



The Spirit of St. Paul's

www.stpaulslutheran.ca

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

Easter Cross witness

Crosses will be available after the service on April 7 and Palm Sunday April 14.

Be a witness to the Risen Christ by placing one of these crosses in a visible place in your yard, window, balcony or wherever it works best for you.

It is suggested that the crosses be put up on Palm Sunday with the white side facing out and on Easter Sunday turn to the side that says "He is Risen." We ask that you leave it up for one week after Easter. Thank you.

Board of Evangelism



Church Liaison – a volunteer position – might you represent St. Paul's?

In its ongoing community-building efforts, the Queen Elizabeth Exhibition Haultain Community Association is developing relationships with the schools, churches and businesses in the community.

To that end, QEXCA is looking for a Church Liaison. The position is responsible to maintain communication of events, activities and issues between the QEXCA and the administration of one or more of the seven community churches.

This is not a director position and the volunteer is not required to attend board meetings. The Liaison will report, at least quarterly, to the Community Relations Coordinator.

To learn more about the Community Association, visit the website qexca.ca.

If you are interested in helping St. Paul's be part of our local community in this way, please let a member of the Board of Evangelism/PR know.

More new books for your reading pleasure



Last month we featured some of the great new non-fiction books in the library, hopefully some of you have had the opportunity to browse through them! This month we are showcasing some of the new fiction books that were ordered in. The Katie Schuermann series would be good for someone who wants an easy, relaxing read. The Messengers series would be an exciting set of books for some of our youth to read. Make your way to the library and check them out!

Let your light so shine

Let your light so shine
in the darkness
that others may see and hear,
and through the power of
God's Spirit
overcome their fear.

Let your light so shine
before others
that God's light reflected they see,
glorifying your Father
in heaven
as it shines through your words
and deeds.

Dorothy Schuler

Reminders

- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.
- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.
- LWMLC mites and offerings are collected the first Sunday of each month.

Caring Ministry Coordinator for April - Ron & Ludy Jeschke

Lord, with my vast store of good advice,
it often seems a pity not to share it.
Let me speak the truth only when
it's the loving thing to do.
You give me encouragement and help
even when I've made stupid mistakes.
Help me treat others as you treat me.

from You Are Loved by Alma Kern



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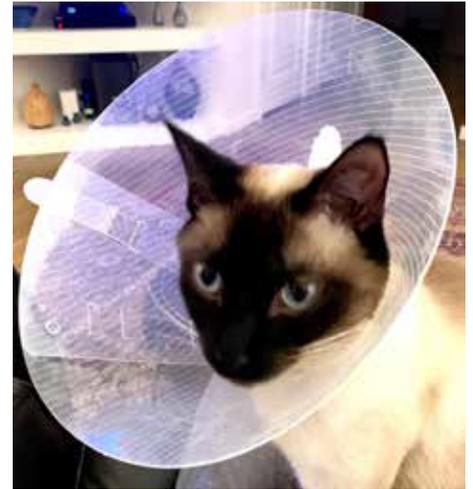
Pastor's Corner

"...And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

These are very comforting words from St. Paul teaching us that everything that happens in our lives, whether good or bad, works together for good for those of us who have been called according to his purpose. These are very comforting words from St. Paul, but they are difficult to trust—especially when we are in the midst of intense pain and suffering. When tragedy strikes our lives, or the lives of those we love, it's easy to think, "How possibly could any good come of all of this?"

One of our cats, Finnegan, has been having some health trouble lately and we have had to make a few trips to the vet. This is an awful experience for him. When he sees his carrier, or somehow senses that he's about to go to the vet, he hides under our bed and it's very difficult to get him out. Once we do, his heart is almost beating out of his chest and he lets us know very clearly that he is not happy. To make matters worse for him, our last trip to the vet led to him wearing a cone. Finnegan cannot understand why these humans who usually feed him and pet him are now being so seemingly mean! We don't like having to take him to the vet and it isn't pleasant seeing him in a cone bumping into walls. But, we know it's what's best for him and it will eventually lead to his getting better.

I know this is a silly comparison to the suffering we can endure in this life, and I by no means wish to trivialize the hardships we face. But



perhaps there is some similarity in that just as Finnegan cannot understand our actions that cause him to suffer for his good, so we are not able to understand God's actions that cause us to suffer for our good.

