

St. Paul Lutheran Church ELCA

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APRIL 2025

"Set Aside Holy Time"

We "set aside" time for different things. Why else would we bother to enter or jot things down in our calendars or make notes to ourselves that are stuck on the refrigerator door? We want to make sure that we don't forget that we have "set aside" such-and-such time for this activity or that appointment.

Within the month of April this year, there is a week that that has been "set aside" by Christians for centuries. It is "Holy Week" - a week that includes Palm and Passion Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and leads into Easter Sunday. "Holy Week" is a fitting name, because the word "holy" has its roots in the thought of something being "separated" or "set aside" for God's purposes. Holy Week is a time that has been "set aside" for worship of the Lord as we hear the story of God's loving purpose in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a *Holy week*. (Please make note of the opportunities to worship during Holy Week here at St. Paul and also with our sisters and brothers at St. John in Sterling and Immanuel in Rock Falls.)

As we think about this upcoming holy - "set aside" - week, I ask that you also hear, once again, God's commandment that states: *"Remember the Sabbath Day, and keep it holy."* It is important that we "set aside" time in our lives and our calendars for that which is truly important - to recognize and treat certain times and actions as "holy." As we get set for a holy week, let's remember the holy day of each week - a day in which we come together to worship the Lord. In doing so, we'll be reminded that each and every day is a day that is set aside



for God's purpose. And, as followers of Jesus Christ, I pray that our lives reflect that truth.

Yes, I know that some of you have very little control over a job that has you working during the "set aside" days and times of worship. (Believe me, I understand; my whole career consisted of "working" weekends!) I hope that you make a special effort to find ways to declare some times each week as "holy." Times of Scripture and devotional reading and prayer are important for everybody; and they are especially important if one can't gather together with other Christians on a weekly basis. (And what a blessing it is to have St. Paul's worship services available on St. Paul's website. Sunday mornings don't work? You can "join us" each and every week at another time of the week by simply clicking on that week's worship service!) Also, as you are working at that Sunday morning job, how about taking some time to think about the ministry that you may be (or could be) doing for others?

The words "remember" and "holy" will be important words during this month. Remember God's loving purpose in Jesus Christ during the Holy Week that has been specifically set aside for remembering and worship. But also keep those words, "remember" and "holy", in your weekly thoughts throughout the year as you think through and plan your calendar.

"Remember the Sabbath Day, and keep it holy."

In Christ's love and service with you,

Pastor Mark S. Luepke



Exciting News!

We are delighted that Pastor Mark Luepke has agreed to extend his service with St. Paul! He will continue as our part-time interim pastor through Sunday June 8th (Pentecost Sunday). He will take leave from June 9th to July 8th, and is willing to return from July 13th thru August 24th. Thank you for making Pastor Mark and Nancy feel welcome. We are truly blessed!

St. Paul Council

Join us For Worship

9:00 a.m. worship to praise God.

The Livestream can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#)



This past month we have prayed for the following: Stacy Verdick, Dylan Wescott, Ken & Sharon Mager, Dianne Miller, Bev Julien, JoAnn Garcia, Barb Lenn, Lori Dewey, Betty Steinke, Larry Wahler, JoDell Cruz, Sandy Julifs, Lila Edeus and the family and friends of Steven Julifs.

Please contact Sue in the church office if you have a prayer request for the congregational prayer list.

LENT WORSHIP 2025

People of St. Paul, we will soon be entering the holy season of Lent. As we remember the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, we add opportunities for worship on Wednesdays.



WORSHIP WITH OUR TRI-CHURCH PARTNERS

St. Paul continues participating in worship on Wednesdays with our tri-church partners, Immanuel and St. John's. The remaining Wednesdays are April 2 & April 9. The theme for these services is "Turning Toward God's Abundance" and will focus on five divine attributes: faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and love.

St. John's will host the mid-day service. Please gather for lunch starting about 11:15 a.m. and worship will follow at 12:15 p.m.

