



MAY EPISTLE

ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH, SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER (ECC)

MAY 2025

"Soon, the real thing is coming!"



"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.' (Revelation 21:1-4)"

I recently heard two older members of the congregation reminiscing over their time together, working in different ministries in St. Paul's. One of them finished the conversation by saying, "And soon, the real thing is coming!"

We just finished our Holy Week and Easter celebrations. This was a marathon week for our church staff and many volunteers, and I received many compliments about the services and the music we sang together.

And yet, I know this was not perfect. I know the little issues in the music that most people didn't notice. I know how completely exhausted we all were by the last Easter service. I know the times I lost my temper and snapped at others behind the scenes. And now that the marathon is over, we largely go back to normal. Even though every Sunday is a little Easter, we cannot sustain that level of celebration every week.

But as this member said, "soon, the real thing is coming." With Jesus' return, we will experience the true Easter celebration, without musical mistakes or exhaustion or short tempers. A perfect celebration with all God's children from all times and places. A celebration that has no end.

Soon, the real thing is coming, for Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

*"City of God,
Easter forever,
Golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
River of life,
Saints and archangels,
Sing with creation to God the I AM!
Jesus is risen and we shall arise:
Give God the glory! Alleluia!" (LSB 474, st 5)*



Dispatches from The Office

Rev. Lance Armstrong O'Donnell, Senior Pastor

The Architecture and Art of Hospitality

“Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” (Romans 15:7, ESV)

There is something I want you to pray about. . .

This was cemented for me when I went to the hospital to visit Bob Bratz, whom I have come to love like an uncle in the faith. Bob's candor with me in moments of pastoral care over the years and his overall joviality made the reality of my last visit a cause for sadness, thankfulness, and *conviction*.

I walked into his hospital room on Holy Tuesday (15 April 2025). He smiled and said, “There's my man.” As always: hospitable. I sat down across from him, and then things turned serious: “I'm going to lose part of my leg.” Then we talked about that, and what it would mean for him in his living situation. Bob—I think for the first time in his life—was not going to be in Church for Easter, and he was in tears. We then talked, of course, about God's promises of forgiveness and resurrection. We talked about confidence in Christ, in life and in death. I then set the Lord's Supper before us so that Bob could receive the “medicine of immortality,” the Body and Blood of Jesus, to forgive him and comfort him before he faced his life-altering surgery. [BTW, Bob gave me permission to repeat this for the Epistle.]

As I considered this faithful man, who loves the Lord and loves being with God's people and receiving God's gifts in worship, I thought also of many like him. I think of the late +Andy Rupnow+, disabled and under twenty-four-hour care, and his blessed mother, Karen, who barely fit in the little lift we have for them so they could be in church. I think of the several people and couples who, for various health reasons, cannot be active at St. Paul's—or who have taken their membership elsewhere—because of the difficulty entering our sanctuary. I think of several current members, who would love to be able to sing in the choir as long as they have a voice, but who know a hip replacement or knee replacement is coming—or who cannot have that surgery because of other issues—and who know that someday, sooner than later—they likely won't be able to go up to the balcony to sing.

I think of last year's strategic planning (“Why Discovery”) discussions, leading up to our congregational picnic in July, and the absolutely central theme on worship. Our people love our beautiful sanctuary. They love being Lutherans. They love Law and Gospel preaching, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. They love reverent and beautiful liturgical worship that celebrates the same. They love being in a room that is designed—in structure and art—to facilitate the reception of God's Word and Sacraments, a place for worship that is different than the world, that becomes a bridge of sorts between heaven and earth. Our people love artwork that

(continued→)

teaches the faith. They love the care that they have received from one another, and the care we show for our people in our community, especially in the Lord's Cupboard food pantry, food and help given not just to the needy, but given *in Jesus' Name*. They love the fellowship that is facilitated in various different ways: Advent and Lenten meals, the funeral lunches, the fundraisers and celebrations. They love *Lutheran* education, that *Christ is in all things* at St. Paul's school, from physical education to math. We live the Creed—the *whole creed*—at St. Paul's.

Our "Why Discovery" process led to four clear themes, four clear reasons people love St. Paul's. We love Lutheran: Worship, Education, Fellowship, and Care.

We have some general operations budget issues that we are working through. We're talking about it this Spring. But the congregation is growing. We'll figure this out. The Lord will provide.