No matter what we are experiencing in this life, whether great joy or devastating hardship, God has promised that it is all leading to our eternal salvation. In a few weeks we will be celebrating Easter which is the foundation for the Good News that "...if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His" (Romans 6:5). Our suffering can leave us feeling lost and confused. But in the midst of our suffering, we have peace that surpasses our understanding because our Lord has promised that ultimately he will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Revelation 7:17).

*God's blessings,
Pastor Keith*

What we cannot do God did for us. Jesus left His heavenly home — not to survey our problem but to solve it.

from You Are Precious by Alma Kern

Stewardship

“Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out” (Deuteronomy 28:3-6).

This is God’s promise to the Israelites as they stood beyond the Jordan outside of the Promised Land. He promises blessing to His people. He will make them prosper, whether they are in the city or the field. He will make the fruit of their work to prosper, whether from the ground or their wombs, their flocks or their herds. He will make them to prosper in all things, whether upon their coming in or their going out.

But there’s a catch. He would do this for Israel only “if you obey the voice of the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 28:2b). If they did that, He would cause that “all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you” (Deuteronomy 28:2a).

If they didn’t obey the voice of the Lord, if they didn’t keep the commandments of the Lord and walk in His ways (Deuteronomy 28:9), they would be met with curse and woe. The blessings would be replaced with curses. Everything the Lord promised to prosper and bless would be cursed and fail.

Thanks be to God that our Lord Jesus Christ has come into our flesh, fulfilled the law for us—in our place and for our benefit; died for us—in our place and for our benefit; and is risen from the dead for us—in our place and for our benefit.

By this we have justification before God. We are forgiven, clean, holy, and righteous. The blessing of God is promised to us in Christ Jesus. It depends upon His work and not ours.

All this is ours in Holy Baptism. For in Holy Baptism, God claims us as His own, makes us His children, His heirs, His holy people. And so it is that the work of our hands and its fruit is holy because we are holy in Christ. It is pressed into His service, and thereby it becomes a blessing to us and to our neighbour.

For this great gift, our reception of the blessings of God because of Christ Jesus our Lord, it is our duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is not to receive blessings but because in Christ we already have.

It is with this in mind that we sit down on the first day of the week and set aside as He has prospered us to give to His church for His work of blessing in our midst (1 Corinthians 16:2).

The Board of Stewardship will be spending time over the coming weeks and months to consider our

financial situation in light of the blessings we have received over the past year and how we can use those generous gifts most wisely for the work of the church—here at St. Paul’s locally, and abroad. As those at the March voters’ meeting heard, we have some significant building maintenance expenses expected in the next few years and we need to ensure we have the fiscal capacity to deal with those when needed. Balanced with that is our ongoing Missions commitment to support the work of the church abroad. Additionally, there may be some local ministry opportunities we may want to consider. We thank you for your continuing support of the needs and programs we have taken on and pray that you will continue to support those endeavours. If you are interested in supporting these efforts by making your offerings using the Pre Authorized Remittance (PAR) program available at St. Paul’s, please speak to a member of the Board of Stewardship or speak with Sandy in the church office.

*In His Service
Board of Stewardship*

COMING UP

Lenten services begin at 7:30 p.m.

April 10 - Grace Lutheran Church, Saskatoon

April 18 - Maundy Thursday, St. Paul’s, Saskatoon

May 4: The bi-annual gathering of women from the Saskatoon circuit (Nor’Western Zone of LWMLC); will be held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Saskatoon. Watch for a poster with details.

LLL Steak Night: May 4, 2019, Smiley’s Buffet and Catering – a fund-raiser for the annual Fair Booth Ministry at the Saskatoon Ex.

Evangelism

God's help in times of need

"In my distress I called upon the Lord: to my God I cried for help. From His temple He heard my voice and my cry to Him reached His ears" (Psalm 18:6).

"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1).

How does God help us?

- Through the reading and hearing of His Word.
- Through the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.
- Through prayer.
- Through Christian resources.
- Through people.

Let's look at some resources God has provided to us

Through Lutheran Hour Ministries we are blessed to have the Project Connect booklets written from a Christian perspective on a variety of topics of situations that life sometimes throws our way. The booklets in the rack by the front door are free to take for personal use or to share with others.

