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**Website:**

stpaulsbremen.church  
facebook.com/stpaulsbremen

**Church Office Hours:**

M,W,Th, F 8:30 – 11:30 am

**Sunday Schedule:**

No scheduled Worship  
Services through May 1 due  
to COVID 19

**Pastors:**

Rev. Roger Rohde  
Office Hours:  
M & Th 8:30 – 11:30  
1-574-209-0306 (H)

Rev. Neil Wonnacott  
Office Hours:  
W & F 8:30 – 11:30  
1-574-301-9291 (H)

The coronavirus pandemic and its effects upon our land and our world are of such a nature that many of us have not seen anything like it. Many who have adhered to the President's guidelines and the governors' orders seem to be becoming impatient as time goes on. People want to return to a normal way of life once again.

As I reflected on our present situation, I considered what event Scripture might parallel our present situation. Immediately the historical account of Noah and the flood came to my mind.

In Genesis chapter 6, verses 11 and following, we see that the world had become corrupt and the Lord was tired of it. God told Noah: "Make yourself an ark" (verse 14). "I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breathe of life in it" (verses 17). The Lord called Noah to bring into the ark his wife, his three sons and their wives, along with a male and female of every living creature.

Now comes the astonishing point. After Noah built the ark according to God's specifications and brought into the ark all everything God had commanded ordered, he closed the ark up and it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. Remember the floodwaters of two years ago. What Noah experienced far exceeded any floods with which we have ever had to deal. In fact, verses 19 and 20 of Genesis chapter 7 tell us that the waters "rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains were covered... to a depth of more than twenty feet."

Forty days confined in an ark with continual rain. Does it sound like anything we know today? Well the account does not end here. While there was no more rain after forty days, the waters did not subside so that Noah and his family could get out of the ark. In all Noah and his family were confined in the ark for one year and 10 days (compare Genesis 7:11 and Genesis 8:14). We think we have been in for a long ride, but it is nothing to what Noah encountered.

How was it that Noah built a huge ark on dry land and then rode out the storm for so long? In Hebrews chapter 11, verse 7, we are told that Noah believed in all God told him. This is why Noah built the ark according to God's design and did so when the concept of a flood was foreign to man's experiences. Noah also trusted that one day God would cause the flood waters to recede and his life on earth would be able to return to normal.

It is this faith in God that you and I are to have in the midst of the coronavirus. As the Lord watches over the needs of a sparrow, we can know that He is watching over us too. Jesus told us in Luke 12:6-7: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.... Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." The truth of this can be seen in that Jesus died for our sins on Calvary and rose from the dead to give us eternal life in heaven.

How then shall we live these days and the days that are to come? In worship to our Lord. Noah never forgot God's promises of deliverance while on the ark, and as soon as he stepped foot on dry land he built an altar to the Lord (Genesis 8:20). The Psalmist calls us to worship: "Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, the flock under His care" (Psalm 95:6-7).

## Learning from God through Life's Experiences

I suspect that God has taught each one of us lessons as we have gone through various situations and circumstances in our lives. I know that is true for me. I learned lessons from God when my car failed to start; when my son was in serious automobile accident; when I had surgery on a torn meniscus; and when Jeri had brain cancer and died.

Every situation we go through in life, God is seeking to make the truth of His word come alive in our lives. Proverbs 4:11 finds God telling us: "I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths." In Deuteronomy 4:9 God tells us: "Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."

What things have you learned from God in the present coronavirus epidemic through which God has been taking you? You may think that what you have learned is not that significant or of importance to other people. Yet, as the above passages indicate, God wants us to learn and to share with others His work in our lives. We can rest assured that as we share God's workings the Holy Spirit will use our Christian testimony to touch the lives of other people.

