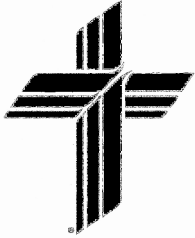


God's Family



• 10:00 a.m.—Sunday
Worship Service

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
150 W. Highway D
New Melle, MO 63365
(636)828-5616

Volume XXIV Issue 4
April 2023

A Visioning Exercise

How about this for a vision?

A group of folks, smiling, not the kinda smile you have to have in social settings. The sort of smile that you pick up in practice of trying to get here to there in the hustle and bustle of our American lifestyles. Not the sort of smile that comes naturally, that wells up from a deep source of something... let's call it Joy. Where can such a joy come from? It comes from faith, that receives grace from the hand of God the Father, in believing in His Son, by the power of the living water that moves within in us, the Holy Spirit. It is the sort of Joy that makes the word "joyful" make some sense. Because it is truly a full joy, that fills the people and overflows around it. The sort of Joy, that is infectious... that puts smiles on the faces of people around them. But it is also the sort of Joy that can handle the frowns. The sort of Joy that is at peace with the times, both good and bad. The sort of Joy that doesn't celebrate in the permanence of this thing, or that way, but rather is totally rooted in Jesus, and so always prepared to embrace what season is given it. The sort of Joy that looks at small things, like flowers in the field and is willing to give them each their due time. The sort of Joy, that enjoys each person, as such a flower. As a child of God. The sort of Joy that, through wisdom, seeks to

mentor, share, invite and freely give the cause for the Joy to others.

I'm sorry, I am getting caught up in the vision. How about the sort of joy that lingers after church for a while longer, sipping on coffee with genuine love and interest in this group we call our own body?

(enjoy a moment to breathe it in)

What about this vision?

A group of folks that is so overjoyed, so thankful for the gift of life they have been given, that they, like Peter jumping into the Galilee at the very sight of their Lord, couldn't wait to dive into the word, the wellspring, the grace of God! Notes being scribbled in church, with attentive, even inquisitive, faces processing, pondering, or even just basking in the rays of the Word of Jesus Christ as his mouth becomes the font of every blessing, and every joy. This would be a group of people that wouldn't, they couldn't, wait to swim deeper and deeper into the Word, through personal study and devotion, through proactive prioritizing of time for their own formal study and discipleship at the church, through the joyful fellowship of meeting with their fellow faithful in their own homes to share the Word of God with each other.

(continued on page 5)

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April Birthdays

4/3 – Zachary Chappell

4/12 – Jane Nadler

4/21—Abby Vossen

4/22 – Mark Fowler

4/26 – Wesley Williams

April Anniversaries

4/22 – Roger and Dianne Sudbrock – 46 years



April Services

4/2—Palm Sunday Service—10:00 a.m.— Communion

4/6—Maundy Thursday Service—6:00 p.m.— Communion

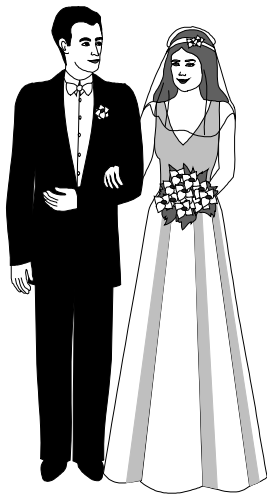
4/7—Good Friday Service—6:00 p.m.— No Communion

4/9—Easter Sunday Service—10:00 a.m.— Communion

4/16—Sunday Service—10:00 a.m.—Communion

4/23—Sunday Service—10:00 a.m.—Communion

4/30—Sunday Service—10:00 a.m.—Communion

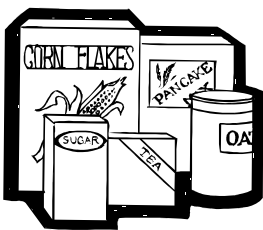


March Food Pantry Donations

Members of the congregation reported donating 36 food items and \$65.00 in cash to the New Melle Food Pantry during the month of March.

In the future, if you donate, please report this to Sherry in the office, so your donations can be included in our tally.

