



## How Will You Prepare Your Heart for Easter?

Even though it seems like Advent just concluded, Lent is fast approaching! The beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is on February 14. That marks the beginning of 40 days of prayer as we contemplate the foundations of our faith.

It is important to approach the season of Lent intentionally and carefully. Spend time preparing your heart for Easter so you can make the most of this holy season. Here are a few ways you can prepare your heart during Lent . . .

- **Prayer** - Spend time in extra prayer as we approach Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time when we clear out the distractions in our lives and reorder the things that are keeping us from God. It is also a good time to meditate on how God sacrificed His only Son to secure our salvation.
- **Silence** - Spend some time in silence as Lent approaches. There is so much noise in our modern world, from social media, entertainment, constant news, and more. Turn off the radio or go for a walk without your phone and listen for the voice of God.
- **Study** - Spend time in God's Word to help you get closer to God. This might be adding a daily devotion or just reading Scripture for 10 minutes a day. Be sure your new routine is manageable so that you can do it consistently throughout Lent.
- **Worship/Pray Together** - Please consider participating in one or more of these events :  
**Ash Wednesday** - February 14 @ 7pm  
**Wednesday Evening Lenten Services** - February 21 - March 20 @ 7pm  
**Prayer and Care Call** - Tuesdays @ 1:30pm on Turbobridge - 314-627-6338 / 63141#  
**Pray with the Elders** - February 24 @ 9am

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## FROM PASTOR MARC'S DESK

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13*

**Praise be to the God of Hope!** - The God of hope has looked on His people here at St Paul's with love and grace. The God of hope has done so for my family and I also. Andrea and I have been praying and seeking what was next for us and for me as a shepherd. We trusted in God and He has provided. The God of hope has been faithful to all of us! I am humbled to have been installed as Lead Pastor on December 3rd. I would like to thank Marco Van Raalten and the search committee. God was involved through the search process and that was evident. Thank you also to Pastor Terry Schoenfeld for his counsel and pastoral encouragement. Thank you, St. Paul's church, elders, and deacons, for welcoming me and my family. I am grateful for Todd Brooks and the EFCA central district for their ongoing support. Join me as I praise and thank the God of hope for His grace and faithfulness.

**Hope when we are hopeless** - My first sermon series was an Advent sermon series on Hope. As I was studying God's word, I was struck by how God's message of hope was when God's people were faced with hopeless situations. This is how God works. As I have talked with many of you, I have learned that St. Paul's has been through a season of hopelessness. God's word has shown us that with God all things are possible. Abraham kept hoping when there was no reason to hope (Romans 4:18). The angel Gabriel told Mary when she was a virgin that she would give birth to Jesus. The angel said, "Nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). While we were sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). Our God is gracious. His hand has provided even though we do not deserve it. So, we humble ourselves before him and God fills us with joy and peace. We then will abound in hope. God has brought St. Paul's through a difficult season and has filled our church with hope that will overflow. What does this mean? We will continue to hope for what's next expecting God to work through us. This is not hope in our strength but through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Great Commission and Great Commandment** - St. Paul's leadership desires to be a Great Commission and Great Commandment church. This is our AIM (Abide, In pursuit, Mission). We abide in the Vine because we know apart from Him, we can do nothing (John 15:4). We cannot play our part in God's mission without the God of the mission. We will abide in the whole counsel of God's word and in prayer both individually and corporately. We are in pursuit together to love one another. We know we have "passed from death to life" by how we love one another (1 John 3:14). So let us love one another on Sundays and throughout the week. Our mission is to make disciples of all nations, and we do this by showing and sharing the love of Jesus. We will look for ways to continue to participate in God's mission of love toward our neighbors, city and the world.

**Connecting People in Community** - How are we connecting people to community? This could be people who have never been a part of St. Paul's or people who have been disconnected recently from our church. Let us pray and be intentional with how God will use us to connect people to our church community. This could be inviting people to an event like the Sausage Supper or to JAM (Jesus and Me) Wednesday night kids' program. This could be inviting people to church on Sunday morning or inviting them to your bible study. Let us be intentional with how we are sharing the love of Jesus with those who need community and love.

**God's call is a gift** - I want to finish and say it is a gift of God's grace to be called to be your shepherd at St. Paul's Evangelical Free Church. I am here to be a shepherd and to live life with you all. It is a gift for Andrea, Joelle and Margot as well. My family looks forward to building relationships with our church family. Let us follow Jesus together humbly and at the right time He will lift us up (1 Peter 5:6).

Respectfully submitted,  
Marc Castro, Lead Pastor



## ELDER & DEACON NEWS

Some highlights from the January meeting of the Elder Board:

**The Elders approved the 2024 Proposal Budget** as presented by the Deacons. A motion was made, and passed, allowing John Graeler to continue as Church Treasurer in 2024.