To this end I have a request to make of all of you. I would like to hear from you by letter, email, or a telephone call to find out what God has been teaching you through this pandemic. Would you please share with me what you have been learning from God, and I will use next month's epistle article to share with you things that God has been teaching me. May we use this crisis to let God's guiding hand shine through us as we share how He is blessing us even in the most difficult of times. God bless, Pastor Rohde

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*Troy and Bob Yoder will celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on May 16<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to help them celebrate please send an anniversary card to them at 2824 Michigan Rd., Plymouth, IN 46563*  
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## From the Board of Lay Ministry

The Covid 19 virus has caused many changes in our lifestyles that have made us pause and reflect on how we can adapt or change to keep moving forward or at least not fall back. Our gathering as a congregation for worship services has been disrupted as well as meetings, Bible studies, social activities, confirmation and countless other activities. In Indiana, we are still under a "stay at home" directive from Governor Holcomb until at least May 1<sup>st</sup> and our gathering for worship services are temporarily suspended, but there ARE opportunities to hear God's word presented in worship service settings:

1. St Paul's website (stpaulsbremen.church) provides videos of brief liturgy of scripture and hymns ( sung by Mr. Ken Eichinger – thank you, Ken!) with a new sermon each Sunday by either Pastor Rohde or Pastor Wonnacott. Go to the website and then scroll down to below the picture of the church and you'll see where you can "click" on a service to watch on-line.
2. You can watch a "live" LCMS worship service on TV that is provided by "Worship Anew" (formerly "Worship for Shut-ins") either on South Bend air broadcast station WHME – channel 46 at 11:00 A.M. on Sunday or on Direct TV satellite channel 377 at 11:30 A.M. on Sunday.

We continue to monitor what our civil authorities (state Governor Holcomb and President Trump) issue on a daily basis to see how we can respond in our activities and corporate worship. We truly hope that we can resume our worshipping together soon, but while gathering together is suspended, please continue to worship through on-line services, daily devotions, Bible study and prayer. Please continue to support St Paul's through your offerings..even though we don't gather together for worship services, there are still staff salaries, utility bills, insurance and operational expenses that must be paid. Praise God for the gifts provided during this crisis and always!  
The Men's Wednesday Morning Bible Study is now being held via "conference call" on April 22 at 6:30 A.M.. (not video, just voice, so you can participate without looking "your best"). It will continue for the foreseeable future ( May 6<sup>th</sup> , May 20<sup>th</sup>) using the conference call by dialing 848-220-3300 and enter conference ID # 102855, followed by the "#" sign on your phone. The study is open to males age 18 or over...join in! Contact Dave Burcham at 574-520-9118 if you want a copy of the Bible study.

***“Luther’s Way to Begin the Day”***

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Apostles’ Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life + everlasting. Amen.

**Lord’s Prayer** *LSB 196*

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Morning Prayer**

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

*Then go joyfully to your work, singing a hymn, like that of the Ten Commandments, or whatever your devotion may suggest.*

**Acknowledgments**

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book  
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**THE DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE EPISTLE IS MAY 20TH!!!** Epistle articles, comments, ideas may be deposited in the epistle box in the Narthex mail slots or better yet e-mailed to Deb Burcham at dburcham@stpaulsbremen.org. I appreciate all of your articles, ideas and comments!

\*\*\*\*\*  
Operating budget fund balance as of April 17, 2020- \$66,600  
**This amount represents just over 5 weeks of normal day-to-day expenses of the Church and School ministries.**  
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**Board Briefs:**

**Christian Education:**

In 2020 our Sunday School will continue to send \$75.00 each month to a mission.

**May Mission of the Month: Camp Lutherhaven**

Camp Lutherhaven is a year-round outdoor ministry center that since 1949 has been dedicated to creating adventurous, faith-building experiences for children, youth, adults, and families. Their carefully chosen staff, along with a program that includes recreation, God’s Word, group activities, Christian fellowship, worship, personal growth, and of course tons of fun, combine to create an unforgettable experience.

Their website says “Summer camp registration is open!” For more information go to [www.lutherhaven.org](http://www.lutherhaven.org).

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***PILGRIM’S PROGRESS***

Lord willing, we will begin our journey with Christian on June 7<sup>th</sup> in Sunday School. This will be a life-changing journey full of gospel truth. The kids will share this journey with Christian as fellow pilgrims. Each week will cover a chapter in the books provided. Each class will begin with a game, challenge or activity that leads into the day’s lesson. Then kids will listen to a dramatic reading as they follow along in their book and will discuss what they have heard. Our young pilgrims will learn about God and His Word as they read and hear Christian’s story lesson by lesson. This journey through Pilgrim’s Progress is designed to help young pilgrims not only understand and enjoy this allegorical tale but benefit from the spiritual lessons and Biblical truths along the way.