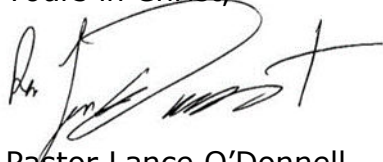
So, keep this in your prayers, and begin to think about how we can make St. Paul's more accessible for worship, fellowship, education, and care. It's clear to me, and to the strategic ministry planning committee, and to many others, that—so help us, God!—it is time for us to build on the foundation bequeathed to us. It is time to invest in our strategic community location by making our facility more accessible, giving people easy and hospitable access to the sanctuary and—God-willing—the balcony, with handicap and child-friendly bathrooms on the sanctuary level. Our fellowship hall could also use expansion and improvement. It works fine for a school cafeteria, but our Sunday Bible class is approaching 100 people. All the support columns in there, and the acoustics, make it a challenging environment for a large class. Other gatherings in the fellowship hall regularly stretch our limitations. Of course, we could move the adult class to the gym, but having that open area unobstructed for the Sunday School opening and play is a way better use of the space, plus moving the adult class to the gym would require considerable weekly set-up and take-down.

Keep this in your prayers, and begin to think about how we can make St. Paul's more accessible for *worship, fellowship, education, and care.*

It will take real sacrifice. It will also necessitate large gifts and bequests. But think about what it took for a congregation of largely German-speaking immigrants to build our current sanctuary *during World War I*. Think about ourselves and future generations. Think about what a more accessible facility for worship, education, fellowship, and care might look like.

Think about these things, and pray about these things. Many in the leadership are. The economy is a bit uncertain. That makes it a good time to pray and think and plan. God-willing, we'll have some options to present for consideration later this year at our 160th anniversary celebration.

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Lance O'Donnell
Maundy Thursday
17 April, A.D. 2025

Word ON Wednesday

Are you thinking about becoming a member at St. Paul's? Do you want a refresher on what Lutherans believe? Join Pastor Schockman for "Lutheran Basics" at our Wednesday evening Bible class, "Word on Wednesday (W.O.W.)."

Where: Room 219

Time: 6:30–7:30 pm



Bethlehem Lutheran in Wales will be hosting the Zone 17 Spring Rally on Saturday, May 10th. Registration and refreshments begin at 9:00 am with our Speaker Linda Phillips giving her presentation about her medical mission experiences at 9:30. Everyone is welcome! A Gifts from the Heart Ingathering will go to Orphan Grain Train for disabled children. LARGE

children or SMALL adult diapers are needed. Items can be placed in the bin located by the LWML bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

Not attending the convention in June? You can still send Gifts from the Heart utilizing Amazon Wish List. See details of the 3 recipients at www.lwml.org.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, May 6th, at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. New sisters in Christ are always welcome!

Looking for livestream volunteers



We are looking for volunteers to help with running the livestream worship services on Sundays at 8am. Teams of two are very helpful. You don't need to be tech savvy or computer literate, just be able to push a button (or two). If you are interested in helping out, please contact Heather in the church office at 262.567.5001 or via email at heather@splco.org.

Ladies Aid



April is almost over and we've had our April showers. So, what comes after those showers? Well, those wonderful May flowers, of course! Ladies Aid's next meeting on May 1st, at 5:30pm, will help get you in the mood for those beautiful spring flowers! Please join us to hear Renee Ebert and family talk about the excitement of spring plantings and what's all happening at Ebert's Greenhouse Village. It will truly be an evening of fun, food and fellowship.



Piggly Wiggly Receipt fundraiser

If you shop at Piggly Wiggly, please deposit your receipts in the designated box in Fellowship Hall. The money raised from your receipts helps to continue the programming for our youth.

May Events

- May 4th NO YOUTH GROUP (Confirmation Sunday)
- May 11th SPEND THE DAY WITH YOUR MAMA!
- May 18th Higher Things Attendee Study: 7pm
- May 25th Higher Things Attendee Study: 7pm

MAY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				¹ 5:30 pm Ladies Aid 6:30 pm Church Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	² 6:00 pm Game Show Gala	³ 8:00 am Women of Joy Bible Study 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
⁴ 8:00 am Divine Worship (Confirmation) 9:15 am Blood Pressure Screening 9:15 am Confirmation Reception 10:30 am Divine Worship	⁵ 5:30 pm Lord's Cupboard Drive-Thru	⁶ 6:00 pm LWMML	⁷ 6:30 pm W.O.W.: Lutheran Basics	⁸ 6:30 pm Church Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	⁹	¹⁰ 7:30 am Journeywomen 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
¹¹ 8:00 am Divine Worship 9:15 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship	¹² 6:00 pm Lord's Lambs' Giveaway	¹³ 5:30 pm Mother/Daughter/Friend Banquet 6:00 pm Board of Operations Mtg.	¹⁴ 11:00 am Caring Through Sharing 6:30 pm W.O.W.: Lutheran Basics	¹⁵ 12:30 pm New Member Sponsor Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Church Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	¹⁶	¹⁷ 8:00 am Women of Joy Bible Study 9:00 am Security Training 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
¹⁸ 8:00 am Divine Worship 9:15 am Coffee Fellowship Hour 9:15 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 12:00 pm Voters' Meeting 5:00 pm Reformation Tap Society 7:00 pm Higher Things Bible Study	¹⁹ 5:30 pm Lord's Cupboard Drive-Thru & Meal	²⁰	²¹ 6:30 pm W.O.W.: Lutheran Basics	²² 6:30 pm Church Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	²³ NO SCHOOL	²⁴ 7:30 am Journeywomen 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
²⁵ 8:00 am Divine Worship 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 7:00 pm Higher Things Bible Study	²⁶ NO SCHOOL/OFFICE CLOSED	²⁷ 6:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	²⁹ 6:30 pm W.O.W.: Lutheran Basics	²⁹ 5:00 pm Circuit Ascension Dinner 6:30 pm Circuit Ascension Worship	³⁰ 3:00 pm Wegener/Burnham Rehearsal 5:00 pm SPS Graduate	³¹ 1:30 pm Wegener/Burnham Wedding 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting



