

February 2024



Eyes On Jesus



February usually has some interesting events. The 2nd is Groundhog Day. Does anyone really believe a large member of the rodent family can predict the weather? We're going to have 6 more weeks, minimum, of winter. This is Northeast Ohio after all. Mari Gras will finish on the 13th this year, with Valentine's Day the next day. A day to celebrate love. A day that, we're told,

should have every moment filled with love. Will the news that day be filled with only love? Highly doubt it. Also on the 14th, the season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday.

We know this season well in Lutheran circles, Lent. I am still surprised by how many Christians have forgotten what Lent is. It's different than the rest of the month. These other events I've mentioned really involve personally receiving something: good weather "prediction", someone's love, a party and a packi [or 2, or 3]. There's an old practice during Lent to give up something. Each year, I hear of people who voluntarily give up something for those 40 days.

Why do people choose to give up something for Lent? It helps them focus on and remember Jesus giving up His life for them. Some find this practice helpful; others think only about the thing they are giving up. If you choose to give up something for Lent, I hope it does help you remember Jesus' sacrifice for you. If you don't, I encourage you to read Hebrews 12:1-3 each day during Lent: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.".

That's what Lent is all about, focusing our attention on Jesus. It is remembering his sacrifice for your sins and my sins. It is about drawing the attention of others to the cross of Christ where Good News, Perfect Love, and Eternal Celebration are found. It is a time to look at your life and take stock of how big a part God is in your life. There are different, free, devotional materials available for you at Lutheran Hour Ministries, lhm.org and Concordia Publishing House, cph.org. Make use of them in these coming 40 days so your eyes may be on Jesus, the author and perfector of your faith.

In Christ

Pastor Sundbom



Happy ... What?

I am just old enough to remember when the mid-February greeting used to run: "Happy Saint Valentine's Day!" Anyone else remember those days?

Yes, in school we made the obligatory heart of red construction paper with glued-on fancy lace for mom. Then there was the horrid popularity contest during which certain youngsters amassed piles of store-bought valentines, and the rest of us didn't. (Oops, did that sound bitter?)

The day was rounded out with copious cherubs brandishing bows and arrows and stomachaches occasioned by too much feasting on red, sugary hearts. Still, it was not uncommon to hear (or read): "Happy SAINT Valentine's Day!" Not that we ever gave the saint much thought, but the greeting still reminded us that there was a little more to the day.

Fast forward to our own time, and the saint has gone completely AWOL, the day hijacked by Eros, the god of the love between the sexes (although I suppose even THAT'S up for grabs at the moment). Eros'liturgy requires giving one's beloved a box of chocolates, perhaps a dozen red roses, and if you can swing it, a romantic dinner out (though the actual romance may be as AWOL as the saint).

In contrast, consider how the day is transformed when we remember the saint for whom it was named. Valentine was a third-century Christian and a physician. Around A.D. 270, under the reign of Claudius II in ancient Rome, Valentine laid down his life as a martyr for Christ. The red we associate with St. Valentine's Day is a fitting reminder of the blood of all the saints and the liturgical color of the feasts of Christ's martyrs.

We often primarily think of the martyrs as witnesses to the Christian faith, but I think that's off. A martyr is first and foremost a witness to the divine love that is at the HEART of the Christian faith: not *eros*, but *agape*. Valentine joins the hosts of others who died to witness to the shocking love that Christ our Lord poured forth into this crazy world. He came among us in the flesh, suffered, died and rose again. He ascended on high so that He might rule His own by uniting them in saving faith to His transformative love.

St. Paul was writing about that love when he urged the congregation in Rome, the very city where Valentine would be martyred a couple of centuries later, to love those who hated them:

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never

HAPPY ... WHAT? continued

be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

(Rom. 12:14-21)

People loved by God, that is the very kind of love that the church celebrates on Feb. 14: a love that shines especially for those who hate us, want to do us harm, even take away our life.

According to a later tradition, after St. Valentine was arrested for his Christian confession, he befriended his jailer's daughter. Pitying the poor child who would miss his company, he wrote her a note of encouragement on the eve of his death. He loved that little girl, his jailer and even his executioner! How could he not? He knew that in love for him, poor sinner that he was, Jesus had given him a life of which death could never rob him.

We don't know if the details of this story are sound, but we do know that Valentine died a martyr for Christ and that the tradition of sending notes of love and encouragement on his feast day persists.

