



The Spirit of St. Paul's

www.stpaulslutheran.ca

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

Palm Sunday at St. Paul's



May 25

St. Paul's Annual Garage Sale

Please consider donating any unwanted "treasures" you may have to our church garage sale. The date for this year's sale will be May 25.

Items can get dropped off at the church after service on Sunday, May 19, and during the rest of that week leading up to the sale.

If possible, please price your items at home before dropping them off.

Sign up sheets will be posted soon. Help with pricing items the week before would be very much appreciated. Help on the day of the sale is also needed.

For more information please contact Sherry Gore.

Please note: We are unable to accept large heavy items such as mattresses and couches. Old televisions, computers and such should be taken to SARCAN as they don't sell.

A huge thank you to Laura, Megan, Lisa, Amy, the choir (and anyone else we have missed) for all the great music over the Lenten and Easter seasons.



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 May - Angela Neufeld

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.



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END OF AN ERA: PRESERVING MEMORIES

“For whatever was written in former days, was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Romans 15:4).

Women’s Spring Event

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
May 4, 2019
9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Registration: 9:30 am with coffee & muffins
Presenters:
Maureen Cline from Memory Writers
Rev. Robert Grout, pastoral counsellor

Free will offering

Bring some memories to share.



This was the group serving at Friendship Inn on April 3, 2019

Stewardship

Stewardship is not just about giving money to the church. It includes this, to be sure, but it is not limited to it. Stewardship involves our whole life—everything we have and everything we are.

Let us not, though, fall into the trap of thinking that because we give of ourselves in one area we can neglect giving in another. Stewardship is not stealing from Peter to pay Paul. It is not a game we play whereby we justify ourselves in not giving a tenth of our income because we have given in some other way. This is why our Lord warns: *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others”* (Matthew 23:23).

We are given to do both—tithe of ourselves and what we have. And so it is that St. Paul makes his appeal to us: *“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect”* (Romans 12:1-2).

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. We are not to have the mind of the world, where we exchange equal weight of this for an equal weight of that, and then think that we have done what God has required.

Our whole life is given over for service in and for the Church of God.

This is to be done in thanksgiving for what God in Christ has accomplished for us. This is our spiritual worship, the reasonable response to what He has done for us—not one for the other, but all in all.

But what does this look like? St. Paul never lays down a general principle without also giving us some practical application of what shape that principle is to take concretely. He gives the general principle that our bodies are to be living sacrifices to God, and, after admonishing those who have been given particular gifts of grace to serve the church, St. Paul then speaks generally of what is expected of all. He says: *“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality”* (Romans 12:9-13).

This is what it looks like to present your bodies as living sacrifices. This is how we live out the grace of God here in time.

Let us then heed the apostle’s teaching. Let us present our bodies—everything that we have and everything that we are—as living sacrifices to God, our reasonable response to what God in Christ Jesus accomplished for us by His death and resurrection.

Through this we have forgiveness of sins, a new life in Christ, and eternal salvation. And through this worship, the grace of God is made manifest in His saints for the church—and the world.

By giving to God with everything we have including our time, talents and treasures, we are honouring Him and supporting the work of the church.

The Board of Stewardship greatly appreciates the heartfelt and generous support from our members. As we have previously shared, we ended 2018 with a healthy financial surplus and we give you thanks for your generosity.

One of the board’s commitments over the last couple of years and in the future is to share with members our financial results and our needs on a regular basis. That is why each week’s bulletin includes a stewardship message to keep you updated with the previous week’s giving compared to our financial needs to meet our current budget.

Recently our treasurer reported our financial results for the first quarter of 2019 which showed we had spent \$5,261 more than we had taken in from January to the end of March. This compares to a deficit at the end of March last year of \$1,437 or a difference of \$3,824. Of note: in 2018 we had an unusual receipt of \$2,000 in a category other than envelope offering which made up a large part of that difference. The good news is that our envelope and PAR offerings were about \$500 higher this year than last year. We pray for your continuing support in your complete response to God’s blessings through this year.

