

St. Paul Lutheran Church

The Church on the Highway

Loving others into the Love of Christ

February 2024 Edition

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Bible Class/Sunday School 9:15am



A Message From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Hesse

Email: pastorhesse@splcwaco.com

This is going to be an exciting month! We start the Lent season this month as Ash Wednesday is on St. Valentine's Day. This year during Lent, we are going to engage in a 40-Day challenge called the *"The Red Letter Challenge."* See more about the *Red Letter* Challenge on page 3 of this newsletter. Also, this month, we continue our "Saint Series" and of course this month the most popular saint is St. Valentine. Saint Valetine's Day is about a lot more than chocolates and flowers. If you recall, the day is properly referred to as Saint Valentine's Day. The following story is reprinted from Lutheran Hour Ministries.

The Story of St. Valentine

In 270 A.D., marriage had been outlawed by the emperor of Rome, Claudius II. Claudius issued this decree because he thought that married men made bad soldiers since they were reluctant to be torn away from their families in the case of war. Claudius had also outlawed Christianity in this time period because he wished to be praised as the one supreme god, the Emperor of Rome. Valentine was the bishop of Interamna during this period of



the bishop of Interamna during this period of oppression. Valentine thought that the decrees of Rome were wrong. He believed that people should be free to love God and to marry. Valentine invited the young couples of the area to come to him. When they came, Valentine secretly performed services of matrimony and united the couples.

Valentine was eventually caught and was brought before the emperor. The emperor saw that Valentine had conviction and drive that was unsurpassed among his men. Claudius tried and tried to persuade Valentine to leave Christianity, serve the Roman empire and the Roman gods. In exchange, Claudius would pardon him and make him one of his allies. St. Valentine held to his faith and did not renounce Christ. Because of this, the emperor sentenced him to a three-part execution. First, Valentine would be beaten, then stoned, and then finally, decapitated. Valentine died on February 14, 270 A.D.

While in prison, waiting for his sentence to be carried out, Valentine fell in love with the jailer's daughter, the blind Asterius. During the course of Valentine's prison stay, a miracle occurred and Asterius regained her sight. Valentine sent her a final farewell note. He signed his last note, "From Your Valentine." Even today, this message remains as the motto for many Valentine's Day celebrations.

According to church tradition, Valentine converted more than 40 members of prison guard and their families to Christianity. To this day he continues to be the patron saint of love, happy marriages, and young people. St. Valentine served the church faithfully, he stood up for the biblical picture of marriage and shared his faith in Jesus Christ. As you prepare for all the celebrations this month, remember that each of them can be a celebration of Christ's love for us.



A Message From Our Deaconess

Dcs. Suzanne Krahn

Email: dcskrahn@splcwaco.com

8 Natural Sleep Aids: What Works?

Many people occasionally have difficulty falling asleep, which is quite common. This can be helped or corrected by improving your sleep hygiene. For instance: limit naps to 30 minutes, exercise 10 minutes each day, avoid caffeine or other stimulants before bedtime, and don't eat heavy foods before bedtime.

To help you fall asleep you may wish to try over-the-counter (OTC) or home remedies. Nonprescription sleep aids are usually considered natural. They will enhance relaxation, ease anxiety, and promote sleep. Some remedies also promote improved digestion and pain relief. But getting enough sleep could be helped with changing your routine, diet, or habits. Always try non-medical, non-herbal options first.

Natural sleep aids are generally considered to be safer than OTC or prescription meds. The reason for this is fewer side effects. There is a worry about becoming dependent on the medication. This may happen and some may experience some withdrawal symptoms, when stopping usage. Short-term use usually doesn't lead to a dependence.