Meal-a-Month Needs for April



The **MEAL-A-MONTH ITEMS** for **April**: Cooking oil, sugar, fruit juice, Hamburger Helper, Tuna Helper, toilet paper, granola bars, and ranch salad dressing.

Please take your items directly to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in New Melle during their office hours. Call 636-398-5270 in advance to be sure there is someone present to accept your donation. Monetary donations should be made payable to “St. Vincent De Paul Society” (“Food Pantry” on the memo line). Monetary donations may be

hand-delivered to the church or be mailed to: Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, PO Box 100, New Melle, MO 63365.

Please report your donation to Sherry Brandes in the office for Voters Assembly and Ladies Aid records. You only need to report number of items (or boxes or bags) and dollar amount. No names will be attached to the donations; just a monthly tally of the number of food items and dollars donated will be recorded.

NOTE: Food Pantry hours are: The 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Please tell anyone who might benefit from this service!



We would love to connect with you and see how we can better serve you in our walk with Jesus. Please feel free to fill out a Connect Card, reach out to our office or Pastor Maxx.



Welcome Guests and Visitors to St. Paul's

St. Paul's wants to sincerely welcome you to our Church and Family! And wish you a Happy Easter! Jesus is Risen!

Whether just visiting, passing through, seeking, searching, or looking to settle in, we are so blessed to have you with us for worship this Sunday!

We'd Love To **CONNECT** With You!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

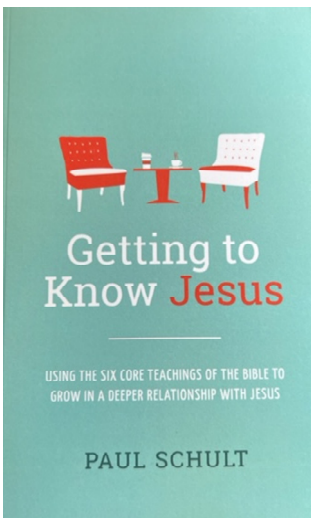
Would love to receive the monthly newsletter

Interested in coffee with Pastor Maxx



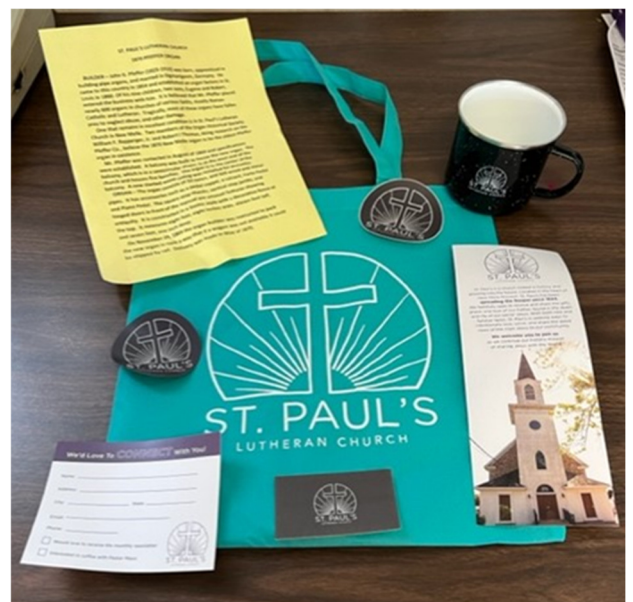
ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

If you haven't received one already, please receive a special gift bag from us to you from our welcome team before or after church.



Also, if you are new and interested in learning what we believe and teach here at St. Paul's, please take a our discipleship book, *Getting to Know Jesus*, as a free gift from us to you!

If you or someone you know is without a bible and would like one, please let us know and we will get you one at no charge. We want the free gift of Jesus to be shared! And we especially want to share it with you!



FireStarters



Are you interested in learning more about our Church? Our Faith? Our Lord Jesus?

Serious, curious, or just bored and looking for something exciting to do?

Come join us for FireStarters. FireStarters is an introduction to who we are as a family at St. Paul's and why we are on fire for Jesus and his mission!



FireStarters is held three times a year—
Summer, Fall & Winter.
Our Summer session dates are still to be determined, but feel free to inquire if you or someone you know is interested in hearing more about the Fire going on at St. Paul's Lutheran Church!