In God’s Service
Board of Stewardship

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.

WHY DID JESUS DIE? (LHM)

"In this booklet we tackle honestly and head-on the question at the core of Christianity's 2000 year preoccupation with the cross: Why did Jesus die?"

Written by Don Everts, ordained pastor, college minister and an award-winning author of more than a dozen books about Jesus of Nazareth.

The author zeroes in on the big question: Why?

1. The fact is the cross (two simple lines, one vertical, one horizontal) can be recognized the world over, on church buildings, found on people's necks and on other items.
2. Why has the church adopted the cross as its central symbol?
3. Why was the cross part of the story so upfront and central for Paul's ministry? It would seem Jesus' death by cross might be a source of embarrassment.
4. Is the cross simply about martyrdom? Or is there another reason that the church, from the beginning,

celebrated and broadcast the fact that Jesus dies by suffocation on a cross?

5. The Messiah must suffer. Jesus' suffering, His death by cross, was not an option; it was not an accident... it was necessary. The cross was the plan for victory.
6. The problem of sin—sin is death-inducing. Sin is that significant. The Bible teaches that human sin has unfortunate natural consequences—everyday ones and eternal ones.
7. The Bible teaches that we have all sinned and we all face judgement before God. There is nothing we can do, our sins have non-negotiable consequences.
8. Enter the cross of Jesus into the story. Jesus suffered on the cross to save people from the consequences of sin. He paid the wages our sin deserved and cleaned our slates. We are reconciled to God, no more judgement.
9. **"Why did Jesus die?** You see, in the whole sweep of history, Jesus dying on the cross is what changed everything. It is the "crux" of the story of all history: the central point, the pivot of the narrative."

The cross is really all about love. "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him" (John 3:16-17).

REASONS TO BELIEVE (LHM) Written by Rev. Stephen Hower (LCMS).

"Believers and nonbelievers are not connecting and it's confusing to them both. What seems perfectly logical to Christians, by all objective standards, seems ridiculous to nonbelievers. Christians are frustrated by their ability to convince their friends of the Bible's veracity and non-Christians can't fathom how otherwise intelligent, reasonable people could get sucked into such unrealistic notions of God, good, evil and a faith which Christians believe 'is the beginning of wisdom'" (Proverbs 9:10).

This booklet examines seven reasons why it is logical to believe the claims Christians make about the Bible, about Jesus and the truth that Christians base their lives upon.

1. Christianity is a faith based in history. If the history of the Bible can be trusted, the message it contains is likewise worthy of consideration.

Pastor's Corner

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

The wages of sin is death and we are all going to collect those wages. Death isn't an easy topic to discuss and in our society it is one we tend to avoid. But, as Christians, we deal with death head-on with the truth of the Gospel. Death is our enemy, but it is our destroyed enemy. This is what Easter is all about. Jesus rose victoriously over death and, through faith, we receive the free gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This doesn't mean we won't mourn and grieve when a loved one dies. Even Jesus wept when he heard his friend Lazarus was dead. But it does mean that we grieve with hope. St. Paul reminds us of this in his letter to the Thessalonians, *"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe*

that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14). Here, St. Paul echoes Jesus in calling death "sleep" which means that there will be a waking up! Just like waking follows sleep, so the resurrection follows death.

Our funerals are a wonderful opportunity to confess and proclaim our faith in Christ and the eternal life we have in His name. To make sure this happens, it is wise to pre-plan your funeral service keeping in mind one question, "How might I best comfort and confess the Lord Jesus to my family and friends?"

An excellent resource for aiding you in planning a Christ-centred and Gospel-focused funeral service is a book called *Final Victory: Contemplating the Death and Funeral of a Christian*, available through Concordia Publishing House (www.cph.org). Beyond some helpful reflections on death and salvation, the author takes you through the funeral service in detail so that you will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for each part. Also helpful is the Funeral Planning Worksheet at the back of the book that can be detached and filled-out.