Herbs, used for natural sleep aids, are not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). So caution is advised when using Herbs and OTC remedies. Always consult your doctor or a Pharmacist before taking these aids for interaction with medications and medical conditions you may have:

- Chamomile gentle herb, calming effects, also aids in digestion, soothes and heals skin, relaxes muscles, and may relieve headaches. Don't take if allergic to ragweed or daisy family.
- Valérian herbal medicine from root of the plant. Can act as a sedative. Can interact with some medications. Valerian may be combined with hops, lemon balm, and other herbs. Also eases menstrual cramps, muscle and joint pain, depression, and headaches. May have a few side effects, like headaches, impaired thinking, upset stomach, dizziness, and irritability.
- Hops female flower of hops plant. May enhance quality of sleep, and also may lower cholesterol, relieve irritability, aid in digestion, have antibacterial properties.
- Melatonin hormone made from in the pineal gland. It controls your circadian rhythms. Helps you fall asleep faster and have a better quality of sleep. May also help relieve jet-lag, boost immunity, fight inflammation. Can cause wakefulness in the night, depression, grogginess, irritability, and stomach cramps.
- Passionflower plant containing calming effect chemicals. Helps with relaxation and sleepiness. Also may help relieve pain, anxiety, muscle spasms, inflammation, and symptoms of menopause. People with depression cannot take Passionflower.
- Lavender fragrant plant has a calming effect. May also help relieve pain, improve circulation, disinfect scalp and skin, ease abdominal discomfort, relieve headaches, and alleviate respiratory problems.
- Ginseng herb thought to promote sleep and improve immunity. Can also raise energy levels, fight stress, treat impotence, but may cause headaches, agitation, upset stomach, dizziness, heart problems, and menstrual problems.
- 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP) a derivative of tryptophan, an amino acid, used to increase serotonin levels. May help depression, anxiety, headaches, but can cause abdominal discomfort, heartburn, loss of appetite, gas or bloating.

With any of these products, if you have problems with them stop taking them and notify your doctor right away. To help treat your sleep problems, try to find the underlying cause. Be aware of what is triggering your sleep problems: stress, noise, discomfort, temperature of the room, and good air circulation.

May The Lord Bless and Keep You Always.

Written by Emily Cronkleton. Resource: https://www.healthline.com/health/healthy-sleep/natural-sleep-aids



SOUNDBOARD TRAINING: We will have a workshop to learn how to manage the audio system in the sanctuary on Sunday, February 18, 2024, immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. There will be a light lunch served in the Parish Hall prior to the workshop. **Please register in the church office (wecare@splcwaco.com), or on the church website by Feb. 11**, for meal planning. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

The Red Letter Challenge

Lent Begins on February 14! Our 40 day Discipleship journey will be introduced on Transfiguration Sunday on February 11. The purpose of Lent is to prepare our hearts for annual remembrance and celebration of Christ's work in the crucifixion and resurrection for our salvation.

This Lent season we will look to Jesus remembering what he has done or us. We will also look at ourselves. Lent is a time of self-examination and an opportunity to make positive Christ-centered changes in our lives. In other words, looking to Jesus the Red Letter Challenge exists to help us live as a more effective followers of Jesus.

For the 40 days of our journey together the Red Letter Challenge will introduce to us a better understanding of this discipleship; the daily process of living out our faith. The Red Letter Challenge employs 5 principles to help us: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving and Going.

By starting our Red Letter Challenge on February 11, we will complete the entire 40 day journey by Palm Sunday! With our journey into Holy Week, prayerfully, we will be more equipped than ever before to share our Easter joy and hope with others around us. Red Letter Challenge will be a whole congregation effort. This journey will encompass our Bible Classes, Sunday Worship Services and midweek services as well. While many of us give up something for Lent... this year instead of giving up something I hope you will add the opportunity to be engaged in the Words of Jesus (the red letters of your Bible).

Please be sure to pick up your Red Letter Challenge Book, which will be available by the time you read this! I look forward to sharing this journey with you as together we will be blessed by God for loving others into the love of Christ.

Lent, Holy Week & Easter Worship Schedule

Feb. 14 - Ash Wednesday Worship

11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m. (Holy Communion, both services; the monthly Senior Adults lunch will follow the 11:00 a.m. worship service.))