So here's my challenge to you: Put the "saint" back in the day. On Feb. 14, celebrate the martyr who witnessed to the love that lasts forever, the love of the crucified, risen and returning Lord! A very happy St. Valentine's Day to one and all!

Photo: Jean-Léon Gérôme – The Christian Martyrs' Last Prayer, Public Domain

About The Author

William Weedon is an Assistant Pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Hamel, IL. He hosts a daily verse-by-verse Bible Study with the church past and present, produced by Lutheran Public Radio and called "The Word of the Lord Endures Forever." He is author of the CPH books: *Celebrating the Saints, Thank, Praise, Serve and Obey, and See My Savior's Hands*. He and his wife Cindi are blessed with three children and nine grandchildren and he is in love with exclamation points!!!

Weedon, William., (2023, February 12). Happy ... What?. The Lutheran Witness-Articles. https://witness.lcms.org/2023/happy-what/



Life Quotes for February

February 4 "Please rejoice in knowing prayer works and keep praying for the states who still haven't banned abortions and for those states trying to ward off those who want to bring it back. We are not done praying and never will be. God is on our side, and He has a plan. We need to stand firm and with faith never give up praying. God controls the power of prayer, and He is amazing." *Virginia Flo, Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

February 11 "We live dripping with the promise of Baptism. We live fueled by the fire of God's Word. We live created on the sixth day and recreated by God's grace to be followers of Jesus seven days of the week until that great eighth day, called eternity, when we will sing praise in His presence forever. We live and we love and we are loved in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, sin forgiven, shame erased, status: all very good." Rev. Dr. John Nunes, guest speaker on "The Lutheran Hour" – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

February 18 "The state can punish offenders, but it can't give birth to law-abiding citizens. The state cannot love or nurture a child. It takes a family. A radical thought, that, but off limits in our public conversations swept clean of moral discourse. Pray that this will change." *James M. Kushiner, The Fellowship of St. James – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • <u>lutheransforlife.orq</u>

February 25 "Our Heavenly Father remains active and almighty, especially in the difficult circumstances that life issues involve. In joining Himself to us with His incarnation, wisdom, power, atonement, and resurrection, Jesus makes every human life blessed—and a blessing! He lovingly and ably handles decisions about welfare and affliction, life and death, so that we don't have to do it on our own." *Pastor Michael Salemink – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • <u>lutheransforlife.org</u>

Announcements

2024 Lenten Schedule



The Lenten Season will soon be upon us. Join us on Wednesdays for our midweek Lenten services starting Ash Wednesday, February 14, at 7:00 pm for the series:

"Words of Life from the Cross"

The theme of this series is the seven words of Christ that He spoke from the cross as He offered up His life for the life of the world. Each word imparts a blessing and is a word of Gospel. The sermons in this series will expound on these words of Christ, linking them to Jesus' words and works recorded in the Gospel as well as the Old Testament prophesies that pointed to Him. Each word of Christ proclaims and delivers something about Him, the Word Incarnate, and delivers His saving death to us that we would trust Him for forgiveness, life, and salvation.

St. Paul's Midweek Lenten Schedule

Ash Wednesday: Feb 14th – "The Pardoning Word" Lk 23:34, Pastor Paul Sundbom, Communion celebrated Midweek 2: Feb 21st – "The Promising Word" Lk 23:43, Pastor Jonathon Schroeder, St. John Geneva Midweek 3: Feb 28th – The Faithful Word" Mt 27:46, Pastor Travis Henry, Zion Painesville Midweek 4: Mar 6 – "The Compassionate Word" Jn 19:26-27, Pastor Kevin Gyunn, Faith Mentor Midweek 5: Mar 13th – "The Suffering Word" Jn 19:28, Pastor Paul Sundbom, St. Paul's Painesville Midweek 6: Mar 20th – "The Dying Word" Lk 23:46 Pastor Freddy Davison, Lighted Cross Ashtabula Maundy Thursday: Mar 28th – The Remembering Word, Pastor Sundbom – Communion celebrated Good Friday: Mar 29th – "It Is Finished" Jn 19:30, Pastor Paul Sundbom

Easter Vigil: Mar 30th – The Restful Word, Pastor Paul Sundbom – Communion celebrated

Easter Sunday: Mar 31st – The Vindicated Word, Pastor Sundbom – Communion celebrated

Women's Bible Study

There will be no Women's Bible Study in February or March due to the Lenten season. See you on April 10!

