, Christ was crucified for you and for me. And by his death, Christ conquered death so that all that believe in Him might have abundant and endless life. Through the cross of Christ, the power of sin, death, and the devil have been conquered.

In many Lutheran Ash Wednesday services, the Lord's Supper rightfully follows the imposition of ashes. We, who were once dead in our sins and deserve eternal condemnation, are welcomed to the Lord's Table wearing the cross of Christ marked in ashes.

Here, at the Lord's table, we receive forgiveness and the promise of eternal life through the body and blood of our Lord and Savior. Here, at the Lord's table, we are raised up, strengthened, reconciled, and reborn through God's mercy, love, and grace.

And here, at the Lord's table, with the mark of the cross of Christ upon our brow, God sends us forth into the world to continue to demonstrate His love and to proclaim the good news won by the cross of Christ.

May God continue to bless you, strengthen you in faith, and protect you from all harm as we begin Lent marked in ashes -- in the shape of a cross!

Pastor Mike

“SECOND SUNDAY” SUNDAY SCHOOL

Classes will continue every second Sunday of the month during the 10:30 a.m. service for students ages one through ten. Below are the remaining dates for Sunday School this year:

- February 12
- March 12
- April 2* 1st Sunday of the month due to Easter
- May 14

Reminders

Volunteers are needed for March, April, and May! Volunteers are NOT required to teach a lesson. Books to read, songs to sing, and toys to play with are all available in the preschool area.

Call/text me at (570) 394-3522 (cell) or email me at swoodring86@hotmail.com.

Looking ahead for when the snow starts flying... parents, please make sure I have your cell phone numbers. If we must cancel church on a Second Sunday, I will text you to let you know.

Regarding February 12 Sunday School

I plan to keep the students in the Sunday School room during the congregational meeting for any parents who wish to attend.

Thank you for your continued support of the Sunday School program. See you February 12!

Sarah Eger

CHILI & SOUP-ER BOWL SALE

The Men of St. Paul's will host a Chili & Soup-er Bowl Soup Sale on Saturday, February 11, 2023, beginning at 8:30 a.m. “on the Square.” Our soup will be \$7/quart or 3 quarts for \$20 and chili will be \$8/quart or 2 quarts for \$15. Come for great chili, tasty homemade soups, and many delicious baked goods.

STiC

SEEDS. So many sizes and varieties! You don't have to be a botanist to be amazed by their superpowers! But more mysteriously, someone told me, a seed is a promise. Once made, you plunk it into some good soil and you can't see it anymore, but the promise remains. With that in mind, the STiC table for February will feature a seed swap. Maybe you have some seeds left over in little paper packets, maybe not, but everyone is welcome to come to the table and check out the seeds that are there, and if you'd like some, there are little lidded containers to carry them home. Some may be able to be started early indoors, most will need to wait until after the last frost. When you get a bumper crop, save a few for next February! “Come and Seed”!

JUMP FOR JOY! This is the theme of the concert being planned for August 6 to support Red Creek Wildlife Center....and we are asking for any/all church musicians, individuals, formal groups, spontaneous ensembles, to think of joyful pieces you'd be willing to share and perform. “Jump” is a style of swing music, but more to the point is JOY...the joy of music, the joy of giving and supporting, the joy of animals being able to return to a healthy life in the wild, the joy of bringing restoration where we have unwittingly caused problems. There will be a simple form to fill out and give Sue Reier available through the Spring so we can line you up! Community musicians are also being sought.

Many thanks to Joyce, Becky, and Tina for creating Valentine Cards to send to our homebound. All members are invited to the Gathering Room to sign and give messages to folks they know. Saturday, February 18, 10:00 AM: it's not too early to propagate plants for the 2024 Valentine giving of green. Come help plant some succulents and we'll watch them grow all year!

en Cristo, Sue Reier

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

> The Service Ministry Committee is pleased to announce that its popular Teddy Bear pew program will be re-introduced in the near future.

> Special thanks to our retiring Council members Crystal Brensinger, Amy Dewald, and Jim Spotts for their years of devoted service – well done!

> Social Media Director, Jessica Swick, has reported that the church's Facebook clicks increased by over 22% from prior periods for the December 14 to January 10 timeframe. The dramatic increase is being attributed at least in part to her inclusion of pre-recorded music from our choirs in a program she dubbed "The 12 Days of Christmas." Congratulations!

ASH WEDNESDAY

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. This year our Ash Wednesday service will be held on Wednesday, February 22 at 7:00 p.m. The imposition of ashes and the sharing of Holy Communion will be offered at this service.

WELCA

All women of St. Paul's: please attend our Tuesday, February 14th meeting at 1:00 p.m. at church. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be held at the same time and place on Thursday, February 16th. This will be a planning session for our hosting of the WELCA Schuylkill Cluster Spring event to be held at our Church on Saturday, April 29th.

Your December In-Gathering offering will be accepted at this time. These funds have been designated for Lutheran Disaster Relief for Florida Hurricane 2022.