Feb. 21 - Lenten Wednesday Worship

11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m. **Feb. 28 - Lenten Wednesday Worship** 11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

March 6 - Lenten Wednesday Worship 11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

March 13 - Lenten Wednesday Worship

11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m. (Holy Communion at **11:00 a.m.** worship; the monthly Senior Adults lunch will follow the 11:00 a.m. worship service.) **No Confirmation Class this week, Spring Break**

March 20- Lenten Wednesday Worship 11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

March 24 - Community Easter Egg Hunt 9:15 a.m. - Easter Activity for ages Nursery thru 4th Grade, Easter Egg Hunt (by age group)

March 28 - Maundy Thursday Worship 11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

(Holy Communion, both services) March 29 - Good Friday Worship

11:00 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

March 31 - Easter Sunday Sunrise Worship, 6:30 a.m. (followed by Men's Club Easter Pancake Breakfast) Easter Worship, 8:00 a.m. Easter Worship, 10:30 a.m.

ST. PAUL SENIOR ADULTS will meet for their monthly fellowship luncheon following the **11:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday Worship Service, on Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2024.** Everyone is invited to join us for this time of fellowship! *Desserts are appreciated for the luncheon, but not necessary.* If you have any questions, please call the church office (254.799.3211).



Please Remember in Your Prayers:

- **†** We pray for continued healing for all those who have suffered physical problems in the last month, including: *(a complete list is available through the church office)*. We pray the Lord lay His healing hand upon them.
- **†** We pray for those on hospice care, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord provide her comfort and peace.
- **†** We pray for all who are undergoing cancer diagnosis/treatment, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- **†** We pray for all who struggle with ongoing health concerns, including: (*a complete list is available through the church office*). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- **†** We pray for all who are home-bound, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- **†** We pray for all those in nursing care or assisted/independent living facilities, including: *(a complete list is available through the church office)*. We pray the Lord will give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- ⁺ We pray for those who have lost loved ones in the last month; including: *(a complete list is available through the church office)*. May God grant peace and comfort to these families, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- + We pray for those serving in our Armed Forces (*a complete list is available through the church office*). We pray the Lord keep them safe in their stead as they defend our freedom and safety.

Please contact the church office if you, someone in your family, or a family friend is in need of prayer. Please keep the church office advised of the status of those you add to the prayer list, so that our list remains up-to-date. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 254.799.3211 or by email to: wecare@splcwaco.com.



Quilters Update 2023

2023 was very productive which allowed the quilters to give generously! The items completed were: 242 runners, 39 quilts, 31 walker bags, 45 bibs or clothing protectors, 7 breast cancer pillows, 45 baby quilts, 57 burp clothes, 25 baby blankets, 2 pillowcases, 3 hot pads, 4 phone bags, 15 hankies, 6 fidget blankets, 4 miscellaneous bags. Job well done. Thank you so much!!

We were able to gift the following items to those in need: 264 runners, 36 quilts, 9 walker bags, 55 bibs, 6 breast cancer pillows, 47 baby quilts, 46 burp clothes, 22 baby blankets, 2 pillowcases, 2 phone bags, 15 hankies, 2 fidget blankets and hot pads. Various items were given to church members, hospice patients, Veterans One Stop, family members, VA Waco, friends, baptisms, Camp Lone Star, Tri-Cities Ministries, fund raisers and CareNet.

Throughout the year we received many heartfelt thank you notes from families that received items; as well as monetary gifts, fabric, and toys. We are truly blessed to be a blessing!

The Quilters meet every Monday in the Parish Hall from 10:00 a.m. to around 3:00 p.m. to create, laugh, and share time together. They enjoy a time of devotion and a sack lunch together at noon every week; anyone is welcome to join in the fun! No sewing experience is required. If you have any questions, please contact the church office or see any of the quilters.



Those who are scheduled to Serve at SPLC February 2024

(Those serving are listed by initial and last name to protect their identity)

ACOLYTES:

- M Schmedthorst (8:00am) 2/4
- F Galler (10:30am)
- D Sterriker (8:00am) 2/11
- B Petrich (10:30am)
- R Tindle (7:30pm, Ash Wed.) K Gerik (8:00am) 2/14
- 2/18
- F Galler (10:30am)
- E Tindle (7:30pm, Lent) 2/21
- 2/25 M Schmedthorst (8:00am) P Hatfield (10:30am)
- 2/28 F Galler (7:30pm, Lent)

LAY READERS

- 2/4 M Borchardt (8:00am)
- M Wortman (10:30am) 2/11 B Dube (8:00am)
- D Bracciale (10:30am)
- J Lamar (8:00am) 2/18 D Galler (10:30am)
- 2/25 B Strickland (8:00am) K Shelton (10:30am)

