

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

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March 26, 2023 Contemporary 11:05 AM

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Deacon of Word and Service			Sandye Fletcher
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Music Minister			Robert Eaton
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomasa Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (*Luke 10:27*)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshiping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***
- Hearing Assist devices are available for those who need assistance in hearing worship service better. Please see a person in the Sound Room (Usher Room) to request the use of a device during worship.

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, this story proclaims God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P We believe that the Bible contains instruction for us as followers of Jesus Christ to do what he asked of us. He taught the first disciples to help others to confess their sins and to proclaim to them the promise of forgiveness afterwards. So let us take a few brief moments in silence to open our hearts and minds to Jesus, to confess the things that weigh heavy on our hearts and the things we need help with so we might be more in line with what Jesus commands.

(Silence for private confession.)

P If you are truly sorry and asking God for help, here is the promise he commanded the leaders in his church to proclaim, "You are forgiven." May this forgiveness free you and help you to live; to live in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

GOSPEL SONG: BONES

**You can take my dry bones – breathe life into this skin.
You called me by name and raised me to life again.
Oh, Jesus; Oh, Jesus; Oh, Jesus; alive in me!**

CHORUS:

***Breathe in me Your life, I can feel You are close now.
I can never hide, You are here and You know me.
All I need is You and I love You, I love You, I love You, I love You.
Breathe in me your life 'til Your love overtakes me.
Open up my eyes, let me see You more clearly.
Falling on my knees 'til I love like You love like You love me, I love you.***

* **GOSPEL:** John 11:1-45

Jesus is moved to sorrow when his friend Lazarus falls ill and dies. Then, in a dramatic scene, he calls his friend out of the tomb and restores him to life.

A The holy gospel according to St. John, chapter 11, verses 1-45.

¹Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so

that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” ⁵Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” ⁸The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?” ⁹Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. ¹⁰But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.” ¹¹After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” ¹²The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.” ¹³Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” ¹⁶Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” ¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” ²³Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.” ²⁸When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” ²⁹And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³²When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” ³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” ⁴⁵Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

GOSPEL SONG: BONES

**You can calm the oceans – speak peace into my soul.
Take me as I am awaken my heart to beat again.**

CHORUS:

***Breathe in me Your life, I can feel You are close now.
I can never hide, You are here and You know me.
All I need is You and I love You, I love You, I love You, I love You.
Breathe in me your life 'til Your love overtakes me.
Open up my eyes, let me see You more clearly.
Falling on my knees 'til I love like You love like You love me, I love you.***

**You move in the unseen. You set the captives free.
As I stand and sing, You're breaking the chains off me. **CHORUS****

END:

Oh, Jesus; Oh, Jesus; Oh, Jesus; alive in me!

CCLI Song #5807877 Words and Music by Joel Houston and Jill McCloghry
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CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*** SERMON SONG: RISE UP (LAZARUS)**

**In the dark and all alone, growing comfortable.
Are you too scared to move and walk out of this tomb?
Buried underneath the lies that you believed,
Safe and sound, stuck in the ground, too lost to be found.
You're just asleep, and it's time to leave. . . come on and**

CHORUS:

***Rise up! Take a breath, you're alive now! Can't you hear the
Voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus?
You're brand new. . . the pow'r of death couldn't hold you.
Can't you hear the voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus?
Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus!***

**When He said your name, the thing that filled your veins
Was more than blood, it's the kind of love that washes sin away.
Now the door is open wide, and the stone's been rolled aside.
The old is gone, the light has come, so come on and**

CHORUS:

Rise up! Take a breath, you're alive now! Can't you hear the Voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus? You're brand new. . . the pow'r of death couldn't hold you. Can't you hear the voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus? Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus!

BRIDGE:

He's calling us to walk out of the dark. He's given us new resurrected hearts. He's calling us to walk out of the dark. He's given us new resurrected hearts.

LAST CHORUS:

Oh! Come on and rise up! Take a breath, you're alive now! Can't you hear the Voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus? You're brand new. . . the pow'r of death couldn't hold you. Can't you hear the voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus? Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus! Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus!

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*** APOSTLES' CREED**

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS

A Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

A You have breathed into us the breath of life. Enliven your church. Deepen our partnerships with our companion churches around the globe, especially Cristo Rey and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad, and bless the work of missionaries who accompany them, especially Dina Anton de Espinoza.

