



The Epistle

Remember that You Are Dust



Few people are fond of dust. We spend most of our lives trying to wash dust and dirt off of our cars, our kitchen floors, ourselves. Ash Wednesday is one exception. On Ash Wednesday, we came to worship with the intention of receiving the sign of the cross with ashes on our forehead. As we begin this season of reflection and repentance, the ash cross reminds us of our mortality and our need to return to the Lord.

This ritual forces us to face what we usually avoid: the truth about ourselves and our sin. Most of life is spent trying to put our best selves forward to the world. On Ash Wednesday, we acknowledge to our community of faith, to our neighbors, and most importantly, to ourselves that we have failed to do as God has commanded us. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Our bodies naturally decay; we may speed up that decay by our choices and actions. On Ash Wednesday, our sin as well as our inevitable death are as plain as the cross on our foreheads. Whenever we look in the

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**FREE BAND
CONCERT
MARCH 26**

All are invited to a free concert by the Wyoming Winds and Sycamore Community Band at 4 pm on Sunday, March 26, 2023 at St. Barnabas

Remember that You Are Dust

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mirror on Ash Wednesday, we are forced to see the truth about ourselves: we have not lived rightly. By our actions, we have brought death into our own and others' lives. We also see the truth about Almighty God. The very shape of this mark points us to the one who hung on the cross, to the one who lives beyond the grave.

On Ash Wednesday, we acknowledge... that we have failed to do as God has commanded us.

Episcopal Church in Montgomery. One of the featured selections, *It is Well With My Soul*, will be in remembrance of baritone player and former director, Jeff Evans. Carolyn Koehl and Jack Wagner are longtime members of these bands and look forward to having you enjoy the music the bands play.

Both of these truths are marked on us so that we do not lose sight of either: what we have done/left undone and what God has done for us. The second half of Romans 6:23 is "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We deserve to die and we will die, but in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and are offered eternal life.

Ash Wednesday should be the pattern of the season of Lent and of life every day for Christians: honest confession of our sinful thoughts, actions, intentions, which lead us to sincere repentance, and trust in God's forgiveness and eternal life through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Christ,
Pastor Emily Beckering



EASTER EGG HUNT—CANDY & HELPERS NEEDED!

The Evangelism Team would appreciate donations to be used for the upcoming Community Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 25, and our own St. Paul Easter Egg Hunt following worship on Easter Sunday, April 9. The committee needs individually wrapped, non-chocolate candies, and plastic eggs to be filled with the candies. Thank you!

Please sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex if you are able to help set up and/or volunteer during the egg hunt.

A Word of Encouragement for Loved Ones of Addicted Persons

If someone you care about struggles with addiction to alcohol or other substances, may you find encouragement in the 7 C's below. During Lent, we remember that Jesus has the power to bring life out of death and hope out of despair. You are not alone.

- 1) I didn't CAUSE it
- 2) I can't CONTROL it
- 3) I can't CURE it BUT
- 4) I can take CARE of myself
- 5) By COMMUNICATING my feelings
- 6) making healthy CHOICES and
- 7) CELEBRATING who God made me to be in Jesus Christ.

End of Life Planning: Will

Do you have a will? It is a basic question, but one that many people prefer to not answer. We don't like to think about our will because we don't like to think about life after we are gone. Lent is a very appropriate time to plan how we will share what God has given us when the time comes to return to the Lord.

The sad reality is that as many as 60% of Americans don't have a valid will. A will is an important final way to tell family and charities what is most important to you.

A will simply directs those we leave behind how to divide up what is left. When instructions aren't given, chaos can ensue. That is when relatives fight with each other and tension enters relationships.

A will can also be a statement of what was important to you. It can be a final way to teach your kids that they were important to you, but so were some ministries that are making a difference in the world.

Contact your attorney to make a will or to add a codicil to your will to include St. Paul Lutheran Church as a way to testify that the Holy Spirit is making a difference in the world through this congregation. The ELCA Foundation offers gift planning services at no charge to you as a member of our congregation. The ELCA Foundation provides Regional charitable Gift Planners to assist with establishing a new, or to confirm an existing comprehensive estate plan that provides for your family and the ministries you care about. Our Regional Gift Planner is Rev. Karl Biermann; if you'd like his contact information, please reach out to Pr. Emily Beckering.

Perhaps you can consider tithing to St. Paul's through your estate or even adopting St. Paul Lutheran Church as an additional child.

PLANNED GIVING INTEREST FORM

I/we ___ have ___ are interested in including St. Paul Lutheran Church in our estate plans. Please contact us with more information.