ELDER OF THE MONTH:

E King

USHERS FOR WORSHIP

8am Worship: Group 5 10:30am Worship: Group 6 Feb. 14, Ash Wednesday: Group 7 Feb. 21, Lent Worship: Group 8 Feb. 28, Lent Worship: Group 9

SUNDAY MORNING GREETERS:

- C Borchardt (8:00am) 2/4 V Savage (10:30am)
- 2/11
- B Dube (8:00am) B Dube (10:30am)
- F & D Kubitza (8:00am) 2/18
- B Reinhardt (10:30am) 2/25 M Dutschmann (8:00am)
 - D Reinke (10:30am)

ALTAR FLOWERS:

- J & C Banta 2/4
- 2/11 K Owen/K Shelton
- 2/14 R & L Turnbough (Ash Wed.)
- 2/18 R & L Turnbough
- 2/25 S & M Leuschner
- OPEN (Lent) 2/28

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

- 2/4 B & K Kubitza (9:15am) M Lange (10:30am)
- 2/11 M Harcrow (9:15am) D & P Reinke (10:30am)
- M Harcrow (9:15am) 2/18 L Wolfe (10:30am)
- M & C Borchardt (9:15am) 2/25 C & K Wolske (10:30am)



SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION WORKSHOPS

Outreach Workshop Saturday, February 17, 2024 9:00 a.m.

Please join us for a lively workshop that presents timely, practical tools that can equip you to become an effective witness for Jesus. This workshop is based on original research from Barna and Lutheran Hour Ministries.

> Please RSVP online (<u>www.splcwaco.com</u>) by February 11, 2024, or contact the church office to sign-up. Lunch and all materials will be provided!

Please contact the church office with any questions.



In our Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting October 22, 2023, the Congregation and Board of Directors created a new ministry position and adopted the job description for The Director of Youth and Family Ministry in alignment with the goals of our strategic plan. Following this action, a motion was made from a member of the assembly to authorize the Board of Directors to begin the call process and formulate a call committee for the Director of Youth and Family Ministry position. The motion was approved. The Board of Directors elected a call committee at the November 14, 2023, meeting. According to the SPLC Constitution and Bylaws, the Call Committee shall consist of the following: The Chairman of the Congregation, three Elders, and eight members from the Congregation who are not, at present, a member of the Board of Directors. A complete list of the members of the call committee is available in the church office.

The first step in the call process is soliciting names. The Congregation can submit names to the call list until Sunday, February 11. For church members to submit a name to the call list they must provide the full name of the church worker and the congregation, or location they are currently serving. Names can be submitted to any member of the Call Committee, or the Church office. Following February 11, the Call Committee will meet, review the names submitted and send the names to the Texas District office.

Please keep the call committee, and the St. Paul family in your prayers during the call process. We will share updates about the calls process along the way, but if anyone has any questions please feel free to reach out to any member of the call committee.



The 2023 giving statements have been placed in the member mailboxes. (*Please note, we only track your donations via use of your provided offering envelopes or online giving; any loose checks or cash received in the offering plate are not entered.*)

If you have any questions, or there are any corrections to your statement needed, please contact the church office.

LWML @ SPLC

Valentine Blessings from LWML. 2024 brings new ideas, projects and passions for our growing LWML group. Of course our main goals remain mites and mission projects, but this February we would like to focus on our own St. Paul family needs. Specifically we would like to focus on our members and/or their loved ones battling cancer. We are so excited to be teaming up with the Children's Ministry to create Cancer Blessing Bags. The Children's Ministry will kick off this project with a special event for families on Feb. 25; and the LWML will begin their collection that day as well. These are the items we will be collecting for our Blessing Bags: bags of peppermints, dry mouth lozenges, lip balm, small packages of Kleenexes, puzzle books, fuzzy socks, nice lotions, adult coloring books and colored pencils. There will be a collection located beneath the LWML table in the foyer for donations. This will be an ongoing project that we feel will allow our entire congregation to show our love and support for our members battling cancer. Many thanks in advance for your generosity and we fervently pray for all our St. Paul members.