Stewardship in the Body of Christ

Baseball season is upon us. The southern images of spring training give way to the pageantry of Opening Day. On that day, the hopes and dreams of every major league team, player and fan focus on doing whatever it takes to get to the Fall Classic, the World Series. Baseball is a secular way that so many of us confess that hope “springs” eternal.

With all of this in mind, baseball can also teach us a new perspective about stewardship. Think about the game itself. Baseball is a team sport. The home team faces off against the visitors. Yet while it is a team game, there are repetitive, individual confrontations that take place within the game. The baseball game cannot start without the individual pitcher against the hitter. Once the batted ball is in play, the battle is between the ability of the fielder against the speed of the baserunner. Once there is a runner on base, an attempt to steal a base, pits the runner against the catcher. A base hit into the outfield pits the outfielder against a runner trying to score.

Baseball is a team game with many smaller units at play. Without all those smaller units working together and achieving their tasks, the team will lose.

Romans 12 puts our stewardship of the Gospel in a similar setting. The church is certainly described as a team, if you will.

Verse 3: *“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”* This is where the Body of Christ is really seen as a team. No one member of the baseball team can win the game by themselves. In the same way, no one part of the Body of Christ can accomplish stewardship of the Gospel alone. The pastor cannot. The congregational chair cannot. The lead soprano in the choir cannot. But each of these individuals have been added to the local congregation to be built into a team that can win the victory with Jesus.

Verses 4–5: *“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”* In baseball, the pitcher pitches. The catcher catches. The hitter hits. When a pitcher attempts to hit, the result is usually not very pretty. Catchers often do not excel at running the bases. The hitter usually does not do well when they are sent to the mound to pitch. Every member of the Body of Christ has a unique set of abilities and functions. Not everyone preaches. Not everyone leads. Not everyone sings well. Yet when the congregation assembles together as a team, it can succeed in ways unattainable by the individual.

Verses 6–8: *“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”* Each member of the team has a role to play. Abilities and opportunities are entrusted to the individual members of the Body of Christ to be used for the ultimate purpose of stewarding the Gospel for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor. The one preaching is no more or less important than the others. The one serving or the one teaching, the leader or the merciful one — all are equally important in the faithful stewardship of all that the Lord has entrusted to the Body of Christ. All this stewardship is for the sake of the other!

A baseball team can have five All-Star pitchers but cannot win if the hitters do not hit. The best lineup in the league will struggle if the pitchers cannot get anyone on the other team out. Pitchers need the defense behind them to play well. Coaches need to lead well. When they all work together, you have a winning baseball team. When the Body of Christ has all its members faithfully stewarding the unique individual talents that have been entrusted to them, the victory goes to Jesus! This is the goal of faithful stewardship! It is all about Jesus!



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Mother/Daughter/Friend Banquet

Sponsored by Ladies Aid

Tuesday, May 13

5:30pm - Fellowship and Cocktails

6:30pm - Dinner

Program—"Accessories R Us"

(wear or bring a gaudy accessory)

Oconomowoc Golf Club

W360 N5261 Brown Street, Oconomowoc

Enjoy fellowship, food and a fun skit!

Adults - \$40 (includes gratuity) Children (3 to 12) - \$15 (includes gratuity)

Menu:

*Chicken Cordon Bleu
Twice Baked Potatoes
French Style Green Beans
Salad & Rolls
Grasshopper Pie
Coffee, Tea, Milk*

*(Vegetarian Dish Available.
Let us know when purchasing
your tickets)*

Menu:

*Chicken Fingers
French Fries
Fruit
Ice Cream Sundae
Milk*



Bring Hard Candy
Flavors: Root Beer,
Peppermint, Lemon

Purchase Tickets:

Church Office (262-567-5001)
Mary Lou Pagenkopf (262-308-8184)
Terrie Seifert (262-490-0649)
Vicky Tuder (414-699-8045)
Judy Braatz (262-266-4841)

GAME SHOW GALA



GAME SHOW GALA **SPONSORSHIP** **OPPORTUNITIES**

St. Paul's Spring Fling



EVENT


SPONSOR

DONOR LEVELS

PRICE IS RIGHT _____ \$1500+

CASH CAB _____ \$1000

JOKERS WILD _____ \$500

PYRAMID _____ \$250

WIPE OUT _____ \$1-249

SHOWSTOPPER SPONSOR _____ \$5000

Prominent name and logo recognition as hosting sponsor in program, event website, invitations, and promotional materials. Special signage at event. Ad in event program. Reserved table and 8 event tickets.