Name _____ Phone _____ email _____

This form can also be filled out online—please visit form.jotform.com/230268107572050

Celebrations in March



3 Emily
Nutt

5 Leah
Miller,

Katie Sturgill,
Maryhelen West

11 Maddie Lohmeier

15 Joyce McDowell

16 Adam Winkle

17 Samara Bronner, Patrick
Cathcart, Terri DeAngelis

18 Rick & Britt Hedges

20 Chet Laine

21 Sean Coulehan,
Drew Harbaugh

22 Faith Eckerle,
Shirley Harbaugh

23 Molly McDowell

24 Ed Hirt

25 Karen Koehl, Maggie
McDowell, Liam Cathcart

30 Pr. Emily Beckering,
Kathy Hirt

Support St. Paul at Kroger!

Did you know that St. Paul benefits from the Kroger Community Rewards Program? Just follow the directions below to increase your church offering at no cost to yourself!

One-time step: Link your Kroger Plus Card to St. Paul.

- Visit [kroger.com/account/communityrewards](https://www.kroger.com/account/communityrewards) and log in with your Kroger account. (Kroger customer service can help with this.)
- Search for “St. Paul Lutheran Church” or organization number TG880.
- Click the ENROLL button under St. Paul’s name & address.
- After this, each purchase with your Plus card will generate donations to St. Paul!

Unfortunately St. Paul no longer receives rewards from Amazon, as they have discontinued the Amazon Smile program.



PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS HELP TO COMFORT OUR NEIGHBORS

Jane Erbeck is in need of plastic grocery bags, which she crochets into sleeping mats for our homeless neighbors. These mats provide a barrier between the person and the ground and help keep out the cold and wet. Please bring in any spare bags you may have. Thank you!

Presiding Bishop: “The Blurring of Law and Gospel”

This article was originally published in the January 2023 issue of Living Lutheran magazine.

Martin Luther once said, “I felt that I had been born anew and that the gates of heaven had been opened. The whole of Scripture gained a new meaning. And from that point on the phrase ‘the justice of God’ no longer filled me with hatred, but rather became unspeakably sweet by virtue of a great love.”

Luther had been studying the Bible—Paul’s letter to the Romans to be exact—when he finally came to understand that it was not up to human beings to make themselves worthy in the eyes of a righteous God. Luther had tried—he quit his study of law, entered a monastery and was so rigorously observant that his health suffered. The word of God only seemed to bring condemnation. It tormented him.

But in an instant, all that changed. From hatred to love. Here was the gospel, the good news. We receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace for Christ’s sake through faith. Thanks be to God!

This is a treasure, and it is the church’s unique and proper work to preach the gospel purely and to administer the sacraments according to the gospel. “It is also taught that at all times there must be and remain one holy, Christian church. It is the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments

are administered according to the gospel” (Augsburg Confession, Article VII, German translation). The church, of which we are a part, is the only institution on earth given this task.

The Augsburg Confession gives a clear explanation of the gospel: “Likewise, they teach that human beings cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits, or works. But they are justified as a gift on account of Christ through faith ...” (*Augsburg Confession*, Article IV, Latin translation).

I’m concerned that the Lutheran understanding of the word being both law and gospel, and that there is a distinction between law and gospel, is getting blurred. Some define the gospel as social justice—feeding the hungry, standing with the poor and marginalized, racial equity, justice for migrants, respect for the dignity of all people. These are all vitally important ministries in which this church must be engaged. But they aren’t the gospel. Rather, these works of justice and mercy flow from the liberation the gospel brings.

In November 1520, Martin Luther wrote his treatise *On the Freedom of a Christian*. In it he makes clear the distinction between law and gospel and between God’s work and our work. The gospel, God’s gift of grace, has set us free. Luther explains it this way: “Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness, just as I am your sin. You have taken upon yourself what

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Our Life Together

To reach Pastor directly, please call the pastoral line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, or to remove a person from the list, please contact the office at 513-821-0987 or mail@stpaulreading.org.

We pray for **Samantha Asbrock** (Marie Calhoun's friend); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Jeannie Allen** (Faith Pirrmann's friend); **Pr. Lisa Bernheisel**; **Louise Barry**; **Teresa Bell** (former member); **Chrissi Bergt** (Kate Wollenburg's cousin); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Nancy Boone** (Gary Gries' sister); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Jodie Calhoun**; **John Cathcart**; **Christian**; **Pat Coldiron**; **Sandy Cordes**; **Kathy Curless**; **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Karen Doan** (Jean Winkle's daughter); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jane Erbeck**; **Nancy Erbeck**; **Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Cindy Flege**; **Lee Frank** (Barbara Moorhouse's niece's husband); **Jeanne Fuller**; **Scarlett Gally** (Beth Wernery's great-niece); **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Steve Gollehon** (Elinor Schieman's cousin); **Janie Grandy** (in-law of DeAngelis-Willet family); **Don Grau Jr.**; **Hannah**; **Ron Harbaugh**; **Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Elain Heskamp**; **Andrew Horton**; **Larry Huber**; **Huitger family**; **Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Stephanie Jacobs** (Hirts' niece); **Jo and her daughter** (Jeanne Fuller's friends); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Mike Keefe** (Millers' neighbor); **Ken Keith** (Kris Keith's dad); **John Kerlin**; **Justin Kerlin** (John's son); **Chelsea King**; **Dennis King**; **Jackie King**; **Janet King**; **Earl (Buddy) King** (Dennis's brother); **Marilyn Kline** (Cindy Sieckman's neighbor); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Tom and Mike Kozee and family** (friends of Faith Pirr-