Remaining bible studies through spring:

April 10 & 24

May 8 & 22

All studies come from the LWML Quarterly. We hope to see you there!



Northeast Zone Prayer Service



All women of the congregation are invited to attend the Northeast Zone Prayer Service (*Grace, Mercy and Peace*) on February 24. This uplifting service will be held at Peace Lutheran Church (12686 Bass Lake Rd., Chardon). The service begins at 10 AM with fellowship time beginning at 9:30. The cost of the event is \$6, payable on the day of the service. Please sign up on the sheet found on the Friendship Circle board by February 18. It you need a ride be sure to include your phone number or contact Erin Cardina.

Greetings from the Board of Outreach

I want to begin by thanking the members of St. Paul's who continue to support the Outreach Committee. Some have dedicated many hours over the years to support this important mission. Others, such as myself, have recently joined the Outreach committee and appreciate the programs and ideas put in place which will guide us going forward. A special thank you to Kristi, Starshine, Jeff, Dennis, Nancee, Kathy, and Scott! In January and February, we are working on ideas for this year's events. Our "Love Thy Neighbor" free hot dog lunch will become an open house for the Church and St. Paul's Preschool. More to come on this as we get closer to August. Closer on the calen-



dar is Easter! Plastic Easter eggs have been filled with candy and other surprises for the preschool Easter egg hunt. Also, for Easter Sunday, the Outreach committee will be hosting an Easter Breakfast here at St. Paul's. All are invited and the time for the breakfast will be available in the March newsletter and bulletins. Continue to pray for guidance that all we do is for the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His Church!

Ken Chaffe, Outreach Chair

In His service,



Are You Feeding Your Mite Box?

Our mite giving for the month of January was \$212. To God be the Glory!

Please remember to feed your mite box or use the donate button at http://lwmlohio.org to continue to support the mission work of the LWML. Just follow the directions on the page remembering to list St. Paul's, Painesville as your church and Northeast as your zone.

Altar Flowers

Is there a date or event you would like to celebrate or a special someone you would like to honor or remember. Donating altar flowers is a great way to do that! All you have to do is sign up next to the appropriate weekend on the altar chart, add the occasion or person and who the flowers are from. Be sure to print clearly. The Altar Flower Chart is posted on the double doors at the back of the sanctuary. Altar flowers are \$40.00. The cash or check can be placed in an envelope labeled "Altar Flowers" with the date of the weekend and placed in the collection plate.





Automated Giving Program

Have you thought of automating your weekly offering? St. Paul's has a program called Simply Giving that does just that. Simply Giving is an automated giving program from Thrivent Financial used at St. Paul's to help you conveniently and consistently contribute to the church. There are many benefits to enrolling:

- 1. It is a reliable and safe way to move your stewardship plan into action.
- 2. It allow you to share your gifts through planned giving and activates your generosity into ongoing stewardship.
- 3. Because the giving is consistent you won't miss Sunday offerings.
- 4. The congregation benefits from steady, more predictable revenue throughout the year.
- 5. There is more efficient bookkeeping.
- 6. Greater confidence in meeting the church's financial commitments

It's easy to enroll. Fill out the form attached to the flyer located on the table at the back of the Sanctuary and put it in Billie Lelle's mailbox.



