



St. Paul's Epistle ~

April 2021

Church Council Minutes— March 4, 2021

Those in attendance: Pastor Quast, Richard Christie, Leonard Morrison, Kyle Morrison, Ken Leerssen, Leanna Hasbargen and Sally Batdorf

Chairman Richard Christie called the meeting to order. The opening devotion was given by Pastor Quast on the topic: "The new political hotbox: Euthanasia".

The minutes and treasurer's reports were reviewed and approved.

Briefs: 1) Communion practices were discussed and will be kept as is. 2) There will be no in person worship services on March 21 and 28th. Facebook live and pre-recorded services will be available. 3) The review of the treasurers books was completed. Thanks to George and Richard for doing the review. 4) Lutheran World Relief Hygiene Kit collection will be ongoing through Lent. 5) The LCMS Convention Referendum passed by more than 90% in favor of moving the National Convention to 2023 instead of 2022. 6) The Congregations of the MN North District exceeded their yearly commitments to the District by over \$17,000.00 in 2020. 7) Leanna Hasbargen will be attending the 2021 LWML Convention in Kentucky in June. There will be donation boxes out to collect items for Assurance For Life Ministry, MOST Ministries, and seminary food banks. She will deliver the items to the convention.

Membership changes: Removed by death: Gary Hart, passed away on January 31, 2021, service on February 6, 2021 at St. Paul's.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted by ~ Sally Batdorf, Secretary

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE:

March 28: NO In person worship. Service available online.

Maundy Thursday, April 1: 5 p.m. IN PERSON WORSHIP

Good Friday, April 2: NO In person worship. Service available online.

Easter Sunday: 11 a.m. IN PERSON WORSHIP

PLEASE NOTE: Services are subject to change according to health guidelines in Ontario, so please check the churches website at www.stpaulifalls.com or call the church at 283-8642. Updates will be available on the answering machine if no one is in the office.





Church Garage Sale!

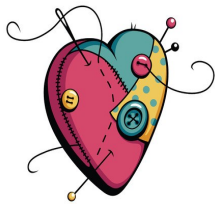
Once again we are holding a Church Garage Sale in our parsonage garage! The dates for the sale are May 14 and 15th. LOTS of help will be needed to make this a SUCCESS! All of our profits will be going toward repairing our church roof.

Starting Sunday, April 11th, the parsonage will be open before and after our 11 a.m. worship service for drop off of goods for the sale. **NO SHOES OR CLOTHES, PLEASE!**

We'll be having the trustee's (or anyone else with strong arms and backs!) to get tables and shelves ready in the garage and then we'll need helpers for organizing and pricing the items the week before the sale. Sign up lists will be available on the church bulletin board for you to sign up for help with organizing and pricing goods, manning the cash box during sale hours and/or making bars and cookies that will be sold at the sale.

If you have items that you need transported to the church, please call the church office and transportation will be arranged.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call the church office at 283-8642 during office hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.



QUILTING

Our quilting group is meeting again on Saturday, April 10 at 10 a.m. NO sewing experience is necessary. We will also be packing sewing kits and quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

April Birthdays

A very happy birthday is wished to these members celebrating their special day!

1st: Amalia Swenson

20th: Lois Averill & Rachel Hasser

4th: Judy Germain

22nd: Sally Batdorf

6th: Sadie Morrison

24th: Martha Buchholz

7th: Lisa Bacon

27th: Jim Moorhead

8th: Ashley Hasbargen & Doug Lite

29th: Byron Blake

13th: Lisa Averill

30th: RaNae Whitbeck



Gifts from the Heart

The 2021 LWML Convention is being held in Lexington, Kentucky in June and they are requesting donations for 3 different ministries: 1. Assurance for Life Ministry provides free medical service, counseling and support to individuals facing unplanned and often crisis pregnancies. They are asking for baby items such as soap, shampoo, burp cloths, wipes, disposable diapers (size 3), baby toys & books.

2. Food Bank Support for our two Seminaries. Gifts cards to stores like Target and Walmart in denominations of \$10, \$20 and \$25 are most appreciated.

3. MOST Ministries is asking for donations of used eyeglasses.

Leanna Hasbargen will be attending the convention and will deliver the items. Deadline for donations is June 10th.



Come, Lord Jesus— by Gene Edward Veith



When I became a Lutheran, one of the few things about my new church that I did not love was the Common Table Prayer that everyone in my congregation would say before meals: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, And let these gifts to us be blest.

This struck me as a children's prayer, like "God is great, God is good" and "Now I lay me down to sleep." Nothing wrong with them, but they sound like singsong nursery rhymes. I much preferred the catechism's table prayer with its strong Biblical core from Psalm 145:15–16: "The eyes of all look to you, O Lord."