A brief silence.

A We pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine. Bring an end to war and the destruction of lives and your creation.

A brief silence.

A We pray for the friends and family of Bobby Zajicek who passed away this past week. Be with them and comfort them during this difficult time.

A brief silence.

A We pray for Kylee Werland and David Zajicek who were united in marriage this weekend. Bless them as they begin a new life together as husband and wife.

A brief silence.

A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Rhanda Lattimore; Jane Brugh; Robert Eaton; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you.

A brief silence.

A We pray for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)*
GayLynn Willms Burk; Carl Norton; Barbara Farley; Laura Harris; Todd Foster; Cher Marino; Cindy Tanner; Joe Reck; Melinda Rodiek; Melda Coleman; Donna Culton; Nancy Hartmann; Lydia Rojas; Catherine Poppe; Larry Stolar; Vivian Fortenberry; Rick Davis; Darryl Stancik; Jerry Ordner; Michael Yancey; Bubba Bencal; Al Gene Canik; Jane Venghaus Taylor; George Wright; Sandy Mosley; Charlene Tesch; Cynthia Coufal; Jeffrey McDaniel; Karen Bailiff; Julian Divin; Nancy Biers; Angie Beggs; Pam Potter; Charlie Hammock; Brad Bryson; Lynette Frnka; Riana Jamison; Jenna Escamilla; Margaret Ortiz; Keith Korth; Jodi Sebesta; Cathy Siglow; Paul Casinger; Fran Gillett; DeQuincy Lister; Angela Mazoch; Lily Presswood; Denise Lange; Doug Mason; Dr. Tom Hancher; Joe Berry; Gracie Brune; Margaret Rogers; Leonard Kahlden; Curtis Wallin; Megan Burch; Lisa Grazier; Phyllis Behrend; Jessica Mauchlen; Donna Tiner; Libby Divin; Diane Brooks; Bob Loy; Stanley King; Monty Gillett; Dawn Foster; Edward Halcolm; Amber Smith Kutach; Louis Camacho; Melvin Schobel; Janet Greene; Sabrina Galindo; Debbie Grimes; Horst Traub; Margie Fisk; Preston Carter; Penny Miller; Carl Hahn; Megan Cain; Amanda Fuchs; Cyndi Wallace; Karen Broussard; Donna Young; Sharon Heimann; and Brenda Baker.

- A We pray for all expectant mothers, and especially for:
Magen Schindler Altieri; Katie Pagel Walcik; Kelsey Kethan McNeely; Montana Appelt; Dina Anton de Espinoza; Olivia Leyendecker; Daya Latiolais; and Cassidy Zajicek Parks that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace.

A brief silence.

- A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound that they receive your caring and compassion. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)*

Linda Frank; Helen Hammack; Joey Denby; Edwin Oevermann; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Verna Coufal; Doug Hill; John Zwiengel; Robert Saunders; Coy Dell Schindler; Barbara McMath; Linda Munos Rodgers; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Delores Purcell; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Curtis Berger; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; Carolyn Renz; and Rita Noska.

- A We pray for all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel that they are protected and kept safe. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)*

Law enforcement officers: Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Luke Kanz; Bruno Flores; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Garrett Flores; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Randy Wendt; Travis Neuendorff; Brenda Henkes; and Jan Willette, as well as those active duty military members including Brian Anderson; Michael Graham; Bryan Kubena; Brad Bergfeld; Cody Jowers; Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Ryan Neisner; Anthony D'Angelo; Dalton Kapel; Kindra Dawson; William Phillips; and Kevin Gonzalez.

- A You are the resurrection and the life. Even though we die, we will live. With thanksgiving, we remember all your saints who now live in your eternal love.

A brief silence.

- A We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

*** PEACE**

- P As Jesus shared peace, let us also share His peace with one another. *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

60 SECONDS OF STEWARDSHIP – Evangelism Team

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

P God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

C Amen.

*** REMEMBERING JESUS' WORDS, PROMISES, AND COMMANDS**

*** LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

*** INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

{Distribution will be continuous. All are welcome for communion. Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Pastor will hand you the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love.

C **Amen.**

* **BLESSING**

P God, the giver of love, ☩ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

C **Amen.**

* **CLOSING SONG: GLORIOUS DAY**

I was buried beneath my shame. Who could carry that kind of weight?