January Meeting Minutes

- 1) Pastor's Report: Pastor reported making 9 calls and 1 shut-in visit. He noted Christmas Eve attendance was down slightly and may suggest a few changes to be discussed at May's Annual Meeting. Lenten services will begin Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14, with rotating pastors in following weeks. He is also planning trip to Minn. in mid-March to clear out items on farm.
- 2) President's Report: Dennis reported ADP is now handling our payroll services, and thanked Russ Walton for doing this the past many years. He also said he found several old insurance policies naming the church as beneficiary. He suggested we get a business credit card, and that he will email council revised Manual for Church Council to review before approval at Feb. meeting.
- 3) Vice President's Report: Eric reported Julie has signed janitor contract.
- 4) Treasurer's Report: Russ reported we finished 2023 with our cash position improved \$15,672 vs. 2022, despite the purchase of a new copier. Offerings were down \$1294, but total income increased \$6090 the 1st six months, while expenses were up \$3508(largely due to higher maintenance costs and increases in payroll) for a net gain of \$2581 vs. last year.
- 5) Education Report: Erin reported Sunday school and Adult Bible study attendance is steady, homemade Christmas cards were handed out to employees of Lake Hospital/UH, Adopt-a-Family project provided gifts to 5 families (with special thanks to Star & Michelle Szoradi for their work on this), and the Advent Bible Study (focus on sons in the Bible) had 5 attendees.
- 6) Preschool Report: Star reported Karen has turned in forms so ADP for new payroll service. Amy has suggested parents schedule meetings with Leigh Wojkowski (OSLS Kindergarten teacher) for opportunities there, and updating board manual and employee & parent handbooks prior to NSLA evaluations, and parent and board surveys were handed out.
- 7) Elders' Report: None.
- 8) Stewardship Report: Kristi reported donations to Giving Tree will be collected, sorted, and distributed to the designated charities this month.
- 9) Financial Secretary Report: Jenn reported a few months still need help with counters.
- 10) Outreach Report: Ken reported ValPak interest response via website traffic didn't show any increase. 30 dozen cookies were baked and distributed to area fire, police, and sheriff depts. on Dec. 9 and were greatly appreciated-thanks to all who helped. Ken also said Star has taken over the printing of new promotional flyers and ways to improve visitor gift bags, and she Pastor, & Amy will discuss ways to improve involvement b/t church and Preschool.
- 11) Building & Grounds Report: Craig reported ongoing projects with a bathroom shower, electrical outlets in kitchen, and garage door lock all at the parsonage; security lights in Preschool bathrooms, seasonal mice sightings in the classrooms, and adjustments to a toilet in preschool boy's bathroom. He also said 2 smoke detectors were installed in the attic.
- 12) Contribution Secretary Report: Billie reported contributions for December were \$19,987.77 down from \$26,102.50 in Dec. 2022, average weekly contributors were 30 vs. 27 in 2022. She noted \$16,476 was donated thru Simply Giving in 2023 and that total giving in 2023 was \$224,986.27 (\$26,712 from Pre-

JANUARY MEETING NOTES continued

school grant transfers) vs. \$219,350.29 in 2022 vs. \$187,157 in 2021. Billie also said 2023 Contribution Statements would be out very soon.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Dennis reported continual problems with false trips on our security systems. Looking into rewiring phone lines to solve the issue.
- 2) Safety/Security Team: Eric reported team continues to meet and discuss items. A survey covering property and building concerns being completed and discussed. An escape ladder is being donated as emergency exit from choir loft.
- 3) Posting of Council positions and duties for May Annual Meeting to be posted by March 1.
- 4) Constitution & By-Law changes are being reviewed by District office.

NEW BUSINES:

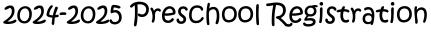
- 1) Old insurance policies: Dennis found several old insurance policies and he will check with Thrivent to see if these policies are still active as several policy holders are deceased.
- 2) Business credit card: Dennis suggested we look into getting a church card to better track purchases, ensure our tax-exempt status, and won't have members use their personal cards and get reimbursed. Eric suggested we set up checks and balances as to its use. Suggested cards included American Express, Amazon. A motion was made to have Dennis investigate options for setting up business credit card to include which card (s) served our needs, costs, and restrictions. Motion passed.
- 3) Today's Light: It was agreed to discontinue receiving copies of this daily devotional due to cost and very limited interest.
- 4) Midweek Lenten services begin Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14 with communion @ 7pm.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2024 @ 6:30pm.



From the Preschool







Registration for St. Paul's Preschool 2024-2025 school year will be opening soon. If you are interested in your child attending St. Paul's Preschool in the fall please pick up a registration form which are located at the back of the sanctuary next to the double doors. Registration for current preschool families will begin on February 12th with open registration beginning February 26th. Once open registration begins classes will be filled as registra-

tion forms are received. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Marizek at 440-354-3000. If you know someone who has a preschool aged child please pass a registration form on to them.



February Anniversaries

Eric and Pamela West Bob and Peggy McDonnell 43 years on Feb 7 35 years on Feb 25



January Baptisms, Weddings, New Members, Funerals

Baptisms

None

New Members

None

Weddings

None

Funerals

None

Those Who Serve: February 2024

ELDERS:

6:00 P Saturday Aaron Lindrose 9:30 A Sunday Rich Szoradi

COUNTERS:

Jenn Drake, Craig McConnell, Kristi McConnell

LECTORS:

02-03-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Pastor Sundbom
02-04-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Terry Wakelee
02-10-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Dale Kerver
02-11-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Dennis Concoby
02-14-24	7:00P	Ash Wednesday	TBD
02-17-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Dave Murphy
02-18-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Craig McConnell
02-24-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Pastor Sundbon
02-25-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Jack Lelle

GREETERS:

6:00 P Saturday 9:30 A Sunday

SIGN UP IN FEBRUARY TO GREET YOUR FELLOW DISCIPLES.