J Uptmore LWML President



If you have any questions, please contact the church office.



Grades 7-12 are invited to join us for a Super Sunday Hangout in the Youth Room on Sunday, February 11, 2024, immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship. Join us for snacks and fellowship!

Please scan the QR code below to RSVP by Feb. 7:



Questions? Contact, Vicar Rory Fry: Email: VicarFry@splcwaco.com PAGE 7

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Please join us for Sunday School and Bible Classes at 9:15 a.m.

Adult Bible Study (Albers Family Life Center)

Join us for "Questions on The Gospel of Matthew" as we read through the first book of the New Testament. Men's Bible Class (classroom behind the Parish Hall)

This class is studying, <u>The Messiah: Revealing Jesus in the Old Testament</u>. This Bible study works through all 39 books of the Old Testament and identifies crossovers between New Testament themes and ideas.

Ladies Bible Class (Conference Room)

This class is working through the study, *Promised Rest: Finding Peace in God' Promise*, by Michellle Diercks. As a Christian, you face the pressure and stressors of the world daily. You look for rest at every turn—rest from your job, family drama, personal struggles—but the only true rest can come from Christ. In this study you will find His promised rest by studying eight different names and characteristics of God.

Simply Loved, Nursery - Fourth Grade Students (classrooms)

Let's get back to the heart of what matters most! Simply help your kids love Jesus and each other. Every activity, song, and visual in Simply Loved is designed to help kids remember each lesson long after their children's ministry years. Simply Loved curriculum was created with the truth found in 1 John 4:7 in mind which says, 'Dear friend's, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.'

XP3, Fifth - Eighth Grade Students (classrooms)

One Priority... "Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-38 This curriculum has three relational motives: Move kids to LOVE GOD by inciting Wonder; Move kids to LOVE LIFE by provoking discovery; and Move kids to LOVE OTHERS by fueling passion. High School and College Students (Youth Room)

All high school and college students are invited to join in the Youth Room every Sunday for Bible Class! This will be a great time of study, building relationships, fellowship and fun! The class will be led by college students, Seth Randolph and Travis Elmore. If you have any questions, please see Pastor Hesse.

Other Bible Study Opportunities:

Dwell Youth Ministry

Dwell Youth Ministry will have an Epiphany Party on Sunday, January 7, 2024. We will meet in the Youth Room immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship for pizza and fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Vicar Fry (254.800.5999 or VicarFry@splcwaco.com).

College Student Evening Bible Study/Fellowship

This group meets on Monday evenings at 5:30 p.m. in the Rogers Engineering Building, room 207, at Baylor University. Please see Karen Shelton with any questions.

Ladies Bible Study Group in the Conference Room

This group meets in the Conference Room on the First and Third Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. They are studying, "CHOSEN: A Study of Esther." In this study, see that God's presence is ever-abundant in your life, and that God gives you the courage to live fearlessly as Esther did. Learn the historical context of the Book of Esther to enrich your understanding of God's Word.

Youth Confirmation/Catechesis Training and Music (grades 5-8)

These classes meet every Wednesday. Students in grades 6-8 meet in the Youth Room at 6:30 p.m. with Pastor Hesse, and students in 5th grade meet at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room with Deaconess Krahn. If you have any questions, please see Pastor Hesse.

There's a place for EVERYONE to be immersed in God's Word and fellowship with other Christians!

Children & Nouth Activities



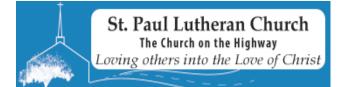
This month, the Children's Ministry will be teaming up with the St. Paul LWML to create Cancer Blessing Bags.

On Sunday, February 25, we will be making blankets during the Sunday School hour...**no sewing skills required**! All adults and children will meet in the Albers Family Life Center for this special project and a devotion by Pastor Hesse that morning. (Due to the nature of the project, no refreshments will be served other than the usual coffee.)

The LWML will also begin their collection for the Cancer Blessing bags on that Sunday (more details can be found on page 8 of this newsletter). This will be an ongoing project that we feel will allow our entire congregation to show our love and support for our members battling cancer.

Please join us in this endeavor as we fervently pray for all our St. Paul members.





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