**Children and Family Ministries** - Lisa Stahlhut attended the meeting and presented updates on Children & Family Ministries. Wednesday night children's events will begin again in February and VBS will be offered in the summer. (See the article on page 5 for more details.)

**Sunday Morning Technical Problems** - Proposals are being sought to try and resolve the current issues with Sunday morning streaming of our worship services.

**Ash Wednesday and Lenten services** are being planned.

**Elder Board officers** for 2024 are Bob Schalk, Chair; Carter Maier, Vice-Chair; Frank Serdy, Secretary.

**Elder Board members** - A big thank-you to David Brewer and Barbara van Dyk for their service as they leave the board. Elder Board candidates to be voted on at the Congregational Meeting on January 28 are Frank Serdy, David Pollmann, and Donna Triebe.

## GATEWAY METRO / MARCO VAN RAALTEN



Join Marco on February 15 at 11 a.m. for a bus tour around the city of St. Louis to see what God is doing in our area. On this tour you will see examples of how God has been using Marco to provide St. Louis the foundations on which to join together for the good of the city and how we can help and love our neighbors.

We will leave from St. Paul's and tour some of the exciting work being done in Dutchtown, the central city corridor, North St. Louis near Fairgrounds Park, and Baden. Along the way we'll drive by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) facility and get an update on its status. The cost of this 4-hour tour is \$50, which will include lunch. Please call the office to register for this fun and informative event.

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

### Women's Fellowship -

We will be hosting a Women's Fellowship Pot Bless Luncheon and Valentine's Celebration on Wednesday, February 14 at 11:30 a.m.

All members are encouraged to bring a guest, and all ladies of the church are invited to be our guests! Women's Fellowship members are asked to bring a pot-luck dish to share. Hope to see you there!



### YarnWorks -

After a short break, the women of YarnWorks will be meeting on Thursday, February 8, 1-3 pm, at the home of Sieglinde Schnellbacher, 2619 White Manor Court, St. Louis MO 63114. We work on prayer shawls plus other items to donate to those in need. We'd love to have you join us for this creative afternoon of fellowship and refreshments. Remember...if you are new to knitting or crocheting, we'd love to help you learn. If you have questions or are interested but can't make it on a Thursday afternoon, please contact Sieglinde at 314-210-0065.

## HELPING HANDS MINISTRY



The Helping Hands ministry is off to a great start! We were able to help 4 people with various chores in January. Praise the Lord! We currently have 6 men on our team, but we could use more volunteers. Even if you may feel that you're not "handy", our seniors can use help with all kinds of projects. This could be an opportunity to learn some new skills while working alongside those with expertise. We would also like to encourage women to volunteer. There are plenty of opportunities to help others at St. Paul's.

As a reminder, Helping Hands is a ministry that can take on home maintenance tasks and odd jobs to support those in the congregation who are unable to do so themselves due to age, medical condition, or lack of skills.

Please contact David Pollmann @ 314-517-4848 if you need to have some team members come out to help. You can also contact him if you would like to be part of the team.



## CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY



Starting  
February 7  
@ 5:30

St. Paul's Children and Family Ministries is launching a new Wednesday children's program called JAM - Jesus and Me. Children, ages 3 - 11, and their families are invited for a light supper followed by activities, crafts, and Bible stories. We hope you'll consider joining us and invite your friends for this evening of fun and fellowship.

If you want more information or are interested in volunteering please contact Lisa Stahlhut at [lisa\\_stahlhut@yahoo.com](mailto:lisa_stahlhut@yahoo.com).

## YOUTH MINISTRY

Please consider supporting the youth by attending the Sausage Supper on February 4. The proceeds will help fund a work camp this June in Ohio. This is a week-long camp where they will work together and grow in Christ.



**SAUSAGE SUPPER**

**FEBRUARY 4, 2024**  
**12:30 - 6 PM**

Join us for fresh sausage,  
homemade mashed potatoes,  
sauerkraut, green beans,  
and dessert.

**\$12 per plate in advance,  
\$13 at the door**

**Kids 11 and under dine-in free!**

**Carry-outs Available**

**All proceeds to benefit  
St. Paul's Youth program**

## MISSIONS NEWS

### Nick & Erica Dettman, Cru

Our supported missionaries, the Dettman's, are currently home from the field on a required sabbatical. During this period, Nick is working for Cru on their website, EveryStudent.com. The Missions Team encourages everyone to check out this site. While it is focused on young adults, you will want to share the site with your children and grandchildren; there's rich content that could be enjoyed by all.