To get in touch with Pastor Fisher, you may contact him by phone in the church office (636-828-5616) or church email (stpaulnewmelle@hotmail.com).

You may also call his cell phone (812-216-5891) or contact him through his personal email (maxxjofish@gmail.com).

A Visioning Exercise *(continued from page 1)*

And yet, deep study, like deep diving, is not the only way to enjoy the water. The splash and play of fellowship as folks wade around in it, swim in it, and enjoy it together. Like the little kid that could sit in the kiddie pool shallows all day, splashing and laughing! What if lives and practices, day to day, were faithfulness embodied, living out faith, not just hearing it?

I'm sorry, I am doing it again. How about this, what if we really trusted Jesus to be our Lord, and couldn't wait to be with him and his body wherever that may be?

However, he might call it to look like. What if we couldn't keep our hands and feet inside the boat? *(Enjoy another moment of meditation on this thought... perhaps this time to some light elevator Jazz?)*

If the other visions didn't do it for you... what about this one?

What if there was a person whose life was up against the brink? Nothing in their circumstances was a cause for joy, just the opposite. It was hardship, suffering and pain. The burdens were weighing them down, including their lips into the sagging frown of someone who simply did not have the strength to lift it up again.

What if that same person didn't know about Jesus? They have heard of him, who hasn't. They even went to a church a few times back in the day with grandma... but they are unaware of who he REALLY is, and what he has ACTUALLY done... more so, what he is still doing.

What if... what IF... what Jesus was still doing, was happening in a special group? A group that was Joyful. A group that was faithful... a group that understood in a deep sort of way, the grace, the love, the mercy, and the newness of life that Jesus freely gives.

Envision this... what if that same group of people... found this person in their pain, their brokenness, their hopelessness, their lack, their need... and called them, "family"? Not just lip service, but the sort of family that lives life together. That shares burdens

and joys. That sacrifices and receives. That helps and is helped, that becomes one organism in symbiotic relationships that transcend blood and biology, that are enlivened and bound by the Holy Spirit himself.

Dang it... I did it again! One more try... what if there was a family, who used baptismal certificates instead of birth certificates, and not only cared for each other, but was eager for the newborn to come?!
(if you have a gong, break it out and enjoy a moment to meditate on this lovely image)

What if... and this might only be a vision... but what if all of this wasn't just a vision of the future, but was a mission for the present?

A joyful congregation, faithfully serving Christ, and welcoming our neighbors to the family.

Perhaps it's not too hard to imagine. Not too far off to envision. Perhaps memories are inspired by the imagery, the words, the meditations of the real life of the church as you touched it, tasted it, smelled it, heard it throughout your lives.

But perhaps, it is difficult to see how this past can be present, let alone future. Many of the how's have gone away, changed, and simply can't come back. But that is the difference between a memory and a vision... the memory informs from wisdom of the past, the vision takes the wisdom into the newness, the ambiguity of a new day.

A mission?

Well, it remembers well, and it delights in the beauty of visions. And most importantly, it sees itself as the one to execute new visions, to create more memories.

St. Paul's... humor me one last time. One more vision... close your eyes, steady your breathing, bang your gong, and turn up that sweet, sweet elevator jazz...

Imagine if this was our Mission.

Imagine us... Joyful, Faithful, Welcoming...Family. I can see it in my mind. And I like what I see.

Pastor Maxx

St. Paul's Worship Team Needs YOU

St. Paul's continues to grow, learn and increase its capacity for discipleship! One of our main focuses is, of course, our time together on Sunday mornings for worship.

From the welcome you receive when you arrive to the coffee you drink before you leave (trust me, we are working on the coffee thing!) we are being disciplined, and growing in faith in Jesus and love towards one another.

People often ask, "how can I help the church?"

But sometimes, the tasks needed to be filled on Sunday mornings seem too small, too easy, or too outside of what we want to do.

Know this, that there is nothing more important than our time in worship together. This is where Jesus comes to meet us, and where he gives us his gifts of grace, mercy, forgiveness and new life. We are fed, taught, and comforted all in this place, all together.

Consider being a part of our Worship Team. And if you are not ready for that step, consider the importance of "being" in a world concerned with "doing." Being with us on Sundays is a building up of the body by the Holy Spirit.