Please watch your bulletins for any necessary changes or updates.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our annual congregational meeting will be on Sunday February 12, 2023, immediately after the 10:30 a.m. worship service. In case of inclement weather (or other emergency), our meeting will be held on the following Sunday at the same time.

Please plan to attend this important meeting!

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Members are invited to pick up and review our 2022 Annual Report PRIOR to our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 12, 2023. Reports are now available in the narthex.

CHURCH COUNCIL POSITIONS

During our Annual Congregational Meeting, on Sunday, February 12, 2023, we will vote to fill several open positions on our Church Council.

If you are an active member and would like to learn more, please contact Council President Doug Travor, any Council member, or Pastor Mike.

WILL WORSHIP BE CANCELED?

In case of inclement weather, please call the church office at (570) 366-2316 and listen to the outgoing message on the answering machine.

You can also check our Facebook page for changes to our schedule. Be safe, not stuck--check before you leave home!



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jean Premich
- 3 Kate Bolinsky, Janice Blair
- 4 Fern Houser, Kathleen Miller,
Chris Kerzman
- 5 Walter Kennett
- 6 Dominick Just
- 7 Trisha Bachman
- 8 Wayne Withers, Sydney Spotts
- 9 Tom Wehr, Kurt Schenck, Cadey Spotts,
William Wimbrow
- 10 Lindsay Cable, Lauren Cable,
Riley Pontician, Brady Seigfried
- 14 Debbie Ferrar
- 15 Dan Mosher
- 16 Barbara Kaunas
- 18 Cheryl Riotto
- 19 Sharon Starr
- 20 Gail Wolfe, Skyla Baer
- 21 Abigayle Krewson, Amy Kokitus,
Greg Shappell, Elizabeth Tomko,
Patty Marcusky
- 22 Tonya Shappell, Mya Kline,
Ivey Hinnershitz
- 23 Joanne Emerich
- 25 Fritz Miller, Ryan Miller, Nora Goessel
- 26 Doug Hinnershitz
- 27 Karen Shoener
- 28 Chase Horbal, Mateo Patterson

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 8 Danielle & Stu Richards
- 14 Leslie & Bruce Guldin

ADULT FORUM

...continues Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m. in the church parlor. We are using "Daring Faith" by Rick Warren as the basis of our discussions.

FEBRUARY FLOWER SPONSORS

FEBRUARY 5

Altar: In memory of Irma Kamp by Tina Butler, and Victoria and Alexandria Spitler.

Chancel: OPEN

FEBRUARY 12

Altar: OPEN

Chancel: OPEN

FEBRUARY 19

Altar: In memory of Rachel Zehner by Diane Brobst.

Chancel: OPEN

FEBRUARY 26

Altar: In loving memory of Harry W. Lafko by his family.

Chancel: OPEN

FEBRUARY BULLETIN SPONSORS

FEBRUARY 5

In loving memory of LeRoy and Corrine Shoener.

FEBRUARY 12

In loving memory of Lorain Kunkel by Julia Kunkel and family.

FEBRUARY 19

In loving memory of Rachel Zehner by Connie Teter.

FEBRUARY 26

In memory of Franklin Kamp by Tina Butler, and Victoria and Alexandria Spitler.

EVANGELISM

The Evangelism committee would like to continue sending cards, signed by our church family, to members who cannot worship with us in person (e.g., military personnel, and college students away from home.) Cards are located on the small table with the prayer list. Please remember to sign our card(s) upon entering or before leaving church.

CALLING ALL CRAFTERS AND ARTISANS

St. Paul's has established a crafting guild that will make items to sell at local community fairs and events as a new outreach program and an opportunity for fellowship. All proceeds from the sale of craft items will go to support St. Paul's ministries.

Current crafters or anyone interested in learning a new craft is invited to take part. If you would like more information, please sign the interest sheet or contact Kristin Durkee (804-380-9066) or Amy Dewald (570-449-4816).

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Pastor Mike will begin a series of five (5) midweek Lenten services entitled, "Gathered Around the Cross" at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1, 2023. This series will continue each Wednesday at 7 p.m. during the month of March.

As we prepare to enter the season of Lent, let us consider the people who gathered at the foot of the cross and watched as our Lord was crucified, suffered, and died.

In some ways they were like us, but in some ways, they were very different people!

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Justin Durkee, son of Kristin and Jerry Durkee of Orwigsburg, PA. On Sunday, January 22, 2023, Justin received a Certificate of Appreciation from St. Paul's.

To fulfill his Duty to God badge, Justin made a colorful display rack and "praise pack" bags for his congregation. It is hoped that this gift will encourage children to sit quietly during worship, listen to the Word of God, and become strong in faith. Thank you, Justin, for your thoughtful gift!

THE LIBRARY CORNER

Hello, St. Paul's Friends!

Happy New Year and a wonderful February too! Here we are, well into winter, and NO SNOW! (But, it WILL come!)

