

“What Does Easter Mean To You?”

While Easter Sunday is evidence of a promised eternal life, we do not look with hope at the resurrection as we would a trophy at the end of a race. The resurrection is not our due, our reward, that which we will find at the end, what we’re waiting for, nor that which will make all of our hard work worth it. Christ’s resurrection means so much more.

When we look to the resurrection as a reward for belief, or as that which comes at the end of earthly life, we completely miss the risen Christ in our midst. The resurrection is more than a promise: it’s a challenge! The resurrection challenges us to live and serve as if death did not have power over God’s promises. The resurrection challenges God’s people to speak truth and serve justly in a world that has grown accustomed to its own brokenness. Death can no longer be a barrier to ministry—that is, fear for self and fighting for privilege must no longer hold sway over our call to love the neighbor. The resurrection removes our excuses for neglecting our neighbor, or for focusing on selfish gain, or for violating God’s natural creation around us.

Christ does not remain on the cross or in the tomb. His ministry did not die when he died; instead, Jesus came alive again and entrusted his ministry to the church. Paul has described Christ’s church on earth as the resurrected body of Christ. Just as Christ’s body, we bear the scars of brokenness and sin, but yet we rise to minister to a needy world. And so, even when we feel broken down, emptied, and without hope, we can look to Christ and remember that God’s promises are stronger than our brokenness. When we feel strong, we help the vulnerable; when we feel vulnerable, we look to Christ and Christ’s church for support. When we live in abundance, we share our wealth; when we need help, we trust Christ and Christ’s church to care for us.

The integrity of Christ’s risen body depends on the church body engaging in Christ-like ministry—that is, the church is called to love the whole world. The whole world. In the now. We can’t wait for God; God is waiting for us. We are the resurrected body of Christ, operating in sure and certain promises, certain that God can move in this world in surprising and shocking ways. We minister out of courage instead of fear, love instead of loathing, openness instead of narrow-mindedness. Above all, we are not content with the pain which we inflict on our neighbors. We are not content with theology which alienates, excludes, and violates our fellow creatures. Christ’s church cannot love some but not all: Christ’s life, death, and resurrection are not so cheap as that.

The love which conquers death cannot champion death as a weapon. That is to say, God’s promises are not reflected in words or actions which exclude, hurt, and marginalize. God’s love is greater than this; God’s sacrifice is greater than this. Christ’s church body on earth must seek out and serve those who are most in need of protection, regardless of religion, sexuality, gender, resident status, political leaning, economic status, or physical ability. The resurrection is for all of creation!

This ministry rarely constitutes a comfortable endeavor. Sometimes, the world will revile such “radical” and all-inclusive love. Are we afraid to change the world with this love? Let us hear the words from the angel who met the women at Christ’s tomb, “Do not be afraid.” The resurrection and promises of God—these will sustain us as we serve our neighbor. When we encounter resistance, when we encounter social barriers which tell us to minister to some and not others, then our incarnated and triumphant Christ will hold us.

There is a reason that the Easter season concludes with Pentecost Sunday, that day during which the Holy Spirit descends on the assembly like fire and Christ’s church on earth begins. Christ’s earthly church is now Christ’s resurrected body on earth, called to love and serve all creatures. The resurrection is not the ending to our story as Christian disciples; rather, the resurrection empowers us to begin serving a broken world in grace and fearlessness. Easter Sunday is not just a celebration of God’s promises and our inheritance: Easter Sunday is a commissioning of sorts, a rallying cry to breathe life where there is death, to minister even when doing so is scary, to love as Christ loved.

Happy Easter, everyone!

Pr Nikoli

Congregation News



Rod & Sandy Pralle

April 30

Derek DeVries	4-1
Shelley Hilton	4-2
Leland Dhondt	4-3
Bryce Pralle	4-4
Jay Van Wert II	4-5
Oliver Arenholz	4-10
Jacob Donnenwerth	4-11
Chris Heilskov	4-15
Colleen Moritz	4-15
Jake Walker	4-17
Kara Koster	
Alan Moritz	4-22
Rod Pralle	4-23
Steph Korth	4-24
Kennedy Pralle	4-26
Parker Kofoot	4-29
Brandi Wikert	4-30
Rob McCormick	4-30



Bob Abendschein, Corey Spear,
 Judy Holbrook, Nancy Knipfel, Terry Wheeler,
 Verna Humburg, Dale Heitland,
 Tauni and Mike Harmon (daughter and
 son-in law of Terry and Karen Wheeler)
 Dorothy Madetzke, Justin Mejia,
 Jo Klein, Robert Swanson
 and the Call Committee Process.



Scan this QR code to add someone to the Prayer List.



Our thoughts and prayers go out to Della Speich and her family. Della's son in law, Greg Hanson passed away unexpectedly on March 14 in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Please keep this family in your prayers.

Worship Schedule

- April 7** **9:00 am Worship at St. Paul**
- April 14** **9:00 am Worship at St. Paul**
 11:00 am Worship at St. John's
- April 21** **9:00 am Worship at St. Paul**
- April 28** **9:00 am Worship at St. Paul**
 11:00 am Worship at St. John's

Participating in Worship:

Date	Reader	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Ushers for April
April 7	Mike Cross	Slater Weydert Torie and Steph Korth	Dorothy Madetzke And Delores Schall	Larry Alquist Paul Flint Mike Cross Reeve Wagner
April 14	Sandy Pralle	Rayne and Reeve Wagner Sally Van Wert	Jay and Jane Crawford	
April 21	Sandy Pralle	Juliette Koch Jo Coonley	Lowell and Shirley Lange	
April 28	Paul Flint	Lydia and Marlee Maas	Lowell and Shirley Lange	

Coffee hour There are new coffee hour schedules out in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to meet the Youth in the congregation, this is a great way to do that.