But little did I know the depth of the Common Table Prayer and why Lutherans love it. This prayer also has a strong Biblical core: "Come, Lord Jesus" is the last prayer in the Bible (Rev. 22:20). Moreover, it is pretty much the last word of the Bible, appearing next to the last verse of Revelation, just before the closing benediction and the final "Amen." Scripture ends with a prayer for Jesus to return. The church prays for His return until that happens. But it is also a prayer for Jesus to come in the Gospel. A few verses earlier, the Book of Revelation reveals this to be the word of the Holy Spirit, the word of the church as the Bride of Christ, the word of those who hear this Word of God — namely, us — and also the one "who is thirsty" and in need of grace: The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price. (Rev. 22:17)

The Common Table Prayer asks Jesus to come into a humble context, the family gathered together for a meal. "Be our guest." Join us. We welcome You into our home and to our table. God gives us this day our daily bread by means of farmers and bakers, but also through the "bread winners" and the hands that prepared our meal. Thus, God is present when we sit around the table with our family to enjoy a good meal. The 19th-century German artist, Fritz von Uhde, a devout Lutheran, made a painting of this prayer. It shows an ordinary peasant family sitting around a table and then Jesus walks in. They stand to greet Him, with bows and shy looks, as they would with any guest. Jesus, the Lord of the universe, has come to this humble family to be with them.

When we call upon the name of Jesus, as we do in this prayer, He is present with us. "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" (Matt. 18:20). The prayer also acknowledges that our food and sustenance are "gifts." We receive "everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body," in the words of the Small Catechism, from the hands of our gracious God (SC, Lord's Prayer). The concept of "gift" is important for Lutheranism. Our salvation is not a matter of "wages," of getting compensated for our work (Rom. 4:4). Indeed, our work has merely earned us death: "For the wages of sin is death," says St. Paul, "but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). Salvation is not our doing, but the gift of God's grace. "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). What is true in God's spiritual kingdom is also true in God's earthly kingdom. Our life is His gift. Our vocations in the home, the workplace, the society and the church are His gift. Thus, our spouse, our children and the other members of our family are His gifts. And the food that we are about to eat, after we pray, is His gift. We pray that God will bless these gifts. And that He will bless them "to us." They will be for our good. This prayer helps us reflect on Christ's presence and God's gifts even in something as ordinary as eating a meal. We now say it in our home, too.

Greetings, People Loved by God, in the name of our Crucified and Risen Saviour, Jesus!

Alleluia! Christ the Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Our hearts swell with joy as remember the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead. He has conquered death and all our evil foes. This past Lenten season we examined the Ten Commandments of our God and noted how they all apply to us as Christians each day of our lives. Our midweek Services were available online only, and may still be viewed at the Revjquast YouTube channel and the St. Paul Lutheran Church/The Church of the Lutheran Hour Facebook Group. Please feel free to watch these sermons/services again – especially if you may have missed one – and share them with your friends and family too! We know that our risen Savior has fulfilled ALL of God's commandments perfectly for us. And that by His death and resurrection, the path to heaven is open and free to all who believe. What joy!

Thanks be to God that in-person worship services have resumed on Sunday mornings, following the Ontario provincial lockdown that began around Christmas and lasted until February 16. This meant that we were actually able to hold an in-person service for Ash Wednesday on February 17. We continue to be blessed by God with the opportunity to hear His Word and receive His Sacraments. To all those who are unable to come to the in-person church services on Sunday mornings, please remember that you may meet with me at the church another time during the week to receive the Sacrament. Please contact me to set up an appointment.

Last year, we were unable to have in-person church services for Easter, due to the pandemic. Thanks be to God that we will be able to meet for Easter services this year, beginning on April 4 (still no breakfast, but hopefully next year!). Please join me in praying that all our churches may remain open and available for people to receive God's gifts and blessings.

Indeed, March marked the one year anniversary of Covid-19 and its drastic effect on our country. We have persevered through various lockdowns and "new" ways of living our lives. This has certainly taken some getting used to. While vaccines are becoming more widely available, it looks as though some of the changes that have come may yet remain for some time. In terms of the vaccine, some of them, such as the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, do not use aborted fetus cell lines in their development. Unfortunately, this is not the case for the Astrazeneca or Johnson & Johnson vaccines, which raises moral and ethical questions for Christians. Please see the Charlotte Lozier Institute website for more information on this issue at lozierinstitute.org/

Thanks be to God that He continues to provide for us in every time of need. Indeed, we have been greatly blessed by regular financial support from our members over this past year. I encourage you to continue to present your offerings of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord!

Remember that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). Though we often do not see or understand all that the Lord is accomplishing during these difficult times, yet we are called to trust in Him and His mercy for us in Jesus. It is my hope and prayer that each of you finds time this Eastertide to rejoice in the good gift of God who has worked your salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Yes, it has been a tough year. Yes, there are rough times ahead. Yet we can face them with confident joy, trusting in our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, "He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

Please contact me should you have any questions or concerns about anything. God's peace and blessings be with you now and always. Alleluia! Christ the Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Yours In Christ,
Rev. J. Quast
Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, International Falls, Minnesota
Pastor, The Church of the Lutheran Hour, Fort Frances, Ontario