This curriculum is designed for children ages 6-12. We will be asking youth who will be completing grades 7 and 8 to be helpers/participants. They will be leading the activities, help lead the discussion, and help the younger kids with their activity sheets. Children ages 2-5 will be attending a class using Veggie Tales material.

**Save the Date!** Vacation Bible School will (tentatively) be June 15-June 19, 2020 from 9:00 am-11:30 am for Preschool thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. We look forward to seeing you as we explore how Jesus leads the way, loves us and always keeps His promises.  
If you would like to volunteer, please contact Jennifer Russell by phone 574-361-5588 or email [momcia@yahoo.com](mailto:momcia@yahoo.com).

### **School Board:**

Tuition expenses for school families are on going! This school year in an effort to help our families we at St. Paul's joined The Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization of Indiana (SGO). If you would like more information on the SGO of Indiana and how you can contribute please contact Curt Nielsen at 574-248-1529. As of April 13<sup>th</sup> Indiana still had \$4.1 million in tax credits available through June 30, 2020.

### **Stewardship:**

The Board of Stewardship continues to explain the various Charitable and Services Agencies that or Church supports. This month is about The Lutheran Hour.

For decades the Lord has used The Lutheran Hour to share the Word of God and Good News of Christ with lost souls. The program encourages Christians to walk with the Savior as they hear words of comfort and hope in time of need. Simply go to [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org).

### **E-TITHING**

Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply allow these easy steps:

1. Visit the Church website at [stpaulsbremen.church](http://stpaulsbremen.church).
2. Click on the "Give" button located at the top of the home page.
3. Click on the "E-TITHING" in the blue "Finances" box.
3. Click on "Create Profile" in the "Create your Online Profile" box on the right side.
4. Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contributions.

**By Christ's command, we pray,  
according to God's will,  
for power, riches, wisdom and strength.**

**"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you;  
seek and you will find; knock and the door  
will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9).**

One cannot separate the true Christian life, that of glorifying God and the giving of loving service to those around us, from prayer. If one were to view the heartbeat of the Christian life as the Holy Spirit working through Word and Sacrament, then most definitely, prayer would have to be the pulse. One cannot emphasize enough that prayer is a vital part of Christian life.

It is sad that we often relinquish ourselves and our church to the poverty of being without God's full measure of power, riches, wisdom and strength simply because we fail to diligently ask in Christ's name.

We are to take everything to God in prayer. First, we confess our sins and plead for forgiveness for Christ's sake. Then, in Christ, we pray for power to overcome sin and the fury of as we go about His work. In Christ, we pray for the financial resources we need to carry out His work and to provide for our earthly needs. In Christ, we pray for wisdom to properly use all that He has given us. In Christ, we pray for strength to do all things according to His will. When we pray diligently in faith, God answers and brings our will into conformity with His will.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Phil. 4:6).

**Altar Guild:** Attendant for May is Mel Schutz.

Altar Flowers in May:

3	Wayne & Tara Andrews
10	
17	
24	
31	

The Altar Flower Chart for the 2020 Liturgical Year is hanging in the Narthex (North side), just outside the altar guild room door. Please look it over and sign up for flowers

# SCHOOL NEWS AND NOTES

e-mail: [schools@stpaulsbremen.org](mailto:schools@stpaulsbremen.org)

The SCHOOL THEME for the 2019-2020 school year is JOY:FULLY LUTHERAN. It is based on I Thess. 5:16-24: “Be joyful always; pray continually...”

Dear Members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

He is Risen! He is Risen, Indeed! Hallelujah! Pastor Rohde's Easter sermon, “Done Deal,” needs to be applied to all parts of our lives including school. In and through all things God is in control, and He is our strength and comfort. Let me share with you (3) very important details about how we are continuing the ministry of Christian Education here at St. Paul's during this time of social distancing.

