

LENT BEGINS



Lent is a commemoration of the 40 days and 40 nights Jesus spent in the desert fasting, praying, and being tempted by Satan in the wilderness as described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Two other men in the bible had similar experiences spending 40 days and nights in the wilderness fasting and praying; Moses and Elijah. This period of denying worldly pleasures gave them clarity in what God wanted them to do, which was to warn Israel to repent of their sins and make the LORD God the only god in their lives. Both men were swept up into heaven as a result of their faithfulness to the one true God.

It's no coincidence these two appeared at the transfiguration of Jesus to offer encouragement directly from heaven for following God's will in what Jesus was about to endure, with a few disciples present as witnesses.

Today, Christians practice these three pillars of Lent: by reflecting on God in prayer, by reflecting on our own heart in fasting, and loving our neighbors by charitable giving.

During this Lenten season take the time to explore the stories of these men in Genesis, Exodus, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, and the above mentioned Gospels. Let these three men be examples of faithfulness to the one true God in your Lenten journey.

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ELDER & DEACON NEWS

Vision: a desired future state which inspires action.

The Elders and Deacons, along with Todd Brooks from the EFCA, met on Saturday, 1 Feb. 2025, for the first of several meetings to prepare our hearts and seek God's guidance for St. Paul's future. Much of the time at this first meeting was in prayer, and reviewing the story of Nehemiah and how God gave him a vision to repair the walls and gates of his homeland, Jerusalem. We used that story as a guide for what to expect when pursuing God's vision. We are reminded in Ephesians 2:10 that: We are part of God's vision. We are made for a particular purpose. God will resource His vision.

We also talked about an example of when St. Paul's clearly aligned with God's vision and how he blessed us. This vision was specifically the building of the welcome center and associated church upgrades. We were blessed by God with the right people, at the right time, and the right leadership which in turn resulted in the blessing of our updated building.

Finally, we began thinking and sharing ideas about "What is keeping us up at night?" regarding St. Paul's. Additionally, we shared ideas about what an ideal future state for St. Paul's looks like. We compiled these two lists and went home to pray over them to seek God's guidance. Our goal is to begin sensing God's vision for us and if not to continue our search.

The process of seeking God's vision is an ongoing activity. We ask that you join us in praying for St. Paul's future and that we are aligned with God's vision and purpose into the future.

We will be sharing and seeking input to St. Paul's vision at the next town hall meeting which is scheduled 1 June 2025.

FROM PASTOR MARC'S DESK

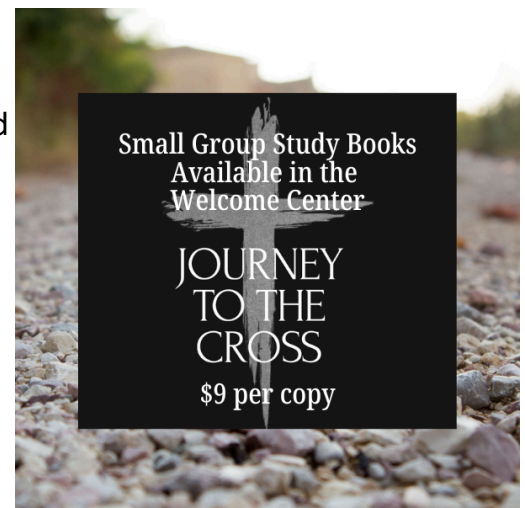
Preparing our hearts for Easter

Lent and Easter is very meaningful time for our relationship with Jesus. This year we are offering a Lenten Devotional called "Journey to the Cross" by Will Walker and Kendal Haug for our small groups that will go along with the sermon series leading up to Easter.

This is a forty day devotional that will focus on themes of the Christian life: repentance, humility, suffering, lament, sacrifice and death. The book is a combination liturgical guide and devotional. It has a call to worship, confessional, gospel reading, and daily devotional with application. This will be a great opportunity to intentionally reflect on all that Jesus has done for us and how we respond with gratitude and praise to Him.

I encourage you to participate in a small group and get the book (\$9). You can also choose to purchase online. There are digital versions available as well. We will also provide some of these elements in our worship services leading up to Easter.

The first reading in the book is Ash Wednesday so get your book soon!



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

The Month of March for the Women's Fellowship is a Thank Offering month. Three times throughout the year the Women are asked to donate to something or someone they are thankful for in their lives. The offerings are collected and held until the end of the year and then 100% of donations are given to a ministry that has been chosen to receive them. For 2025 the ministry chosen is Dutchtown Outreach. Dutchtown Outreach serves the Dutchtown area in St. Louis City through its mission: "To bring love and reconciliation, identity and dignity to the Dutchtown community by living out and sharing the restoring love of Jesus."