It was my tomb. . . 'til I met You.

I was breathing but not alive. All my failures I tried to hide.

It was my tomb. . . 'til I met You.

You called my name. . . and I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness. . . into Your glorious day.

You called my name. . . and I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness. . . into Your glorious day.

Now Your mercy has saved my soul.

Now Your freedom is all I know.

The old made new. . . Je-sus when I met You.

When You called my name. . . and I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness. . . into Your glorious day.

You called my name. . . and I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness. . . into Your glorious day.

BRIDGE:

I needed rescue, my sin was heavy. But chains break at the weight of Your glory.

I needed shelter, I was an orphan. Now You call me a citizen of Heaven.

When I was broken, You were my healing. Now Your love is the air that I'm breathing.

I have a future, my eyes are o-pen. . . 'cuz when You called my name. . .

I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness. . . into Your glorious day.

You called my name. . . and I ran out of that grave!

Out of the darkness. . . into Your glorious day.

CCLI Song # 7081388 Words and Music by Jason Ingram, Johnathan Smith, Kristian Stanfill, and Sean Curran.

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* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace, unbound to serve.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

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USHERS: Amanda & Aaron Oppermann; Loraine Gast; Adam Torres

LAY READER: Ashlyn Pugh

STREAMING: Kay Wesson

SOUND: Todd Jacobs

ACOLYTE: McKayla Kahlden

POWER POINT: Peggy Geisler

ALTAR GUILD: Marilyn Yearwood

WELCOME: "Hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love" (Psalm 130:7, ESV).

Welcome to worship, one and all.

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Kenny & JoAnn Venghaus and Larry & Tootsie Venghaus in memory of Milroy Venghaus for the anniversary of his birthday on March 23.

Congratulations and best wishes to Kylee Werland and David Zajicek who were united in Holy Matrimony here at St. Paul Saturday, March 25, 2023. May God bless them as they begin a new life together as husband and wife!

We extend our Christian sympathy to the family and friends of Bobby Zajicek who passed away this past week. May God comfort them during their time of loss.

Congratulations!! William and Rhanda Lattimore are pleased to announce the birth of their grandson **Oliver Joseph Buck Lattimore**. Oliver Joseph Buck is the son of Dustin and Ruth Lattimore of Alpine, Texas. He was born Sunday, February 26, 2023 at 5:10 PM. He weighed 9 lbs. and was 20 inches long. Welcoming him home were siblings Liam (7), Malachi (4), Eleanor (3), and Nathaniel (1). Proud great-grandparents are Adrian and Virginia Fritsch.

Congratulations!! Ronney & Marian Frank wish to announce the birth of their great-granddaughter **Brinlee Nell Heard**. Brinlee Nell was born Monday, March 20, 2023 to Tanner and Allison Bubak Heard. She weighed 7 lbs. 3 oz. and was 20½ inches long. Proud grandparents are Raymond & Donna Frank Bubak, Chris & Janet Heard and Tracy Heard. Proud great-grandmother is Arlene Brune.

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.

Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

Attendance: March 18 & 19, 2023 – 145 **Contributions:** March 18 & 19 – \$6,300.01
Power of One: March 18 & 19, 2023 – \$46.00 **Building Fund:** March 18 & 19 – \$5,557.02

Attendance: Wed., March 22, 2023 – 40 **Contributions:** Wed., March 22 – \$1,082.00
Power of One: Wed., March 22, 2023 – \$8.00 **Building Fund:** Wed., March 22 – \$6.42

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

Wednesday Night Attendance: – Wed., March 22 – **86 Total**
BLAST/Confirmation: 68 **Adult Bible Study:** 2 **Support Staff:** 16

ATTENTION: Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available for use by our young members and guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the narthex.**

Thank you! ☺

Attendance Pads Reminders: Thank you to everyone for doing such a good job signing the attendance pads each week when you attend worship! Our records are more accurate when you sign the attendance pads. Here are a couple of things that will help get our records even more accurate and up-to-date: **1) When signing in, please write everyone in your family who is attending worship.** When you write “John Doe Family”, we do not know how many people that is and we don't know who exactly attended worship. Was it John, Sue and Sally Doe, or the whole family of John, Sue, Jim, Tom and Sally Doe? **2) Please include your address and phone number.** This is helpful especially when we have guests signing in. When they see the members writing addresses and phone numbers, guests are more likely to do the same. We like to welcome our guests by sending them a card after their visit. That is hard to do when we do not have contact information. It is also a way for us to keep up with our members when they have a change of address or phone number. Thank you for taking the time to do these items. Our staff and volunteers who take care of the personal records and oversee attendance records greatly appreciate your help.