mann); **Chet Laine**; **Kelsee Lainhart** (friend of Kings); **Nelson Langefeld**; **Grant Lohmeier**; **Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Carroll and Cindy Mayhugh**; **Jessica Mayhugh & family** (Mayhughs' niece-in-law); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Jack Miller** (Becky Betsch's uncle); **Linda Miller**; **Mary Mills** (St. Paul Players); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Barbara Moorhouse**; **Charlie Myers** (Coulehans' family friend); **Jean Nolte**; **Carol, Jim, and Jeannie Oerther** (Portmanns' sister and family); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Rosie Osborn** (Betty Pack's sister); **Tom Osborn** (Betty Pack's nephew); **Tom Pack** (Betty Pack's son); **Eric Papin**; **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Cathern Pirrmann** (Adam and Nick's aunt); **Nick Pirrmann**; **Pat Popplewell** (Dennis King's friend); **Bob Price** (Kings' friend); **Barry Prince**; **Christopher Rolfes** (Anne's son); **Pr. Pete and Joyce Rudowski**; **Mike and Judy Ryan** (friends of the Kings); **Sara and Evan** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousins); **James Savoy** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Scott Schadel** (friend of McDowells); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Bernadette Shear** (Kings' granddaughter); **Sharpshier family** (Kings' neighbors); **Shear family** (Kings' daughter & son-in-law); **Knox Shepherd** (grandson of Pr. Vicki Garber); **Kate Sheridan** (Kings' family friend); **Keith Shupe** (father of Kelly Shupe); **Kim Sieckman**; **John Smith** (Elain Heskamp's brother); **Michelle Snavelly** (Laines' daughter); **Scott Songer**; **Judy Songer** (friends of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Kathy Spelman and family** (Joyce's sister-in-law); **Michael Steele**

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Presiding Bishop

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is mine and given me what is yours” (Luther’s Works, 48:12-13). No one and nothing can take this away from us. No longer crushed by the weight of self-justification, but gloriously free by being bound to the righteousness of Christ, we are free to serve the neighbor.

Luther wrote: “I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable, and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ” (*On the Freedom of a Christian*).

Lutherans have been accused of quietism in the past. And I sense the current blurring of law and gospel is motivated out of an earnest desire to follow Jesus’ command to care for “the least of these” (Matthew 25:1-46). But we aren’t quietists. Our faith compels us to be active in the public square.

Jesus said, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). We don’t bring life or salvation. That is God’s work, and it has already been accomplished through the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is because of this life, this grace, this freedom that we human creatures are bold to stand with the marginalized and excluded.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton

Prayers

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(Mayhughs’ nephew); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim’s dad); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle’s granddaughter); **Randy Thaman** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle’s neighbor); **Lish Trasser** (friend of DeAngelis-Willet family); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle’s cousin); **Larry Turner** (Dottie Deloatch’s brother); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Mike Waddle** (former member); **Jack Wagner**; **Jeanne Wagner**; **Melinda Wakefield** (Sherry Bronner’s friend); **Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack’s granddaughter); **Leslie Willet**; **Jean Winkle**; **Susan Winkle** (Jean Winkle’s daughter-in-law); **Kate Wollenburg and family**; **Judy Young** (Janet King’s sister); **Barb Zeh** (Jeni Cathcart’s mom).

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Louise Barry, Betty Hoffmann, Betty Kline, Shirley Lathrop, Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords’ neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman’s grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman’s great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (Loretta’s grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl’s son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn’s granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl’s son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Becky Betsch’s brother); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey**; **Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadine and Barry Wisecup).

St. Paul Lutheran Church

LOCATION KEY

S = sanctuary
 N = narthex
 L = library
 FH = fellowship hall
 US = upstairs

March 2023

Mission Statement

Growing a Christian community where each is valued, accepted, and loved.