I must admit that it was a bit strange when I did the pre-planning for my funeral. But I take great comfort knowing that the victory I have over death in Christ Jesus will be boldly proclaimed to my family and friends. In the face of death, there is nothing more comforting than hearing Jesus' promise, *"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die"* (John 11:25-26).

*God's blessings,
Pastor Keith*

God in time of need, continued

2. Archeological discoveries corroborate the people, places and stories of the Bible.
3. The existence of complex prophecies made centuries before their fulfilment helps guard against fraudulent claims of charlatans, who otherwise could make claims no one could test.
4. Specific prophecies concerning Jesus validate His role as Lord Messiah.
5. Consider the miraculous nature of God's creation.
6. What about the universal belief in right and wrong?
7. Note the willingness of Jesus' disciples to endure torture and martyrdom rather than deny the Christian faith.

To learn more about each of the seven "Reasons to Believe" read the pamphlet.

*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).

God wants us to thank Him in the midst of circumstances, even when things make no sense whatsoever to us. We thank God that He loves us, that He is in control and that somehow He will work things out for our good. This lifts our spirits and gives us hope.

from You Are Precious by Alma Kern

Planting seeds for the future

Everyone likes to receive gifts, and most of us likely enjoy giving gifts. Gifts can bring joy to both the giver and the receiver. We most likely have given or received a gift that we have treasured for some reason. Maybe because the item was particularly memorable or because the individual was someone special to us. From time to time over the years our congregation has been blessed to receive special gifts from our members.

Gifts can take many forms. Sometimes it might be an item, at other times it might be a gesture and at other times an amount of money. Gifts to the church can take many forms as well. Many of us donate items for the annual church yard sale, amazingly year after year

the church continues to receive all sorts of treasures for this event. The income generated from the yard sale is usually designated for a specific purpose which is approved beforehand at a meeting of the voters.

St. Paul's Lutheran has established a Gift Acceptance and Use Policy that was presented and accepted by the voters in November of 2018. This policy establishes guidelines for receiving gifts that may be donated to the congregation through estates, as memorials from family members or through other means.

Lutheran Foundation Canada (LFC) reports that more and more Lutheran Church Canada (LCC) members are creating charitable gifts within their estates to be directed towards their home

congregations. These charitable gifts are some of the seeds that we can contribute to ensure the future growth of our church.

The Gift Planning Committee is proposing an evening dinner, to be held in the fall after harvest, to help inform congregation members about the policy and how they might make use of some of the suggestions contained in it. More information regarding this evening will be available as the date draws nearer.

If you would like to know more about Lutheran Foundation Canada please visit their website at <http://lutheranfoundation.ca/>

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7

LET US PRAY

...for youth ministry in Canada via the Lutheran Church-Canada national youth gathering; they have received a mission grant of \$5,000.

LCC has been sharing the Gospel of Christ with youth and youth leaders from across Canada for over 30 years. The goal of this ongoing project is to help youth believe and understand they are a vital part in proclaiming the saving message of Jesus Christ and His love for all people to further God's Kingdom. Coast to coast gatherings provide a sense of unity, faith and encouragement to youth to become involved in their local congregations,



and perhaps select vocations where they can continue sharing Jesus' love through the Gospel message with those they meet. In addition, youth gatherings like this provide opportunity for unchurched youth to experience the love of Christ,

often transforming their lives and creating lifelong friendships.

This grant will help cover the costs that cannot be covered totally by registration fees, including some of the costs of the presenters.

Heavenly Father, we pray that the grant for this project will provide a sense of unity, faith and encouragement to our youth who are vital

members in proclaiming His saving love for all people, even the unchurched. We ask also, that some may be drawn to vocations that share Jesus' love through the gospel message. Amen.