Immanuel will host the evening service. Please gather for supper starting about 5:00 p.m. and worship will follow at 6:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

St. Paul is responsible for the luncheon served on Wednesday, April 9 at St. John's. We presently have volunteers to provide the soups and salads, and all we need is kitchen help on both days. The kitchen help will be responsible for set-up, serving, and clean-up beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 9.....3 kitchen volunteers needed

Please text or call Julie Woessner if you are available to lend a hand either day. 815-441-8084

This year's weekly themes:

April 2	Forgiveness	Pastor Bree
April 9	Love	Pastor Jacob



Holy Week at St. Paul

Worship will be at St. Paul on Good Friday, April 19. Gather for a potluck in the fellowship hall at 5:30 p.m. as we recognize the last supper of Jesus with His disciples. Following our meal together, at approx.. 6:15 p.m. we will move to the sanctuary for a Good Friday Tenebrae service. Gabby will have an activity for the children during this part of the evening.

Tri-Church Holy Week opportunities **Immanuel**

Thursday, April 17 – Maundy Thursday – 12:15 & 6:00 p.m. Worship with the stripping of the Altar t 6:00 p.m. only

Friday, April 18 – Good Friday – 12:15 & 6:00 p.m. Worship

St. John's

Thursday, April 17 – Maundy Thursday – 6:00 p.m. Worship

Friday, April 18 – Good Friday – 6:00 p.m. Worship

Church Announcements

CLEO (Church Ladies Eating Out)

CLEO meet monthly at 5:30 p.m. at a designated restaurant. The March outing is on Monday, March 31 at The Factory in Sterling. The next meeting will be on Monday, April 28. Watch the bulletin announcements to find out where! If you are unable to attend because of bad weather or personal reasons, please join us the next month. If you need a ride or have any questions, please contact Judy Bartel at 815-751-6768. All are welcome!





Menz Group will meet at St. John's Lutheran Church in Sterling on Monday, April 7, at 6:00 p.m.

Please keep our home visitation members and friends in your thoughts and prayers. If you would like the address for anyone listed here, please contact Sue in the church office.

Shirley Dodd	Lori Dewey	Lila Edeus
Katherine Janssen	Sandy Julifs	Viola Koster
Cliff Miller	Sandra Sweitzer	Dale Worley



St. Paul Year Budget Report

2025 Budget \$293,589 (\$24,466 Monthly)

Totals through March 28, 2025

Budgeted Expenses \$73,380

Offerings/Interest \$29,281

Expenses \$44,402

Lutheran World Relief Quilting

Our next quilting day is April 16. Join us in the Social Hall to tie & pin quilts between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

We have completed 63 quilts to date. We are always in need of clean, spot-free materials to be used within the quilts.

Thank you to those who have donated these items and to those who have donated the pretty, colorful material we use for the quilt tops.

Donations can be put in the closer by the kitchen.

If you have questions regarding the quilting contact Dawn Waite (815-631-8142) or Debbie O'Brien (815-441-0257).



NAME TAG SUNDAYS!

The first Sunday of each month we are having name tag Sundays. This will help us all! The ushers will remind us to make our own nametags as we enter the sanctuary.

HOLY COMMUNION during Lenten Sundays

For the five Sundays of Lent, communion will be offered both at the rail and at the base of the steps in front of the altar. Pastor will alternate his Sunday locations, but will bless all of the communion elements. This will require more communion servers. Please call Sue in the office, or contact a council member if you would like to help with communion distribution.



Friendship Pads/Connect Cards/Prayer Request Papers

The Worship Team is streamlining our paper in the pews! Look for new connect cards where you can share all of your details. These also have a place for prayer requests. As always, if you would like to have Pastor include your prayer request in that Sunday's public prayers, please hand your connect card to an usher during the gathering hymn.

Stewardship – We are Easter People

Easter is a good time to reflect on how we can rise above tensions and troubles to experience the joy of Christ's peace.

As we celebrate Easter, a time of renewal and hope, let's remember that stewardship is about using our gifts and resources wisely, reflecting the abundance of God's love and the transformative power of Christ's resurrection. May we take this opportunity to reflect on how we can better serve God and others by using our gifts for His glory.