513-821-0987 | mail@stpaulreading.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
February 26 1 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Social Concerns Committee (L) 2 pm <i>The Chosen</i> Bible study (N) 3 pm Youth Group (FH)	February 27 February 28 6:30 pm Venture Scouts (N)	March 1 6 pm Soup/Salad Potluck 7 pm Lenten Worship: Vespers	2 10:30 am Bible Study (N/Z)	3 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning	4	
5 2 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After Worship: Evangelism Committee (L) 2 pm <i>The Chosen</i> Bible study (N)	7 5:30 pm Confirmation Class (N)	8 6 pm Soup/Salad Potluck 7 pm Lenten Worship: Holden Evening Prayer	9 10:30 am Bible Study (N/Z) 6 pm Scouts BSA (N)	10 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning	11	
12 3 Lent **No Sunday School / Adult Forum** 10:30 am Worship (S) 2 pm <i>The Chosen</i> Bible study (N)	14 6:30 pm Venture Scouts (N)	15 6 pm Soup/Salad Potluck 7 pm Lenten Worship: Compline	16 10:30 am Bible Study (N/Z)	17 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning	18	
19 4 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Stuff Easter eggs 2 pm <i>The Chosen</i> Bible study (N)	21 5:30 pm Confirmation Class (N)	22 6 pm Soup/Salad Potluck 7 pm Lenten Worship: Healing	23 10:30 am Bible Study (N/Z) 6 pm Scouts BSA (N)	24 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning	25 12 pm Setup for Easter Egg Hunt 4 pm Community Easter Egg Hunt	
26 5 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) 2 pm <i>The Chosen</i> Bible study (N)	28 6:30 pm Venture Scouts (N)	29 6 pm Soup/Salad Potluck 7 pm Lenten Worship: Stations of the Cross	30 10:30 am Bible Study (N/Z)	31 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning	April 1	

Council Corner

Below are the issues discussed at the February 20, 2023 meeting and actions that were taken:

- Dennis King (Guest) presented data regarding decreased offerings related in part to the passing of members and followed with a recommendation to reduce the 2023 Operating budget expenses by \$50,000.
- The TD Ameritrade stock account continues to recover (+\$2000 in January).
- The Nominating Committee is making phone calls seeking volunteers to serve on the Church Council term 2023-2025.
- The benefits of Council Retreat in January were discussed.
- We reviewed several policies and approved recommended minor changes. More substantive changes were made to:
 - ◇ Gift Policy – approved changes made as discussed and recommended in the congregational meeting.
 - ◇ Wedding Policy – approved additional copyright protection language.
 - ◇ Child Protection Policy – Revisions in progress.
- Discussed organ failure issues and approved moving forward in obtaining information on the Hauptwerk system, a reportedly less expensive alternative to the digital organs previously presented to the congregation.
- Approved a request to allow a member of the Lord of Life congregation to use our stage to practice and possibly produce a self-written play.
- Approved the purchase of a new laptop to replace Pastor Emily's computer that was failing and beyond repair.



Thanks to the Evangelism Committee for the scrumptious Valentine's breakfast on Feb. 12!

March Ministry Schedule

Date	Service	Assisting Minister	Lesson Reader	Acolyte	Livestreamer
Weds. 3/1 (7 pm)	Vespers		John Cathcart		Patrick Cathcart
March 5	2 Lent	Carroll Mayhugh	Sherry Bronner		Patrick Cathcart, Nick Huitger
Weds. 3/8 (7 pm)	Holden Evening Prayer		Patrick Cathcart		Carroll Mayhugh
March 12	3 Lent	Cindy Mayhugh	John Cathcart	Patrick Cathcart	Chet Laine, Carroll Mayhugh
Weds. 3/15 (7 pm)	Compline		TBA		Patrick Cathcart
March 19	4 Lent	Terry McDowell	Carroll Mayhugh		Chet Laine, Noah Moorhouse
Weds. 3/22 (7 pm)	Healing	Cindy Mayhugh	TBA		Carroll Mayhugh
March 26	5 Lent	Noah Moorhouse	Chet Laine		John Cathcart, Patrick Cathcart
Weds. 3/29 (7 pm)	Stations of the Cross				Chet Laine, TBA

**St. Paul
Lutheran Church**

***Mission
Statement:***

Growing a Christian
community where
each is valued, ac-
cepted, and loved.

2023 LENTEN SERVICES

7 pm each Wednesday in Lent



March 1 Vespers

March 8 Holden Evening Prayer

March 15 Compline

March 22 Healing Service

March 29 Stations of the Cross



A soup-and-salad potluck at 6 pm
will precede each service.

**St. Paul
Lutheran Church**

106 Maple St.
Reading, OH 45215

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mail@stpaulreading.org

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