1. **Did you know that at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year our school bought 30 chromebook computers?** Looking back, this was perfect timing for this change here at school. Not only did our 6-8th grade use these computers on a daily basis through the first three quarters of the school year, they now are a major component of our continuous learning plan here at St. Paul's.
2. **Did you know that through the hard work of Miss Rennecker and Mr. Otto our school was approved for the Google Suite for every student?** This Suite (or collection of Google Based Programs), is now providing teachers with the ability to communicate with students on a daily basis and it is being used to continue class discussions even from home! It also gives students and teachers access to a host of programs similar to Microsoft Office free of charge. This is truly a blessing to our continuous learning plan for the remainder of this school year.
3. **Did you know that we were able to send at least (1) chromebook home with each school family on Friday, March 13th (our last day of “old fashioned” school) so that we could guarantee that every student would be able to continue their education from home?** God truly is in charge, and He is continuing to provide for our school and our ministry here at St. Paul's.

While nothing will replace in person teacher to student instruction and interaction, **continuous education** is the definition that we use to explain what we are doing during these uncertain times. God has continued to allow staff the ability to teach math, language arts, science, social studies, and other subjects through the use of technology, and printed materials. To God be the Glory!

We as staff, are also reminded of the great school families and church members that we have at St. Paul's. School families are now logging into their Google classroom from home to check for posted assignments, or logging on to Google Meet for their classes daily. Thank you parents for your patience and support during this transition, and thank you church members for your continued prayers and support of our school ministry here at St. Paul's.

I will finish with part of a staff devotion that we had right before Easter. The title of the Devotion was “Uncertain Times.” “So this morning, I'm taking a deep, noncontrolling breath and saying to Jesus, “You are right, I am Yours. Do Your thing. I will trust You.” Even when I don't have a clue about what is coming around the next corner. Because according to the One Who established the earth....He's got this too.”

## May Devotion: "Delivered From Death"

*Psalm 116:3-4 - The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish. Then I called on the Name of the LORD: "O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!"*

"And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30). On the night He was betrayed, Jesus and His disciples finished their Passover meal and sang a hymn before they continued on to Gethsemane. The hymn may have been part of the Hallel, Psalms 113 to 118, sung during the Passover celebration. So perhaps, on the night before He was crucified, Jesus sang these prophetic words, "The snares of death encompassed Me, the pangs of Sheol laid hold on Me; I suffered distress and anguish."

Tangled in the snares of approaching death, with Sheol, the place of the dead, awaiting Him, Jesus suffered distress and anguish. He said to His disciples, "My soul is very sorrowful even to death" (Matthew 26:38b). With His sweat falling to the ground like great drops of blood, Jesus cried out in prayer to His Father. He called on God to deliver Him, asking that the cup of suffering might pass from Him, the terrible cup of God's wrath against human sin. Yet, obedient to His Father, Jesus also prayed, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39b).

Jesus' prayer was answered according to the Father's will. The hour had come. Jesus' betrayer arrived, and the Savior was handed over into the hands of His enemies. The next morning, on the day we call Good Friday, Jesus was nailed to the cross. Bearing our sins in His own body, He drained to the end the cup of suffering, the cup of God's anger and judgment. The Son of God suffered the penalty of death to save us.

The psalm Jesus had sung just a few hours earlier held words of anguish; it also foretold what would follow the terrible suffering of the cross. Before His crucifixion, Jesus sang out these words of trust and hope: "You have delivered My soul from death, My eyes from tears, My feet from stumbling; I will walk before the LORD in the land



of the living" (Psalm 116:8-9). On the first Easter morning, the Son of God was delivered from death and the grave—and through faith in His Name, we are delivered from the snares of sin and death, too.

When we suffer distress and anguish, struggling against fear, pandemic, death, and loss, the prayer of the psalm is our prayer and its words of hope are ours: "O LORD, I pray, deliver my soul!" God hears our prayers and, according to His will and perfect timing, He will deliver us. When our crucified and risen Savior returns in glory, we will be raised from death and the grave, as He was raised. On that great day, we will walk forever in the land of the living and our living Lord will walk with us!

**THE PRAYER:** Mighty risen Lord, You suffered in distress and anguish to deliver us from sin and death. Walk with us now when we are in distress and deliver us according to Your gracious will. We look forward to the day when we will walk with You in glory. Amen.