No one has ever become poor by giving.

Treat your treasures as a trust; God will meet your deepest needs. Use your talents!!

Give generously with a grateful heart!



BIRTHDAYS FOR OUR CHURCH MEMBERS & FRIENDS

If you don't see your name on this list or there is a correction to be made, please let Sue know in the church office.

3 Mark Glafka
4 Carolyn Duncan
8 Tim Zollinger
10 Karen Wright
11 Paul Steinke
14 Brandon Dewey
15 Bob Bartel
21 **Viola Koster – 96**
24 Bennett Shore
25 Liz Klein
28 Susan Kuehl
29 Izzy Brockman

Happy 35th Anniversary

April 21, 1990

Keith & Kathy Peugh



Youth News!

Easter egg hunt | Candy needed: Easter Sunday is **April 20**. Immediately following the 9:00 a.m. worship service, we will be having an Easter egg hunt for kids of all ages. We are planning for outside, but will still have the hunt inside in case of rain. Congregation, we are asking for donations of individually packed candy, stickers, little toys (needs to fit inside plastic eggs). You can pick up a bag of empty eggs at church, fill them, then bring them to the church no later than Sunday, April 13. Or, just bring your candy, etc. donation to the church and we'll fill the eggs. Thank you for your support of this fun event for the children and youth of St. Paul.



Summer Camp

Now is the time to sign up for Summer Camp! The theme for 2025 is Remember. Reconnect. Renew.

Camp is offered weekly from June 15-August 5. All camps enjoy a full schedule each day at the beautiful 600+ acres of

LOMC. Campers experience morning devotions, natural exploration, cookouts, Bible study, archery, team building, campfires, games and so much more. Come to LOMC this summer for a unique outdoor experience! You can learn more about all the great options for LOMC Summer camp at www.lomc.org. A non-refundable deposit per camper is required to hold your space.

NOW is the time to make plans to join in CommUNITY VBS this summer! Consider having your grandkids or extended family coming to visit during that time and join us for VBS too! **CommUNITY VBS is offered for Pre-School-5th graders July 20-24 from 5:30- 8 p.m.** at Immanuel Lutheran (501 8th Ave., Rock Falls). Festivities include a free supper, Bible exploration, music, games, science and arts & crafts! Guard your calendars and plan to volunteer for this life-shaping week too! If you would like to be on the CommUNITY VBS planning team, the next meeting is on April 1 at 6 p.m. at Immanuel. PLEASE plan to join us or volunteer for CommUNITY VBS July 20-24!



VOLUNTEER
NEEDED JULY 20-24

PRE-K

We're looking for a passionate individual to lead our preschoolers at Vacation Bible School! Help us create an unforgettable, fun, and faith-filled experience for our youngest learners. Please reach out to Miss Gabby if you are interested in helping out!

815-981-6479 gabby@stpaulsterling.com

VOLUNTEER
NEEDED JULY 20-24

MUSIC

We're looking for a passionate individual to lead our music group at Vacation Bible School! Help us create an unforgettable, fun, and faith-filled experience for our youngest learners. Please reach out to Miss Gabby if you are interested in helping out!

815-981-6479 gabby@stpaulsterling.com

Children's Offering



In April the children's offering will support our synod partners in Tanzania and India. The offerings will be sent directly to non-profit organizations that work with the North Central Diocese of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and the Arcot Lutheran Church (ALC) in India. The Friends of Mwangaza supports education programs that tackle issues related to teaching, learning, public health, empowering women, and building community in Tanzania. Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry supports education through financially supporting students at the ALC boarding homes in India. Check out both organizations here: <https://lutheranpartners.org/what-we-do> or <https://www.mwangazapartnership.org/>

Confirmation 2024-2025

St. Paul has a multi-year confirmation program for **6th-8th graders** students who desire the Rite of Confirmation typically Affirm their Baptism in the fall of their 9th grade year.

Confirmation is a special time of intentional exploration of our faith through Bible Study, questions, service, worship, retreats and more! It is an opportunity to learn about God, Lutheranism, ourselves & others. There are MANY opportunities to grow in faith, love & service!