BIG DEAL SPONSOR _____ \$4000

Name and logo recognition as big deal sponsor on event website and in event program. Special signage at event. Ad in event program. Reserved table and 6 event tickets.

BONUS ROUND SPONSOR _____ \$3000

Name and logo recognition as round sponsor in program, event website, and announced at game start. Special signage on table. Five sponsorships available.

OPENING SPIN SPONSOR _____ \$2000

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SPONSOR / DONOR RESPONSE FORM

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ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL
GAME SHOW GALA FUNDRAISER
210 E. PLEASANT ST.
OCONOMOWOC, WI 53066

TO MAKE YOUR DONATION VIA CREDIT CARD, PLEASE USE OUR
WEBSITE SPLCO.ORG, AND MAKE YOUR DONATION TO FUND A FAMILY.

ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH IS A 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION.
OUR FEDERAL TAX ID IS: 39-0836067.



Circuit Ascension Service

May 29, 2025

St. John's Lutheran Church -
North Prairie
312. N. Main St.
North Prairie, WI 53153
stjohnsnp.org

This year, the circuit's Ascension Dinner and Service will be held at St. John's North Prairie. Offerings for the service will support the Dominican Republic Lutheran Mission and the South Wisconsin District's Church Planting Initiative.

Dinner: 5:00 - 6:15 PM

Featuring Turkey and Gravy

Divine Service: 6:30 PM

Liturgist: Rev. Lance O'Donnell

Celebrant/Preacher: Rev. Dr. Michael Nielsen

Lector: Rev. Gregory Barto

MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 7th
Judy Stock

May 10th
Phil Herrmann

May 14th
Al Mueller

May 17th
Gerald Prockl

May 18th
Russ Meyer
Dick Paul

May 19th
Roxie Gerlach
Anne Lindquist

May 20th
Jean Anderson
Julayne Sullivan

May 22nd
Dutch Holland

May 26th
Tony Brockway
Karen Meyer

May 27th
Dorothy Duchow

May 30th
Donna Andrus

May 31st
Marian Faltersack

For our members 70+ years



MEMORIALS

Andrew Rupnow	\$345.00
Roxanne Mueller	\$25.00
William "Pops" Kuebler	\$20.00

ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

(The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)

210 E. Pleasant Street
Oconomowoc, WI 53066-3050
262-567-5001

WORSHIP & STUDY

Saturday Worship	5:00 pm
Sunday Worship	8:00 am & 10:30 am
Bible Class	9:15 am

Pastor Lance Armstrong O'Donnell 262.567.5001 x217

Pastor Jason Schockman 262.567.5001 x216

Director of Parish Music, Allison Mackie 262.567.5001 x214

Principal - Jill George 262.567.5001 x213

Website: www.splco.org

LIVE BROADCASTS:

8:00 am Sunday Worship
Live on WTKM 104.9 FM/1540 AM
& www.wtkm.com
Live-streamed at www.splco.org

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER (ECC)

Christian Pre-School & Day Care
Director Christine Flores 262.567.4881

Epistle Editor-Heather Scheuer

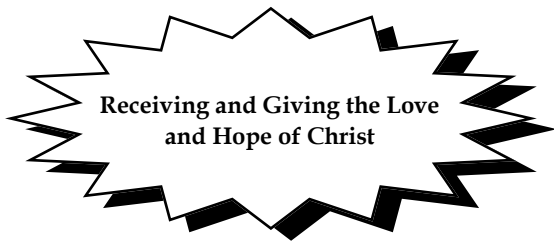
Newsletter deadline for articles,
announcements and features is the
2nd Wednesday of the month

PLEASE ADVISE THE CHURCH OFFICE OF
ANY ADDRESS CHANGES

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REFORMATION TAP SOCIETY

Theology and conversation with a bit of hops.



*ADULTS 18 AND OLDER

May 18

Ask the Pastor

Presenter: Panel of Pastors

5:00-7:00 pm
@ BrewFinity

N58 W39800 Industrial Rd., Suite D
Oconomowoc WI 53066
www.brewfinitybrewing.com

**First time guests
get a free
beer or soda on us!**