During February Women's Fellowship had to postpone its annual Valentine's Day luncheon twice due to the weather. Stay tuned as we are hopeful we may be able to hold this event some time in March.



YarnWorks

This month we had the opportunity to send 5 Prayer shawls to Wichita to bless some family members of the Washington plane crash victims.

PLEASE NOTE: The yarn work meeting has been moved to the third Tuesday on the month to make it possible for everyone to participate. We meet together with the quilters on Tuesday, March 18th from 10:00 - 1:00. We will work on projects and bless the completed prayer shawls and other items. We would enjoy for you to participate. We can teach knitting and crocheting if you would like to learn. Please bring a sack lunch.



MISSION NEWS

From the People of REACH Pregnancy Resource Center

St. Paul's Evangelical Church, thank you so much for your partnership and having us at your church for our interest meeting of Reach. You are amazing! It is our honor and great joy to serve God beside you as we, together, empower women and men facing crisis pregnancy.

All our love in Christ Jesus,
Your Reach Reproductive Health Family





We also want to extend our appreciation to Clay Brigham who stayed after the meeting to be sure the church was back in order for Sunday worship. Thank you, Clay!

YOUTH NEWS

Youth Work Camp – Why Go To Workcamp?

St. Paul's youth are scheduled to attend work camp in Pewaukee, WI on 20-26 July. A question you might have is why do we "Go To Workcamp/Why can't we just do this here?". And those are reasonable questions. On the face of it, this seems an impossible question to answer. After all, almost any of the work you do on a mission trip could be done just as easily where you live couldn't it? Yes...if a mission trip is all about repairing homes or community service or teaching VBS or any of the other things you might do on a mission trip. But mission trips aren't just about what you're doing. They're about the whole complex process of relationships and creating space for the to experience God. Here's how it works... Let's face it, when you try to do a project locally this is what you get... Sure I can be there...except Tuesday when my mom wants me to take my brother to swim lessons. Oh, and Wednesday coach wants us in the weight room by one so I'll just be there in the morning. My boss won't let me off Thursday and Friday. My friends are taking off early to go to Tommy's parent's lake house. But I can be there the rest of the week. I'll be there but I'm coming late every day 'cause I promised my dad I'd clean out the garage. Maybe you get the work done but you miss the real impact of going on a mission trip. When you go away from home you cut the connection. Being three hundred miles away eliminates all the excuses. You get work done but you get so much more including a stronger bond among your young people and the adults who go with them.

If you've ever had a spoonful of frozen juice concentrate, you know what a powerful experience that can be. Once you add water, it's just juice, but if you want something out of the ordinary, there's nothing quite like juice concentrate. The same is true with mission experiences. Do one around the home and your young people might see it as just helping out around the home. Go to a community unlike yours, spend 24/7 with members of your group and get busy doing things you don't normally do (like swing a hammer or teaching a third grader about Jesus) and WHAM! You've tasted concentrate. You've been challenged and stretched in a way that just doesn't happen at home. You've seen your friends in their extremes when pretend doesn't hold up, and masks fall off. Now you're getting down to what's real. Top it off with the fact that you get to interpret this concentrated experience through the eyes of faith and nothing can match the power of going away for a mission trip.

Inspiration is a spiritual experience. Moving away from what you know, and spending time in a place that you might never otherwise experience, is inspirational. It touches your spirit. A mission trip isn't a vacation. On a mission trip, you go where tourists are never allowed...into the lives of real people. You drive the side streets and back roads. You spend time in the homes and touch the hearts of people you might not otherwise ever meet. When those connections happen you can feel the Holy Spirit at work in your life and see him at work in the lives of others and it's Biblical. When Elijah was at his wit's end and needed renewal, God took him away from home. He showed his power but spoke in a still, small voice. There, in a strange place and away from the stuff of home, Elijah was inspired. He returned home renewed and changed by his encounter with God   1 Kings 19  . The power of a mission trip isn't found in any one element. It's not the work or the travel or the time or the distance. A mission trip becomes much more than the sum of its parts when all the parts are put together. So the next time someone asks, "Why can't we just do that here?" you can say; "If it is just about the work we could, but the most important parts of a mission trip can't happen at home."