FORGIVENESS IS A CHOICE (LHM)

"How God's free gift of forgiveness leads to peace and eternal life." Written by Rev. Dr. Steve Hokana, U.S. Army chaplain.

Whether we're forgiving or being forgiven, he shows the reader that forgiveness is not about weakness or ignoring the past. Rather it's about understanding that as we have been offered forgiveness through the work of Christ on our behalf, so, too, are we to forgive others and, when necessary, ourselves."

A summary of important facts about forgiveness:

- It is a powerful healing gift.
- As demonstrated by Jesus' life, death and resurrection, we are enabled to extend this same love to others.
- Restores broken relationships.
- Sets us free from guilt.
- Allows us to stop hurting others because we have been hurt.

- Means wholeness and harmony are restored and peace prevails in our lives.
- Lack of forgiveness is destructive.
- In the workplace it fulfills that calling of Goe to be a "beacon on a hill."

WHERE'S GOD IN ALL OF THIS? (LHM) "God has a purpose and it will ultimately be for good because God loves His children." Written by Joe Burnham.

"Suffering happens all around us. Sometimes it comes in the form of a natural disaster; other times it's a form of terror brought on by humans. Sometimes suffering is fueled by economic or medical conditions; at other times it appears randomly. Suffering can happen on a global scale, within a specific community or be limited to an individual."

Where is God in all of this? There is no single answer. Sometimes the answer is "I don't know" for God has not revealed His purposes to us. He hasn't let us know how He's going to work things out. What He has revealed is that He has dealt with the problem of pain that stems from what we've done wrong: God's Son Jesus Christ took our wrongdoing upon Himself and died in our place. God's Spirit intercedes for us in prayer, this Spirit restores struggling faith. God's Spirit comes to us and reminds us that even in the midst of seemingly pointless suffering, God has a purpose and it will ultimately work for our good because God has called us as His children.

*May you find peace, hope and comfort in His Word,
The Board of Evangelism*

God's promises in times of need

Every word of God proves true; He is "a shield to those who take refuge in Him" (Proverbs 30:5).

"...and call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me" (Psalm 50:15).

Classifieds

Something to sell or give away? Need something? Services to offer to fellow members? Try The Spirit Classifieds first. No cost. Leave your ads at the church office or give them to the editor.

Checking in with one of our talented musicians

When you think about Amy Timm, would you ever think about chickens? I was surprised to hear she has a few chickens where she lives on an acreage near Blumenthal just outside Hague. And she says she can't wait to dig around and get a garden going.

Her career teaching school allows some time for that, which is fortunate since she spends a lot of time on the road the rest of the year.

Asked about all that time in her car, Amy says she began her driving days in silence, doing a bit of planning in her head but found that it wasn't particularly productive so, after two years she began listening to audio books while travelling—non-fiction. She said someone had commented that you could eventually get a university education just listening in your car.

Two east-side elementary schools in Prince Albert benefit from Amy's musical abilities. I had heard that she teaches school but discovered in chatting with her that she is not a classroom teacher but teaches music to children from kindergarten to grade eight. The East Flat Band, made up of students in grades five to eight from both schools, is also under her tutelage. She takes the band many places to play including Christopher Lake and Saskatoon. Right now she's testing her organizational skills with a band trip to Calgary and Banff. "Teaching has improved my musicianship," she says. "When you're the sole authority of the subject in the classroom, you gotta step up or you sink."

Amy was raised in a musical family so music is not a surprising

interest. "I really value the music in this congregation," she says. "My whole life I've been exposed to these harmonies. I've been blessed with great music. It's been great to work with Laura, and who would have thought that one day I'd be given the opportunity to collaborate musically with my cousin Megan?! It's so special for me."

Vicar Jeff Swords, who served the congregation a few years ago, gets the credit for getting Amy involved with the choir. In his kind and gentle way he said, "Amy, you should think about getting some people together for a choir." Several years later she's thankful that he guided her to this opportunity for service. Amy says, "Making music with others is one of the greatest gifts there is."

Marion Hollinger, editor

LET US PRAY

...for youth ministry in Central America that will receive a mission grant of \$8,450.

It has been spiritually rewarding to witness the children in LCC's education program in Central America grow into mature youth, contributing in one way or another to their congregation's work and the work of the Lord's kingdom in general.