**** God's Gals:** God's Gals will meet **Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Schobel's Restaurant** in Columbus for food, fellowship, and visiting!! All women of St. Paul Lutheran are invited. Bring a friend! Questions? Contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127. **

Sr. Explorers Learn How to Make Knives: On **Thursday, April 13, 2023**, we will be traveling to Phenix Knives/The Blacksmith Shop in Bellville, Texas. **We will depart at 8:30 AM and return around 1:00 PM.** We will have the full tour of the blacksmith shop where Phenix Knives are made. They will show us the forges and tools of the trade and how they are used by these craftsmen as they also demonstrate knife making. A very interesting and educational hour with very little walking accompanied by many benches. Also, time for browsing and shopping before heading to the Texas Star Cafe for lunch. **Cost of the tour is \$15.** This tour has a maximum of 25 capacity. Please call Kevin Page at 979-732-0845 with any questions, and sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex (foyer) by Sunday, April 9, 2023.

Sr. Explorers Save the Dates: **1) Thursday, May 11, 2023:** BeeWeavers of Navasota tour with Bee Expert Chat, honey tasting and private hive tour. **2) Thursday, June 22, 2023:** Movie Day and Lunch at St. Paul – “The Jesus Revolution”.

WESTERN CLUSTER SPRING GATHERING: Let's get together again now that Covid is behind us. The Gathering will be **Saturday, April 22, 2023 at St. Paul Lutheran Church of Shelby**, 6814 Skull Creek Rd., Fayetteville, Texas. *(Use Fayetteville for nav, church is in Shelby).* With this Gathering, we will not have a formal program. Rather, we want to emphasize getting together to re-energize and catch up on what is going on throughout our Cluster. We will have **brunch, beginning at 8:30 AM**, and socializing along with an abbreviated business meeting. Let's get things rolling again and share what our individual units have been doing and suggestions for future gatherings. All women of the ELCA are invited! Please RSVP by Saturday, April 15, 2023 to Betty Huebner at 979-277-5303 (call or text) or Lana Aschenbeck at lanaaschenbeck@gmail.com.



Men In Mission: Men In Mission is a group of men of all ages who meet at **7:00 AM** on the first Saturday of each month in The Lighthouse. Breakfast is served, which typically includes conversations pertaining to sports, the arts, entertainment, and occasionally politics. We then have a short devotion, discussion, then close with the Lord's Prayer around 8:00 AM. If you are seeking a closer connection to the men of St. Paul, this is an excellent way to do so. You will make friends for life. Come join us on **Saturday, April 1!**

♪♪ The **Columbus Community Choir** will be presenting their annual Easter cantata on **Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 5:00 PM at Columbus High School Auditorium.** The title of this year's cantata is The Body of Christ: Glorified, Anointed, and Sacrificed by Pepper Choplin. Support your fellow neighbors as they share the “retelling of the final days of Jesus' life, focusing on the meaning of His words and actions leading to the cross”.

Columbus Ministerial Alliance is sponsoring an Easter Sunrise Service on Sunday, April 9, 2023 at **6:30 AM** at Beason Crossing Park. All are welcome to attend this service to celebrate the resurrection!

☘ **Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023 the Men In Mission will be serving their delicious breakfast** of pancakes, fruit, etc. in the St. Paul Lutheran Lighthouse after the 7:00 AM Sunrise Service. **There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for you to sign if you plan to attend.** If you have any questions, please contact Danny Kautz at 979-732-7897. ☘

♦ **Lutherhill Serve Day:** The annual Lutherhill Serve Day will be **Saturday, April 22, 2023** from 8:00 AM-2:00 PM. Time will be spent clearing brush and limbs around the camp. Lunch will be served. Interested in helping? Sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex **by Friday, April 21, 2023**. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858.



SUMMER CRAFTING CAMP: This summer we will be having a Summer Crafting Camp the first week of June. **We are in need of the following items:** 1) *Cardboard tubes from paper towels and toilet paper;* 2) *Crayons – broken pieces are great! (no matter the size).* Items may be dropped off in the church office between now and the end of May. If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Eaton at 512-757-2251. Thank you!



