



# THE CHURCH ON THE HIGHWAY

## *Where Life and Jesus Intersect*

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### St. Paul Lutheran Church

May 2020 Edition

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

TOPIC	Page
Pastor Krueger Article	1
Memorial Day	2
2020 VBS Information	
Mother's Day Activity	
Pastor Hardaway Article	3
Prayer Guide	4
2020 Graduates	5
Guatemala Update	
Thank You	
Count Up to Pentecost	Back Cover
Worship on the Web	



#### From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Larry Krueger

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##### Of First Importance

On Easter Sunday, I had included the following Scripture in that Sunday's announcement page and at the beginning of my verbal announcements prior to the live-stream service that morning:

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, ESV).

I really like this Scripture passage because it reminds us about what is of first importance in our lives ...Christ died for our sins...he was buried...he was raised. There is nothing more important than these truths to which we cling by faith in Christ. For as the Apostle Paul continued to expound in 1 Corinthians 15, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (1 Cor. 15:13–14, ESV).

He continued, "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:20–23, ESV).

So, why then is the message of Christ's death and resurrection of first importance? It is of first importance because it is at the center of our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. Because he has been raised from the dead, we know as followers of Jesus that our bodies, too, will be resurrected from the dead when Jesus comes again on the last day. We learn from other parts of Scripture that our resurrected bodies will be like Jesus' glorious body, imperishable, unlike the temporary perishable bodies our spirits currently occupy.

This message of first importance is foundational for every day of our lives. It was foundational before the COVID-19 pandemic, is foundational during the pandemic, and will be foundational after the pandemic. Our faith in our Lord, the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, is the one thing on which we can depend. As I write this article, no one is absolutely certain about when life will return to the normalcy of which we were accustomed before COVID-19, or if it will ever return to those norms.

At the end of the day, however, there is truly only one thing that matters, during and after this pandemic...that is our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. We can see past these present days and cling to the promise of absolutely better days ahead in an eternity with Jesus. Therefore, both now and always, we cling to our faith in Jesus...crucified...buried...raised and "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2, NIV84). He is of first importance!

Love God and love your neighbor,  
Pastor Krueger



**Sunday Worship**  
Streamed online at  
10:30 a.m. at  
[www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com)  
or the church  
[Facebook page](#).



We remember, O Lord, all those people throughout the years who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country, for liberty, for us. Whenever we breathe the air of freedom or claim the right to justice or enjoy the privilege of worship, fill us with gratitude for those who selflessly gave the last full measure of devotion — their very lives — for our benefit.

May these brave men and women now know the joy of eternity and your presence. And may the families of the fallen receive comfort and peace amid their grief. Help us as we minister to their needs. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



### **2020 AT HOME VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:**

In place of a traditional Vacation Bible School this summer, St. Paul Lutheran Church will be sponsoring a 2020 AT HOME VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL. Please visit the church Web site ([www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com)) for more details.

***Anyone interested in receiving VBS materials for your household should order these by May 1, 2020, by completing the online order form on the church Web site.***

**HAPPY  
Mother's Day**  
*May 10, 2020*

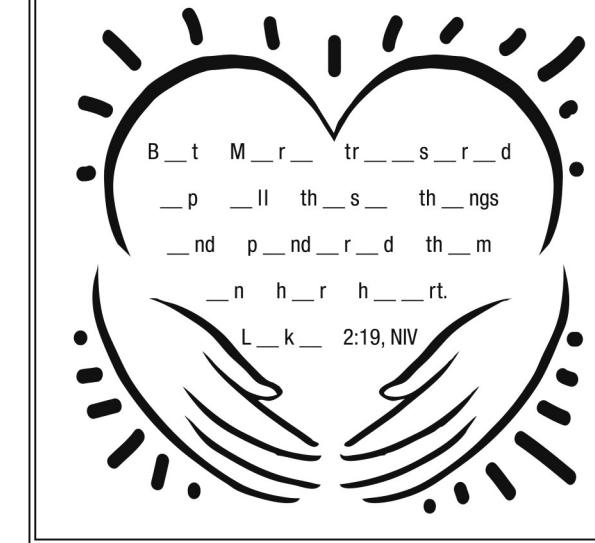


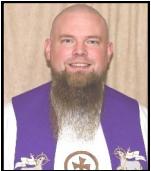
*A mother's love*

At age 12, Jesus was left behind in Jerusalem. His parents later found him in the temple, discussing Scripture. What did Mary, Jesus' mother, think about this?

*Directions: Fill in the blanks with the correct vowels to complete the Bible verse.*

**A E I O U Y**





## A Message From Our Associate Pastor

Rev. Matthew Hardaway

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### Jesus in the Psalms - Psalm 21

<sup>1</sup>How the king rejoices in your strength, O Lord! He shouts with joy because you give him victory. <sup>2</sup>For you have given him his heart's desire; you have withheld nothing he requested. *Selah* <sup>3</sup>You welcomed him back with success and prosperity. You placed a crown of finest gold on his head. <sup>4</sup>He asked you to preserve his life, and you granted his request. The days of his life stretch on forever. <sup>5</sup>Your victory brings him great honor, and you have clothed him with splendor and majesty. <sup>6</sup>You have endowed him with eternal blessings and given him the joy of your presence. <sup>7</sup>For the king trusts in the Lord. The unfailing love of the Most High will keep him from stumbling. <sup>8</sup>You will capture all your enemies. Your strong right hand will seize all who hate you. <sup>9</sup>You will throw them in a flaming furnace when you appear. The Lord will consume them in his anger; fire will devour them. <sup>10</sup>You will wipe their children from the face of the earth; they will never have descendants. <sup>11</sup>Although they plot against you, their evil schemes will never succeed. <sup>12</sup>For they will turn and run when they see your arrows aimed at them. <sup>13</sup>Rise up, O Lord, in all your power. With music and singing we celebrate your mighty acts.