The Iglesia Luterana Sinodo Nicaragua has held national youth gatherings. In 2015, 250 youth attended and in 2016 over 220. A considerable number of these are youth who have grown up in the children's education program in their congregation. About 50% of the



youth may identify with a religious group but are not affiliated with a Christian congregation.

The ILSN has a Youth Committee that works with two pastors as mentors for youth outreach and ministry. There is a very structured

youth leadership which needs to be trained, encouraged and equipped in their work.

The grant will pay for a two-day national youth gathering in Chinandega as well as support a gathering in other regions.

Lord Jesus, we pray that the National Youth Gathering in Central America will continue

to grow in attendance and that the youth affiliate with Iglesia Luterana Sinodo de Nicaragua. We also pray that the ILSN Youth Committee receive training, encouragement and be equipped for their ministry. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Meditations from the Psalms

for Lent and Easter

By Laurie Schaeffer

from *Tapestry*, Spring 2005 & 2019

Lent 1

"If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness, therefore You are feared" (Psalm 130:3-4 NIV).

This is the problem between man and God. Who can stand before the Almighty God, covered in sin? Not a one of us! God is completely just and righteous; sin is destroyed in His presence. That's why Jesus came to take our place in judgment. When we are covered with Jesus' righteousness, we can come to our Heavenly Father.

Dear Father, help me to understand Your love in sending Jesus to take my judgment, and to share Your love with others. Amen.

Lent 2

"Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always. Remember the wonders He has done, His miracles, and the judgments He pronounced" (Psalm 105:4-5 NIV).

This world is a confusing, disappointing place. We think we have life figured out, and something beyond our control happens to upset our security. Where can we find something to cling to, something that will not let us down? Through our Saviour Jesus, we see God in His faithfulness, His unchangeableness.

Dear Jesus, give me eyes to see God's faithfulness. Help me to show others who are looking for something to hold on to that is found only in the Triune God. Amen.

Lent 3

"When my spirit grows faint within me, it is You who know my way. In the path where I walk men have hidden a snare for me" (Psalm 142:3 NIV).

Everyone has had a day like this when you feel weak, discouraged, like giving up. It seems there is no one to help or encourage us. Jesus was tempted to give up, take the easy way out. Jesus knew His Father was there with Him and used His Father's words to overcome that temptation. We have our Father's words to help us too!

Dear Holy Spirit, work faith in me and bring my heavenly Father's words to my remembrance, so that temptation does not overwhelm me. Amen.

Lent 4

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You preserve my life; You stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand delivers me. The Lord will fulfil His purpose for me; Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever—do not forsake the work of Your hands" (Psalm 138:7-8).

What was God's purpose in sending Jesus to live among us? To have Him return to heaven victorious, having destroyed death and the power of Satan. What is God's purpose for us here on earth? To live with Him forever through the cleansing blood of God's Son!

Dear Father, remember Your eternal love for me and do not abandon Your saving work in me. Give me Your love for lost sinners. Amen.

Lent 5

"Return to your rest, my soul, for the Lord has been good to you" (Psalm 116:7 NIV).

It's a lie that makes us feel worthwhile. After all, I'm a pretty good person. I try hard to do the right thing. Surely that counts for something when I reach the "pearly gates." But God tells us He has done it all. He doesn't need our help. He wants us to believe in Him, to depend on Him.

Dear Lord Jesus, free me from the need to help You save mankind. Help me to rest in Your power and Your love. Amen.

Palm Sunday

"For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light" (Psalm 36:9).

We've made it through this season of Lent. It's time to turn our focus to Jesus' last days on earth. Encourage

your church family by taking time to join them in extra worship during this Holy Week. Let God's love be reflected from your face to others you see.

Almighty God, what a mystery, to understand that You would come to earth to live as one of us, even to die for us while we were still sinners! Fill my heart with Your life and light, that I would shine as a beacon of hope for all to see! Amen.

Easter Day

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:22-24 NIV).

Spring brings a promise of new growth, new life. Our spirits lift at the signs of green grass, fresh flowers. Surely, God makes these days to rejoice. How much more, the day on which Jesus came back to life, the Victor over death. Now that's a day to rejoice over!

Dear Jesus, stay with me, as each year I hear the story of Your saving work in time and place. Teach me to come to God with confidence and joy and let Your peace overflow from me as I connect with others. Amen.

Laurie Schaeffer, St. Peter's
LWMLC, Simcoe, Ont.