How you can serve on Sundays:

Welcoming—Greeting, handing out service bulletins, providing information to visitors & answering questions.



Sanctuary Preparation—flowers on and around the altar, numbers on the hymn boards, altar cloths appropriate for the day, refilling the eternity candle, & more.



AV & Tech Help & Service Live Streaming—making sure the equipment is up and running.

It is in service to our Lord that we help each other take care of our sanctuary by making it ready for worship and inviting for visitors. Please consider helping, if you are able.



Communion Set Up—filling the wine cups and wafer container. Cleaning the communion ware after the service.

Elders and Ushers—assisting Pastor with communion, guiding everyone to the communion table, and lighting and extinguishing candles before and after the service.



St. Paul's, we have been raising funds to provide the church in Kainhogoga with materials the need for their ministry. These materials include things we take for granted, such as bibles, hymnals, robes, and whatever the congregational leaders deem necessary to continue to raise up disciples and share the Gospel of Jesus to their community!



Our goal was \$750.00 and we have NEVER missed a fundraising goal since we began walking with Hearts & Hope for Uganda, including last year's fundraiser of \$1,500 to help them build a new nursery school.

We are happy to announce that we have, once again, surpassed our goal by raising \$1,100. Thank you, St. Paul's, for your continued generosity and love shown to our brothers and sisters in Christ in Uganda.

If you want to learn more about Hearts & Hope for Uganda, and our partnership with the Lutheran Church Uganda, please take some of the resources located in the back of the church. You can also visit their website: www.heartsandhope.org



The Kainhogoga Nursery Structure before and after they received funds to refurbish it last year. Pastor Fisher had the opportunity to teach those students in their much improved school.



Lenten Wednesday Service & St. Patrick's Day Fellowship



JUST FOR A BIT OF FUN: (pictured left to right) **First Row:** Scott & Pam Alexander, Mary & Terry Bethel, and Mason Jennings. **Second Row:** Jane Nadler, Evyn Humphrey, Sally Goth, Amy & Carson Jennings, Annie & Jeff Schneider, and Sherry Brandes (not pictured), joined Pastor Maxx for a time of fun and fellowship, green beverages and a big St. Patrick's Day decorated cookie.



Generations Sunday & Palm Sunday Bring People of All Ages Together



On Palm Sunday, the morning began with Sunday School in the church hall led by Sandy Schmidt and Becky Murphy. Reid, Zachary, Waylon, Rowan, and Carter learned about Easter week and made a palm branch by drawing around their own hands. They were joined by their parents Hannah and Amoret and grandmother Becky.

The children also participated in church by following Pastor Fisher in and waving real palm branches. They also joined him by the altar to hear his Children's Message.



Visioning Team Update

While we have given updates on the visioning team for quite some time, we wanted to share with you an inside look of the crew behind the collaboration, which has led our congregation to settle on some amazing values and direction for our future.

This group has worked with our coach and consultant from Leighton Ford Ministries since last spring. Almost of a year of effort, work, discussion, and prayer has been poured into this project.

This news article is a reflection of their efforts, built on feedback from the congregation and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

They have worked on:

Clarifying the roles of the leadership and governing bodies of the church, including the Board, the Elders, and the Pastor.

They have helped settled on five values that embody who we are as St. Paul's including: Belong, Care, Mentor, Generous, & Heritage.

And they have helped us settle on this working mission statement:

"A JOYFUL congregation, FAITHFULLY serving Christ, and welcoming our neighbors into the FAMILY."

The next steps will be to begin synthesizing our values and our mission into strategic priorities for us to begin focusing on.

We can't wait to share what we find with you, and work with the whole congregation on charting out our course for the next chapter of our Church's ministry and mission together!

Please pray for this group and be on the lookout for what our next steps together will require.

Upcoming Youth Activities at Immanuel—Wentzville

If there are any high schoolers in your family or your neighborhood, please share the information above and encourage them to get involved.

Deaconess Janie Fisher is the one with all the answers to your questions, so please contact her and help young people you know interact with other Christian teens.

HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS | 2023

APR 23 BREAKFAST AND BIBLE STUDY 9:30AM

YOUTH NIGHT IN THE GYM 6:30-7:30PM APR 30

MAY 21 BREAKFAST AND BIBLE STUDY 9:30AM

YOUTH NIGHT IN THE GYM 6:30-7:30PM MAY 28

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL JFISHER@ILSW.ORG



St. Paul's "Shines" at the New Melle Easter Egg Hunt



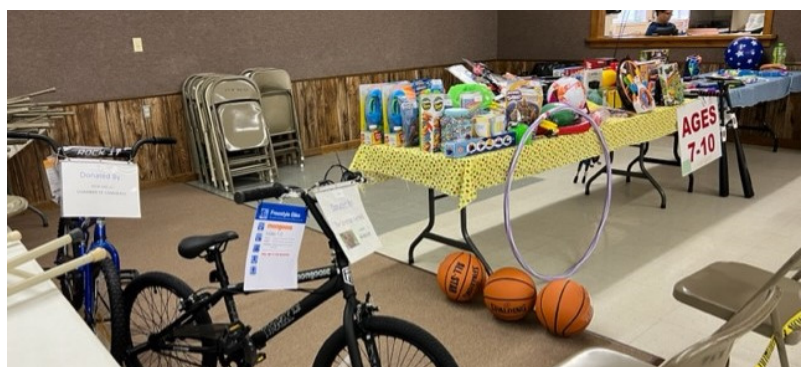
St. Paul's, once again, participated in the annual LCMS Shine Event by volunteering to help the Chamber of Commerce at their annual New Melle Easter Egg Hunt.

Work began on Friday morning, March 31, when our volunteers joined Chamber Member Dianne Sudbrock in packing 314 goodie bags for children attending the event on Saturday.

Bag Packers: Pam Alexander, Debbie Pohlmann, JoAnn Hammel, Missy Motz, Mary Bethel, Dianne Sudbrock, Sally Goth, and Sherry Brandes (not pictured).



Amy Jennings helps Maureen Blondin by making posters acknowledging those groups and businesses that contributed to the event in a variety of ways. (St. Paul's was on one of the posters, too.)



Pam Alexander and Sandy Schmidt did "double duty" on Saturday. They both worked at the registration booth outside and then came in to help distribute prizes to the kids.



St. Paul's Participants Saturday, April 1: Pam Alexander, Amoret Chappell, Sandy Schmidt, Debbie and Rick Pohlmann, Amy Jennings, Jeff Schneider, Pastor Fisher, Scott Armstrong, and Sherry Brandes.

Watching the smiles on kids' faces made the cold day worthwhile!

Directing Traffic in the Parking Lot:

Scott Alexander (below left) and Rick Pohlmann (below right) had the coldest and probably the toughest job of all, because the parking lot was filled, and the location was new to parents who had brought children in previous years.



Braving the Cold for Some Easter Fun: The parking lot was filled, the parents had their kids bundled up, and the hunt was quick because no one really wanted to stay out in the cold any longer than necessary.



Thank You Note from the New Melle Chamber of Commerce

Thanks for being someone we can depend on...We hope you know how important that is to us.

Thank you ALL for your help and support at our Easter Egg Hunt 2023. You were all so helpful and fun. You are so appreciated by this committee.

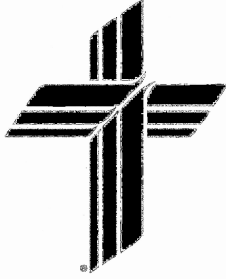
Amy Schneider
&
Maureen Blondin



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 70
New Melle, MO 63365

"A new command I give
you: Love one another."
John 13:34



St. Paul's Lutheran Church-
Missouri Synod



Oktoberfest Teaser

Dreaming of
lederhosen and
dirndls?
The smell of sausage
in the air?
It is never too soon
to think about
Oktoberfest!
And this year?
It will be the biggest
one yet!
This year, let's
make this New
Melle's Oktoberfest,
and give the gift of
fellowship and fun
to our community!



If you are interested in helping with this year's Oktoberfest, please contact the office and we will connect you to the project.



If you or your business would like to sponsor the Oktoberfest, please contact our office for more details.