At this time Confirmation classes will not meet on Sunday mornings here at St. Paul but will meet with Immanuel and St. John's through monthly Sunday gatherings from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Each session will include a light lunch which the host church for that session provides. **The schedule for the year is below.** The dates with an * are still being confirmed. Items in *italics* are service or fellowship events. PLEASE aim to participate as you are able. Friends are welcome! This schedule is subject to change.

2024-2025 Tri Church Confirmation Schedule

April 6, 2025; 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Paul, New Testament

**April 30, 2025; 7 p.m. Buddy Bags Packing*

May 4, 2025; 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Immanuel, New Testament (Wrap-up Party & Review)

Make plans to join us in exploring your faith this year!

Community Announcements

**Breaking
Bread
Together
BBT**

Breaking Bread Together (BBT)

You are most welcome to join the people of Immanuel for BBT in April! Breaking Bread Together or BBT is a time of sharing life, God's love and a meal together! This is a no host lunch. Join us for BBT on Wednesday, April 30 at 11:15 a.m. at Angelo's 2 (2525 E. Lincolnway, Sterling). ALL ARE WELCOME! Come and share life with God and each other at BBT!

The Morrison Ecumenical Chorus will present the Lent and Easter portions of G.F. Handel's "Messiah" on Palm Sunday, April 13, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Morrison. The concert which is sponsored by the Morrison Ministers Council, begins at 7:00 p.m.

"Messiah" has been performed in Morrison since 1956. The chorus includes singers from Morrison, Sterling, Fulton, Clinton and other Iowa communities. This concert is truly an ecumenical event and has become a meaningful part of Easter preparations for both the performers and the audience.

The chorus is under the direction of Kathy Janicek, choir director at Bethesda Lutheran Church, Morrison, and is accompanied by Christine Holmer of Clinton, Iowa. Soloists include Connie Swanson-DeSpain, soprano; Sara Dunne, alto; Eric Phend and Luke VanderBleek, tenors; Pete Hagglund, bass; and Mike McCoy, trumpet.

A free-will offering will be taken to cover expenses with any extra funds going to the Ministers Council to help with their activities. The entire community is invited to begin their Holy Week by attending and sharing in this musical and spiritual experience.



Mark your calendars for Relay for Life on June 14 from 5:00-9:00 p.m.

You're invited to join Immanuel members to become members of the Spirit of Immanuel Relay for Life team at the 30th Annual event to be held at Westwood Sports Complex in Sterling.

Relay for Life is about celebrating survivors, honoring and remembering those lost to cancer, and Fighting Back against this cancer which is not fussy about who it attacks – male or female – younger or older – whatever nationality or heritage. For questions, contact Pam Shoffner or Bonnie Cassens. Registration and of survivors to walk the first lap, receive a free Survivor t-shirt, and a free box lunch after the opening lap and team members as well may register online at www.relayforlife.org/saukvalleyil or call 1-800-ACS-2345.

A colorful poster for an Easter Egg Hunt. The background is light blue with scattered white and pink daisies. A large yellow Easter egg is in the center. A white rabbit is on the left, and a red heart with a dashed line trail is on the right. The text is arranged around the egg.

JOIN US FOR AN

EASTER EGG HUNT

**SUNDAY, APRIL 20TH
10:15 AM**

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN
CHURCH
1701 16TH AVE.
STERLING, IL**

Church Service begins at 9am

EGG HUNT WILL BEGIN AFTER SERVICE



Walking the Ancient Path

WELCA SPRING RETREAT 2025

"Thus says the LORD: Stand at the crossroads and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16