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Children and Family Ministries Update - By Lisa Stahlhut

Mother Nature played great havoc with JAM during the months of January and February! It seemed to only snow on Tuesday/Wednesday, and when you throw in a week with no heat, we hardly got to meet or finish our "Camp Believe It" unit we started in January. Our next unit will be "Miraculous," which will be a study of Jesus' miracles from the Gospels and will feature an "ocean theme." We did have the opportunity to welcome some new children to our program and hope to see them become some of our "regulars" in the future. If you know of any children ages 3-11, invite them to come check out JAM on Wednesdays. We start each week with a family meal at 5:30, and finish by 7:00 pm. A good time is had by all each week!

Looking ahead, we are going to expand our annual Glow in the Dark Easter Egg Hunt to a "community event." The hunt will be held on Saturday, April 19 from 10:00-11:30 am and will be held in the multi-purpose room. For younger children, or those that don't want to hunt in the dark, the front room will be filled with eggs to be found as well. Along with the actual hunt, children will have the opportunity to work on some Easter crafts.

We are heading north this summer with VBS. Our theme, "True North," will teach us how we can find our way in a world gone wild! VBS will be held each evening June 16-20, beginning with a family meal. It takes many hands to make this program a success, so please consider volunteering your time that week. If you would like to help with our set design, no experience is needed, just willing hands. Work usually takes place the week before VBS.

Our children's Sunday School continues to meet each week in the Power Plant. All children ages 3-11 are encouraged to join us as we journey through the Bible together. The children enjoyed creating valentines which were sent to some of our members that are unable to attend church in-person.

If you have considered being a part of the Children and Family Ministries, please see me, and we can get you started on the process we have in place to work with our children. Our young people are the future of our church, and you won't find anything more rewarding than teaching them about our savior, and in turn, they tend to teach the adults some things too!

FEBRUARY AND MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Our Sausage Supper was a huge success. We sold 445 tickets. Total money made has not yet been figured. There is still cooked sausage to sell which will add to the funds raised for our youth. The bake sale, beautifully set up by Donna Schalk, brought in \$1100 for the Children and Family Ministry! Thanks to the many volunteers who made this event possible.



A family of satisfied customers



Potatoes, potatoes, potatoes



Two of the hardest workers of the big day



Supporting Togolese women by selling their hand made products



The joy of having all the potatoes peeled



A beautiful bake sale



Lenten Schedule

This year we will combine lenten dinners with JAM dinners

- 5:30 Dinner
- 6:15 kids disperse to JAM
- Worship remains in Fellowship Hall



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversaries

03/05 MARSH, Ruth (48)
 03/11 TRIEBE, Fred & Donna (47)
 03/21 DEL CID, Jorge & Maria (27)

03/27 TETER, Edward & Carol (71)
 03/31 BREWER, David & Melanie (41)

Birthdays

03/01 POLLMANN, Daniel
 03/02 KOLMER, Janet
 03/05 EICHHOLZ, Jerry
 03/06 ASLIN, Robert
 03/07 PRSHA, Katherine
 03/07 VAN DYK, David
 03/08 NEIER, Elizabeth
 03/13 POLLMANN, David
 03/13 VAN RAALTEN, Marco

03/19 CARLSON, Eileen
 03/19 VAN RAALTEN, Clarissa
 03/22 LEBSOCK, Eddie
 03/25 APPEL, Julia
 03/25 JAYNE, Dennis
 03/27 VAN DYK, Kurt
 03/28 GRAELER, Kevin
 03/28 SPRECHER, Judy

03/29 BECKEMEIER, Clarice
 03/29 MARSH, Ruth
 03/29 NEIER, Rob
 03/30 ASLIN, Heidi
 04/01 STADLER, Phyllis
 04/02 PERCIVAL, Lois
 04/04 KALLEMEIER, Robert
 04/05 BODENSCHATZ, Cynthia

Condolences

The family of Tom Schlafly, The Pollmann's relative
 who passed away 2/19

The family of Tim Immekus, Mark's brother who
 passed away 2/23

The family of Linda Vickery,
 Donna Schalk's sister who
 passed away 2/25



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.
Martial Arts	6 and 7 p.m.

Wednesdays

Women's Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
JAM Jesus and me	5:30 p.m.
Lenten Dinner	5:30
Lenten Worship	6:15 p.m.

Thursdays

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

Fridays

Martial Arts	6 and 7 p.m.
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3/3 Missions Team Not Meeting in March
3/5 Ash Wednesday Service, 7 pm
3/11 Deacons 5:30 pm, Elders 7 pm
3/17 Reasonable Faith, 7 pm
3/18 YarnWorks, 10 am
3/24 Quilts of Valor, 9 am
3/29 Pray with the Elders 9 am
3/29 Leadership Retreat, 10 am