Lucy had Herman and me very excited the other day, Mr. Wayne Lutsey was coming out of the church office at the same time that Lucy was, and he accidentally shut her foot in the door! Mr. Wayne really jumped in a hurry! He took Lucy and us to the Girardville Memorial Hospital for Mice since Red Creek is not open yet. There, Lucy had her broken foot set by the renowned mouse surgeon, Dr. Marcus Whiskers. She is doing well, and we thank Mr. Wayne for getting us to the hospital quickly. (He even ran only 2 lights in Pottsville and one wrong turn on the way!)

In other news, there are four new books to add to the library shelves. They are:

1. *ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, HE WHO SPOKE WITH ANIMALS* selected by Geraldine Elschner given in memory of my father, Francis Piacine, by his daughter, Danielle (Piacine) Richards
2. *BYGONES* (Summerfeld Trilogy) *BOOK 1* by Kim Vogel Sawyer
3. *BEGINNINGS* (Summerfeld Trilogy) *BOOK 2* by Kim Vogel Sawyer
4. *BLESSINGS* (Summerfeld Trilogy) *BOOK 3* by Kim Vogel Sawyer

Happy winter reading and enjoy when it arrives! God bless each of you as you are entering this new year!

---Melvin, Herman, and Miss Lucy
with her injured foot "on the mend".

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Our church office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

FEBRUARY 2023

SERVICE SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	FEBRUARY 5	FEBRUARY 12	FEBRUARY 19	FEBRUARY 26
	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>8:00 AM</u>
GREETER/ USHER	Pastor Mike	Pastor Mike	Pastor Mike	Pastor Mike
LECTOR/ COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Connie Teter	Ruth Ann Withers	Kay Weidensaul	Amy Dewald
	<u>10:30 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>
GREETER	Doug Travor	TBA	Evan Davis	Evan Davis
USHER	Cindy Ritschel	Diane Brobst	Diane Brobst	Jim Spotts
LECTOR	Gwen Wehr	Hope Clarke	Eric Eger	Julianne Schenck
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Greg Sklar	Wayne Lutsey	Chris Long	Doug Travor
ALTAR GUILD	Joanne Emerich Gwen Wehr	Joanne Emerich Gwen Wehr	Barbara Lafko Amy Dewald Beth Post	Hope Clarke Madelyn Knecht
COUNTERS	Gwen Wehr Tom Wehr Glenda Bright	Rosalie Wingle Diane Brobst Marlene Eidam	Joyce O'Rourke Gloria Dierwechter Pat Davis	Connie Teter Joanne Emerich Barb Sterner

VALENTINE'S DAY: A WORLDLY OR HOLY DAY?

The origins of St. Valentine's Day shadows the pagan holiday of Lupercalia (a pagan love/fertility type of celebration amongst the Romans that continued to be celebrated a century after Christianity became legal in Rome).

In the fifth century Pope Gelasius ended the pagan festival and soon after that decreed that February 14 was to be 'a day of feasts to celebrate the martyred Saint Valentine'. In the Middle Ages, displays of love and affection became a popular custom for titled Lords and Ladies on St. Valentine's Day eventually turning into the commercial and often expensive event that we experience today!

(Adapted from <https://stjohns-salisbury.org/2021/02/10/the-feast-of-st-valentine/>)



ASH WEDNESDAY at 7 PM (2/22/23)

GREETER	TBA
USHER	Wayne Lutsey
LECTOR	Jason Swick
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	TBA
ALTAR GUILD	Barb Lafko, Beth Post, and Amy Dewald

STIC NEWS

There will also be a 'workshop' on propagating succulent plants on Saturday February 18 at 10 a.m. Everyone is invited.

FEBRUARY 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 9 a.m. STiC 6 p.m. Bell Choir 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	2	3	4 5:30 p.m. Worship
5 8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum 3 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #31129	6 6:30 p.m. Worship & Music	7	8 6 p.m. Bell Choir 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	9	10	11 8:30 a.m. Chili/Soup-er Bowl Sale on the Square 5:30 p.m. Worship
12 8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum 10:30 a.m. Sunday School Annual Congregational Meeting	13 7 p.m. Council	14 VALENTINE'S DAY ♥	15 6 p.m. Bell Choir 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	16 6:30 p.m. Constitution	17	18 10 a.m. STiC Succulent Plant Workshop 5:30 p.m. Worship
19 TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD 8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum 3 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #31129	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY	21	22 ASH WEDNESDAY 7 p.m. Worship with the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion	23	24	25 5:30 p.m. Worship
26 8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum	27 6:30 p.m. Property	28 6:30 p.m. SSCC				

[NOTE: HOLY COMMUNION IS SHARED ON THE FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH AND AT EVERY SUNDAY SERVICE.]



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FEBRUARY 2023

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DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY 11 – CHILI & SOUP SALE AT 8:30 A.M. ON THE SQUARE

FEBRUARY 12 – ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AFTER THE 10:30 A.M. SERVICE

FEBRUARY 22 – ASH WEDNESDAY - WORSHIP BEGINS AT 7:00 P.M.

Visit our website: www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org. Watch us on YouTube.

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/StPaulsOrwigsburg.

Call our church office at [570-366-2316](tel:570-366-2316).