Sign-up sheet located an the double doors at the back of the Sanctuary.



Scripture Readings for February

Feb 3/4

Isaiah 40:21-31 1 Corinthians 9:16-27 Mark 1:29-39

Feb 17/18

Genesis 22:1-18 James 1:12-18 Mark 1:9-15

Feb 10/11 [Transfiguration]

2 Kings 2:1-12 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:6 Mark 9:2-9

Feb 24/25

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 Romans 5:1-11 Mark 8:27-38

Feb 14 [Ash Wednesday]

Joel 2:12-19 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



February Word Search—Words of February

M	Р	Υ	F	Ε	N	L	Ε	Т	Ε	L	0	I	V
D	R	W	Υ	Υ	Р	0	S	R	N	S	Р	G	Е
L	Ε	R	L	Y	I	٧	0	Α	R	L	F	R	I
U	S	M	0	S	N	Ε	R	Ε	Α	W	0	0	Υ
N	I	S	Α	S	K	Т	M	Н	Е	0	R	U	M
Α	D	Α	R	R	Ε	N	I	S	Υ	В	Т	N	S
R	Ε	G	M	E	D	S	R	R	Р	R	Υ	D	Т
N	N	L	Ε	Ε	W	Ι	P	0	Α	Ε	D	Н	R
Е	Т	Е	Р	L	Т	0	G	Е	Е	P	Α	0	Ε
W	S	W	I	R	М	Н	L	R	L	U	Υ	G	Т
Υ	D	E	E	D	U	N	Υ	F	Α	S	S	D	N
Ε	Α	٧	Н	R	Ε	P	Y	S	С	S	Ι	Α	I
Α	Y	D	Ε	R	Y	I	L	Α	T	R	D	Y	W
R	Α	Ε	Y	W	Ε	N	Ε	S	Ε	N	I	Н	С

SUPERBOWL LUNAR NEW YEAR AMETHYST CHINESE NEW YEAR PRESIDENTS DAY LEAP YEAR **FLOWERS PRIMROSE** FORTY DAYS RED WINTER GROUNDHOG DAY ROSES MARDI GRAS **HEART PURPLE** VIOLET PINK LOVE

Play this puzzle online at : https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/6584192/

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St. Paul's Lutheran Church and Preschool

250 Bowhall Road Painesville, OH 44077

(440)354-3000 | www.splcpainesville.org | office@splcpainesville.org

Staff

Paul D. Sundbom, Pastor Matt Chaffe, Organist Peggy McDonnell, Admin Assistant

Worship Services

Saturday 6:00 pm Sunday 9:30 am

Sunday Bible Study

Adult 8:30am & 10:45 am Children 10:45 am

St. Paul's Preschool

Amy Marizek, Director preschool@splcpainesville.org www.stpaulspainesville.com

Also Supporting







February 2024

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
COMMUNION SERVICE	Sunda	SHIP SCHEDULE Saturdays - 6:00pm Sundays - 9:30am by School - 10:45am -8:30am & 10:45am	Office Hours Monday-Friday 9:00am-12:00pm February Birthstone Amethyst	Bulletin Announcements Due Wednesdays February Flower Violet	2 COUNDHOGO	3
American Heart Month	Black History Month					
4	5	6 Preschool Chapel	7 No Preschool— Evening Parent Teacher Conferences 6:30 pm Council Meeting	8 No Preschool— Daytime Parent Teacher Conferences	9 National Pizza Day	10 Chinese New Year
11 Super Bowl	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13 Preschool Valentine Day Party 3's 9:30 am Circuit Meeting	7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service Preschool Valentine Day Party Pre-K & 4's	15 6:30 pm Elder's Meeting	March Newsletter Articles and Announcements Due	17 Random Acts of Kindness Day
18	No Preschool Washington's Birthday	20 No Preschool— Teacher In-Service	21 Tent 7:00 pm Midweek Worship Service	22 6:30 pm Safety Committee	23	9:30 am LWML Prayer Service
25 *	26	27	7:00 pm Midweek Worship Service	29		