APRIL 26, 2025

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

LOMC Oregon, IL

\$30 per person

Scholarships are available

Program led by

PATHWAYS

A CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL



Women of the **ELCA** 



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



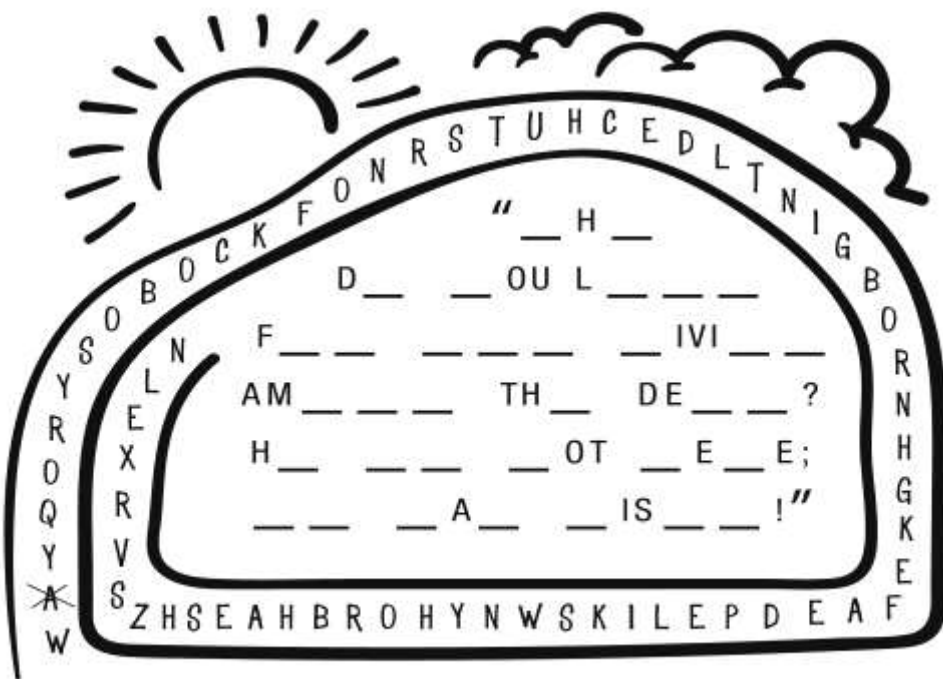
**"What could I say? They are
her most Eastery shoes."**



EASTER MORNING *message*

Early Sunday morning, some women who followed Jesus encountered a great surprise. Solve the puzzle to see what the angels told them.

Directions: Cross out every other letter in the maze. Write the remaining letters in order to complete Luke 24:5-6, NIV.



TELEPHONE PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP

We welcome your prayer requests and also your praise reports:

(Want to be a part of this? Call the church office.)

Church office – 815-625-3069

Janie Billings

Judy Bartel

Greg Zeigler

James 5:16 *Pray one for another.*

DIRECTORY OF STAFF and CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Pastor Mark Luepke

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

Sue Dirks, Parish Secretary

(815) 535-3574 – sue@stpaulsterling.com

Gabby Law, Children Ministry

(815) 981-6470 – gabby@stpaulsterling.com

Dawn Zeigler, Music Coordinator

(815) 275-3775 – dawn@stpaulsterling.com

Julie Woessner, Children's Music Leader/Worship Song Leader

(815) 441-8084 – 4woessner@comcast.net

Shawn Andrews, Custodian

(779) 775-4530



2025 Congregation Council

President – Greg Zeigler

Vice President – Mary Ordean

Treasurer – Chrissy Zollinger

Secretary – Stacey Avelar

Christian Education/Youth

Stacey Avelar ('27)

Stewardship

Greg Zeigler ('27)

Social Outreach

Stacey Avelar ('27)

Lay Ministry & Worship

Chrissy Zollinger ('27)

Julie Woessner ('27)

Property & Management

Dan Bartel ('26)

Members-at-large

David Carrillo ('27)

Mary Ordean ('26)

Rayce Gale ('27)

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
1701 Sixteenth Ave.
STERLING, ILLINOIS 61081

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**– DATED MATERIAL –
PLEASE DO NOT HOLD**



LOVING – SERVING – SHARING

DIRECTORY

Office (815) 625-3069

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday; 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday – 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Pastor Mark's hours – Tuesdays – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net

Website: www.stpaulsterling.com

Facebook: St. Paul Lutheran Church – Sterling, IL