At first read this Psalm doesn't exactly look like one you and I can glean much guidance. We are not kings, nor do we live in an earthly kingdom. One could perhaps try to say that whoever holds the office of President of The United States of America could take the place of the king in this psalm, but I would very quickly warn against doing that. "Why?" you ask?

There are many different types of psalms, and this is one where the context of the psalm is so distinctly different from our current context that we cannot make direct, easy correlations to our current life.

For much of Israel's history they lived under a theocracy, that is, their faith and scriptures governed all aspects of life, from house and home and church to the government. Their "constitution" was the first five books of the Bible instead of a separate document like what we are accustomed.

This brings me to what may be the elephant in the room, Psalm 21:10, "You will wipe their children from the face of the earth; they will never have descendants." This type of language always makes me feel just a bit uncomfortable. What does it mean? Why does the psalmist say that about God? Why would God want that?

This goes back to the "constitution" part of the Bible for Israel. Deuteronomy 20:16-18 reads, <sup>16</sup>But in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, <sup>17</sup>but you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded, <sup>18</sup>that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God."

God wanted that because in His divine will and plan those people groups mentioned were enemies to Him, and their consequence was death. Israel did not exactly do what God wanted the first time they went into the promised land by not destroying them all like God instructed. Now, hundreds of years later, they are still enemies to God and His people. The psalmist proclaims that they are too much for Israel, but God will keep His word and His plan.

So what does all this mean for us today? In short, we have many problems that are bigger than us. Yes, there is the Sunday school answer of our sinfulness which Jesus takes care of on the cross and through forgiveness. We also have enemies that come to us in this life due to original sin that are bigger than us.

No matter what the problem is, we know we can pray to God to take care of our problems. Jesus teaches us this in the Lord's Prayer - "Thy Kingdom come - Thy will be done - Give us our daily bread - Forgive us our sins - Help us forgive others - Lead us not into temptation - Deliver us from evil."

Day by day as we are surrounded by sin and our enemies, no matter what they are, we have a Risen Savior who is hearing our prayer and defending us!



**"The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;  
He delivers them from all their troubles." Psalm 34:17**

## *Lord, Hear Our 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 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, in nursing care or assisted living facilities, 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 those who have lost loved ones in the last month; including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort in their time of sorrow.
- † We pray for all nations as the battle to combat Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues. We pray for world leaders, healthcare workers, public service workers, and all those who have been affected by this disease. We pray for healing, patience, and calmness during this time of uncertainty.
- † 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.
- † We pray for those serving in the mission field ... may God continue to bless and keep them safe as they minister to the world as an extended outreach of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Waco, Texas.

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](mailto:wecare@splcwaco.com).

*How can we Pray for you?*



# CLASS OF 2020

## Attention all 2020 St. Paul Graduates!

We realize this school year has been very different and challenging for everyone, but especially so for our 2020 graduates. We want to celebrate YOU, and give you a chance to brag about all of your accomplishments during your education!

Please submit your graduate information by May 15 (school of graduation; degree received; future plans; list of clubs, groups, sports participated; and any special awards, scholarships, or accolades received). This information will be published in the **JUNE 2020** Newsletter. Please be sure to have all information delivered to the church office no later than Monday, May 15, 2020.

If you have any questions please contact the church office at [wecare@splcwaco.com](mailto:wecare@splcwaco.com).

### Guatemala Mission Trip Brief Update:

The spring trip is definitely cancelled. The summer trip is “on hold” and will likely not take place. Please continue to pray for the mission and people in Guatemala; and that the villages of Oasis and New Hope remain free of the Coronavirus.



**Guatemala**  
for Christ

# Thank You!



- † Tim & Lana Harrington extend their thanks to the St. Paul family for their prayers, calls, cards, and support during his cancer radiation treatment. He has officially ‘rung the bell’ and completed his treatment! What a tremendous blessing to part of the St. Paul family!
- † Henry Randolph and family extend their heart-felt thanks to the St. Paul family for their outpouring of love through calls, cards, prayers, visits, food and support during Helen’s extended illness and following her recent death. We are so blessed to be loved so well by our church family!
- † Shirley Kuretsch and family extend their thanks to the St. Paul family for their expressions of care and love following Willard’s recent death. We are blessed to be part of the St. Paul family!



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May 2020 Edition

We're on the Web:  
[www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com)



Find us on:  
**facebook**<sup>®</sup>

Search for [StPaulWaco](#) and like our page.



During this time of "Shelter in Place," we will continue our Facebook ([StPaulWaco](#)) devotion videos Monday thru Friday, now focusing on Count Up to Pentecost, which is May 31! We invite you to join us and share the posts with friends and family.



Live-stream Worship on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.  
at [www.splcwaco.com](http://www.splcwaco.com) or on Facebook ([StPaulWaco](#)).

(Archived copies of Sunday morning worship are available on the web site.)