Radio Broadcast If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a birthday or anniversary, the cost is \$40.00 There is a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.



April 2024

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits. We appreciate all the donations!!

Everyone is invited to attend our quilting group sessions on Wednesday mornings, beginning at 9:00 AM. If you can tie a knot, you can help tie the quilts for LWR. Of course, coffee hour is always an enjoyable time. The coffee is "on" about 10:00 and everyone is welcome. Treats are potluck so we usually have a great variety of things to eat.

Priscilla Circle Bible Study will be held here at the church on April 18 at 1:30 pm.

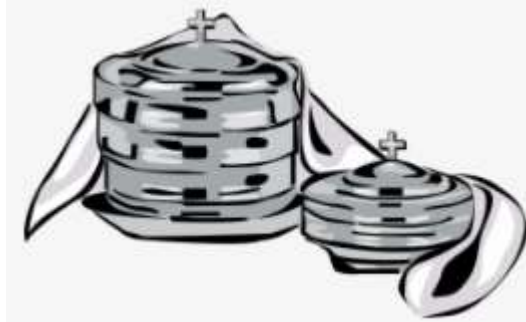


**90th Birthday Open House
For
Mary Marquard**

Saturday, May 4

**Harriman Park
Shelter**

2:00 pm



Altar Guild

We are in need of volunteers to help with Altar guild for the months of June, September, November and December. If you can help out with this, please contact Evelyn Cross or the church office.

Thank you!



**Save the Date!
Vacation Bible School
will be held on
July 25-27**



Thank you to the Youth for serving Easter Breakfast!!
We appreciate you!!

Here are a few planned events for April.

Wednesday, April 17- Go out to Eat!

Please meet at the church at 5:30 pm

Sunday, April 21- Earth Day Clean Up

8:00-8:45 am before church

2024 ELCA Youth Gathering



Thank you so much to everyone who has already given to support our young people attending the New Orleans Youth Gathering. With your generous support, we are over 60% of the way there!! We are so excited for these participants to experience the joy, wonder, challenge, and wideness of God's spirit alongside tens of thousands of their peers.

But, we're not done yet—we still have 37% left to raise. So, we're cordially inviting you to save the date for our Silent Auction and Dinner (**JUNE 9 @5pm**), hosting by the participating students. At this event, besides enjoying some great food, you will also learn more about the upcoming trip to New Orleans and have an opportunity to bid on some amazing items.

How can you help right now? We are looking for people to donate items for the auction. There will be a spreadsheet posted in the Fellowship Hall for those who wish to donate.

Thank you for supporting the Youth of St. Paul!!



Palm Sunday

The Children wave palm branches and escort Burrito the donkey into the church before worship on Palm Sunday.

Thank you to Charlane Pralle for bringing Burrito to St. Paul!! He has been coming for many years! He is a pro and a joy for all to see!

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Monthly Council Meeting
March 20, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by President Mari Cramer. Those in attendance were: Mari Cramer, Steph Korth, Patrick Sietsema, Robyn Kofoot, Marcus Kofoot, Kent Cramer, Robin Wagner, Evelyn Cross, Beth Whalen and Charlene Richtsmeier.

Secretary's Report: Motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2024 meeting was made by Steph, seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: No report.

Pastor's Report: Reviewed the report Pastor Nikoli provided. Motion to extend Pastor Nikoli's contract for 6 months was made by Marcus, seconded. Motion carried.

Board Reports:

Education: Robyn – There will be an egg hunt after church Easter Sunday. Bible school will be July 22-25. Will partner with Hampton Methodist Church.

Life and Growth: Beth – Harriman Park service and potluck will be August 25th.

Property and Management: Nothing to report.

Stewardship: Marcus – Will order offering envelopes now to take advantage of a 10% discount.

Worship and Music: Nothing to report.

Youth: Robin – Youth will serve breakfast Easter morning. Four graduates will be recognized May 5th. Youth will rake leaves April 21st after church.

WELCA: Evelyn – Quilts will be presented to the graduates. Personal care kits are being assembled.

Old Business: No old business.

New Business: No new business

Moved by Steph to adjourn the meeting, seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted:

Charlene Richtsmeier

Stewardship Report

	Giving
March 3	\$ 4,050.99
March 10	\$ 2,994.99
March 17	\$ 2,097.99
March 24	\$ 3,372.99
March 31	\$ 4,082.99
Total	\$ 16,559.95

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who supports St. Paul Lutheran!



Scan the QR code to give electronically or automated Giving.

These deposits include the general fund, building fund and radio broadcasts.

Franklin County Ministerial Presents

Time For CHURCH

Easter brings new life.
New life means growth.
Are you ready to grow?



We want to see you, all are welcome, come and see that the Lord is good!

Pastor Panel
Tue, Apr. 16 at 6:30pm
Windsor Theater, Hampton

PLEASE JOIN US!!
IN HONOR OF NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK
THE HAMPTON LIBRARY WILL BE HOSTING
AN OPEN HOUSE
TUESDAY, APRIL 9
FROM 10:00-5:00 PM (Refreshments will be served)

"Iowans You Should Know: Stories From the Iowa Almanac" Will Be Presented by Jeff Stein @ 10:00am
The Program is free and open to the public as part of the Humanities Iowa Speakers Bureau program



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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Living in God's amazing grace

We are called through baptism to be a welcoming community of faith, grounded in worship and prayer, so that we may grow in Christ-like forgiveness and love.

Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered, and sent for the sake of the world.