Here's some background information from the site:

EveryStudent.com is a safe place to explore questions about who God is and what it might be like to know God. There are no product sales and no ads. You can sign up for the free email series and your email address will never be shared. They also give you an opportunity to email a question. You will receive a thoughtful reply from a real person. Every article and video is described in an honest way, helping you spend time on what personally interests you.

EveryStudent.com provides well-researched answers to questions that many people have about God and the value of a relationship with God. It contains content from many authors, including those who hold PhDs in their fields of study. Some of the questions addressed on EveryStudent.com are:

- How can you prove that God exists?
- What is God like?
- What about all the religions in the world?
- How can you have peace in this chaotic world?
- Why is life so hard?
- How to experience real love in relationships?
- Does God answer prayer?
- Where is God in the midst of tragedy?
- What is it like to know God?
- How can you begin a relationship with God?



EveryStudent.com began in the year 2000 and has grown to over 45 language versions. The site is visited by more than 100,000 people each day. Hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world have begun a relationship with God through this site.

EveryStudent.com was started by and continues to be directed by a former atheist who is with a nonprofit Christian organization named Cru. Cru is an interdenominational organization partnering with many Christian church denominations and Christian organizations throughout the world. Its goal is to help many people know Jesus Christ in a personal way.

Please pray for Nick and Erica during this season of rest and renewal. We know they are anxious to get back into the field, but God is using them in mighty ways to reach the lost through OneStudent.com and other support they are providing to Cru.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to the volunteers from Helping Hands for helping me with a minor home repair in January. I'm very grateful for this new ministry.

-Betty Lang



## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

### Anniversaries

2/11 Jeffrey & Rena Pfeiffer (29 yrs.)

### Birthdays

2/01 Arthur Pasteris  
2/02 Jorge del Cid  
2/02 Margaret Robinson  
2/06 Maureen Kozlowski  
2/06 Carolyn Maclean  
2/11 Levi Bensing  
2/12 Betty Lang  
2/13 Elizabeth Thomas

2/14 Robert Schnellbacher  
2/18 Fernando del Cid  
2/18 Edith Niedringhaus  
2/19 Jeffrey Pfeiffer  
2/19 Calvin Wong  
2/20 Joyce Sabine  
2/21 Brian Thomas  
2/22 Jeff Drake

2/22 Janet Graeler  
2/22 Lynn May  
2/23 Mark Swanson  
2/24 Joyce Lindstrom  
2/24 Gregg Peter  
2/25 Eric Thias  
2/27 Edith Skaggs  
2/28 Carol Wipke

### NEW ADDRESS

Ben and April Gemignani  
9502 E. Orange Grove St.  
Florence, AZ 85132

### MEMORIALS

**John Daniel Nickel Jr.**, October 15, 1925 - January 15, 2024 Dan, age 98, was the beloved husband of the late Dorothy Dee Nickel, son of the late J. Daniel Nickel Sr. and the late Caroline (Kuhlmeier) Nickel. He was the dear father of Dennis Nickel and Grandfather of Jacquelyn Nickel. Dan was a U.S. Navy Veteran of World War II. He was a member of Bridgeton Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite, Moolah Shriners, and Shriners Hospital committee member. Dan also faithfully served as St. Paul's treasurer for many years.

A Memorial Service will be held at St. Paul's Evangelical Church on February 10, with Visitation at 10:00 a.m., Funeral Service at 11:00 a.m., and a luncheon served directly after the service.



### NEW ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Paul Feiner has been leading an Adult Bible Fellowship class on Sunday mornings based on his book, *New Jerusalem After the Millennium*. This is a great follow-up to Pastor Terry's class on the millennium. If you haven't been attending, there is still time to join in.

**St. Paul's Evangelical Church**  
**9801 Olive Blvd**  
**St. Louis, MO 63141**



**Sundays**

Worship Service	9:30 a.m.
Sunday School	11:00 a.m.

**Mondays - Church Office Closed**

**Tuesdays**

Quilters and Project Linus	9:30 a.m.
Prayer & Care Meeting	1:30 p.m.

**Wednesdays**

Women's Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
JAM - Jesus & Me	5:30 p.m.

**Thursdays**

Praise Ringers	6:00 p.m.
Chorale	7:00 p.m.

2/4	Sausage Supper 12:30 - 6pm
2/5	Missions Team 7pm
2/7	JAM - Jesus & Me Kick-off 5:30pm
2/8	YarnWorks 1pm
2/12	Deacons / Elder Meetings
2/14	Women's Fellowship 11:30am
2/14	Ash Wednesday Service 7pm
2/15	Marco's Ministry Tour 11am
2/19	White Cross 9:30am
2/21	Wednesday Lenten Service 7pm
2/24	Pray with the Elders 9am
2/26	Quilts of Valor 9am
2/28	Wednesday Lenten Service 7pm