Habitat for Humanity: The Outreach Team is in search of a Team Leader to represent St. Paul Lutheran Church for Habitat for Humanity. The churches in our community coordinate and build a couple of houses a year for our neighbors in need. **We need someone to represent St. Paul and be the liaison between Habitat for Humanity and our congregation.** You do not have to build the house yourself, but help coordinate our efforts. Please let Kevin Page know (979-732-0845) if you are interested or have any questions. Thank you, and thank you, God, for our most generous church family!

♥ **Grief Support Group:** Are you experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, loss of friend who has moved? The Grief Support Group is a place to share and discuss these issues with other individuals. The group meets the **third Thursday of each month from 5:30-6:30 PM in the church library.** For questions or more information, contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Today (March 26) – 6:00 PM – Good Friday Play Practice
6:00 PM – God's Gals to Schobel's Restaurant, Columbus

Mon., March 27 – 9:30 AM – Staff Meeting
6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (Hackfeld Family Room)

Tues., March 28 – 9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
6:00 PM – CLA Board

Wed., March 29 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
1:00 PM – Neighbor-to-Neighbor Craft & Delivery Day
4:30 PM – Lenten Worship Service
4:30 PM – Confirmation (2nd yr.)
5:00-6:30 PM – Soup & Sandwich Meal (Lighthouse)
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation (1st yr.), Adult Class & HS Youth

Fri., March 31 – 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)

Sat., April 1 – 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship

Next Sun., April 2 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship
1:00 PM – Play Practice

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Wednesday, March 29, 2023 Hans Nielsen Hauge, renewer of the church, died 1824
Hauge was a layperson who wished to revitalize the church in Norway. As a result of a mystical experience, he felt called to preach. Many professionals in the church feared his motives and influence, and he was imprisoned for leading unauthorized gatherings.

Friday, March 31, 2023 John Donne, poet, died 1631

After finishing his education at Oxford University, Donne seemed headed for a career in the English public service. But a series of circumstances led him into the ordained ministry. He is well known as a writer of both secular and sacred poetry.

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OTHER READINGS: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a promise that Israel as a nation, though dead in exile, will live again in their land through God's life-giving spirit. Three times Israel is assured that through this vision they will know that "I am the LORD."

The reading begins:

¹The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD." ⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds,

O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.¹¹ Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’¹² Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people.¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.”

PSALM: Psalm 130

¹Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; ²O LORD, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication. ³If you were to keep watch over sins, O LORD, who could stand? ⁴Yet with you is forgiveness, in order that you may be feared. ⁵I wait for you, O LORD; my soul waits; in your word is my hope. ⁶My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning, more than those who keep watch for the morning. ⁷O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is steadfast love; with the LORD there is plenteous redemption. ⁸For the LORD shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

OTHER READINGS: Romans 8:6-11

For Paul, Christian spirituality entails living in the reality of the Holy Spirit. The driving force behind our actions and values is not our sinful desire for self-satisfaction but the very Spirit by which God raised Jesus from the dead and will also raise us from the dead.

The reading begins:

⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law — indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

SERVICE OVERVIEW: THE HOPE OF NEW LIFE

The message of today’s readings is that hope overcomes despair for God’s people. The hope of new life is evident in the story of “dry bones” from Ezekiel, and the Gospel of John tells the hope-filled story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The gospel gives us encouraging words to sustain us through the approaching despair of Christ’s passion and brings us to the fulfillment of hope on Easter. The interactions with Jesus by both Martha and Mary reflect the hope of God’s people in the face of despair, even in the face of death.

Put your hope in God and God’s word. Let this preview of the hope of the resurrection sustain you in these final days of Lent as we approach the death of Jesus on the cross. The Christian’s confidence in the resurrection of the dead epitomizes their hope in Christ.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Do you sometimes feel half dead? Do you see death everywhere? Are you afraid to even think about death? The raising of Lazarus and the vision of the dry bones are metaphors for baptism and for the renewed life of faith that is the intention of Lent. Welcome to worship! Receive the breath of the Spirit. Hear the voice of Christ. Be fed at the table. Celebrate and use the life God gives!

Although we have probably never visited a valley of dry bones, many of us have visited famous memorials that honor those who have died. Consider places such as the memorials for Vietnam, Pearl Harbor, and 9/11. Even more common are crosses, flowers, and pictures that can be viewed from many roadsides. These sacred places of remembrance bring to mind the stories of those who died. How do we recognize the death that happened in these places, while also proclaiming God’s promise of resurrection life? Remember, resurrection does not deny that death happened. Rather, it promises that death is not the end, and that God can and will bring new life.

Mary and Martha have the same grief. Both women believe Jesus has the power, and both women say the same thing: “*If you had been here, my brother would not have died.*” Mary and Martha have often been pitted against each other - the be-er vs. the do-er. Mary and Martha are like most siblings: opposites in many ways and alike in others. Our families of origin shape who we are, but we are also part of God’s family. Jesus shows up and all who believe receive new life.

Do you have a personal experience or know someone who has had a life after death-dealing experience? Are you a recovering addict? Did you find a way forward after a major loss? Did you decide to no longer hide an aspect of your identity from the world? These can all be experiences of new life and freedom. What does Jesus’ call to “come out” of the grave sound like? What is our responsibility as a Christian community to proclaim to *everyone* that we are unbound and set free from death?

Do you think Lazarus liked the tomb? Did he feel safe in that cool cave? Did he want to come out? The “tombs” we find ourselves in are often of your own making. We make tombs for ourselves where we feel safe, away from the world, burying ourselves deeper and deeper to protect ourselves from something. For Lazarus, and fortunately for us, it’s not up to us to decide if we like the tombs in which we find ourselves. Our God calls us out to new life in spite of what we might think is best.

KID STUDY:

One time when Jesus was out in the desert with his friends, a messenger came. “*Your friend Lazarus is very sick! Could you please come and help?*” It took several days for Jesus to get to

Bethany, the town where Lazarus lived with his sisters Mary and Martha. When Jesus got near their house, there were many people gathered around. Many of the people were crying. Lazarus' sister Martha came out to meet Jesus on the road. She was really angry. She stomped her foot and said, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died! Now he's gone! This is all your fault!"

Jesus listened to her, and let her be angry. He didn't say she was wrong. He didn't defend himself for taking so long. Soon Lazarus' other sister Mary came out, but she wasn't angry. She was sad. She fell onto her knees and said, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died! Now I have nothing to live for." She cried and cried. Jesus saw her sadness, and he felt sad too. He didn't try to cheer her up. He stayed close and listened. He was so sad for Mary that he cried too.

Jesus, Martha, and Mary all knew that usually when people die they are gone from us. But Jesus wanted to show his friends something very important: Jesus is so full of God's life that being near him means we come alive too. Jesus told them to open the tomb. Then he called into the tomb: "Lazarus! Come out!" And Lazarus came out - alive!

God gives us life. God heals us and helps us many times in many ways. Eventually we die, but Jesus really is the resurrection and the life, just like he told Martha. When we belong to Jesus, when we stay close to Jesus, we hear his promise that he will raise us up to live with God forever.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

From "The Three Whom Jesus Raised to Life," Augustine's sermon on the narratives of Jesus raising the dead daughter of the synagogue leader, the widow's son, and Lazarus: It may be that even now I am speaking to such folk as Lazarus, buried under the unyielding stone of habit and who are dead four days and stinking. Yet not even they must despair: they are dead, in the depths; but Christ is on high. He knows, by crying out with a loud voice, how to destroy these heavy loads; he know how, through himself, to raise the soul within to life, giving it to his disciples to loose... So let those who are living, live; and those who are dead, in whichever of these three deaths they find themselves, let them act at once, to rise here and now from the dead. - Augustine of Hippo [Augustine of Hippo, The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers, trans. and ed. M. F. Toal (Chicago: Regnery, 1963), IV: 119-120.]

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Next Week's Theme (April 1 & 2): Palm Sunday Weekend

Next Week's Scriptures (April 1 & 2):

Processional Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11
"Jesus enters Jerusalem."

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a
"The servant of the LORD submits to suffering."

Psalm: Psalm 31:9-16
"Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit." (Ps. 31:5)

Second Reading: Philippians 2:5-11
"Humbled to the point of death on a cross."

Gospel: Matthew 26:14 - - 27:66
"The passion of the Lord."