



THE SPECTRUM

The Newsletter of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church

**FEBRUARY
2022**

Sunday Liturgies
8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Livestream video via
SPR's FB page or look
in your e-mail on
Sunday mornings.

Confirmation
In person

Sunday School
In-person
and online

Adult Forum
On hiatus

Nursery
On hiatus.

Visit us on the web!
www.stpaulref.org

St. Paul-Reformation
is a congregation of
the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in
America (ELCA).

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St. Paul, MN 55104
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The Spectrum items, articles and columns need to be to the Parish Office by the 12th of the month. *The Spectrum* goes to the printer on the 15th of the month, and this date is hard and fast. Articles received after the 12th may or may not be included in the newsletter.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING Sunday, February 13

For many years now, SPR has participated in the “Souper Bowl of Caring” on Super Bowl Sunday (this year, February 13). Partnering with TackleHunger.org, this nationwide drive has raised over \$170 million dollars since it began, donating directly to local foodshelves. Again this year, SPR will be teaming up to make our donation to the Hallie Q. Brown Foodshelf right here in our neighborhood.

Super Bowl Sunday has become in much of American secular culture a festival of excess. The consumption of resources required to stage the Super Bowl game each year is...staggering. From expenditure to food to the buildings in which it takes place, the richest country on earth spares no expense to mount this annual spectacle. And yet...within the shadow of this game, many in our neighborhoods (especially children) go hungry on a daily basis, and the inequality that the game represents should give Christian people pause to ask how we can help lessen this gap. The Souper Bowl of Caring is one way we can.

So, on Sunday February 13, we ask that you would make a special donation on your way out of Church by using an envelope that will be provided that day. Please be generous. Likewise, you can also donate online at www.stpaulref.org/donate. You can learn more or make a donation (as well) at www.tacklehunger.org



ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

The congregation of St. Paul-Reformation met via Zoom for SPR's Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30th. The 2022 budget was passed, as well as new members of the Parish Council elected, Voting Members to the Synod Assembly elected, and other matters that required attention. You can still view the parish's Annual Report by visiting www.stpaulref.org.

IN EARLY FEBRUARY, the Church will celebrate (on the calendar, at least...), the Presentation of the Lord (February 2), a feast day that commemorates Jesus' entry into the temple to be circumcised and named. Because the Church plays fast and loose with historical timelines, Jesus – who on the Sundays that bookend this event – is, again, an infant. He's an adult! He's an infant again! He's back to being an adult! The point is not a chronological order of the Lord's life, but a remembering of the events of this day, particularly when the aged Simeon joins the prophetess Anna to sing that he has “seen the salvation you have prepared in the sight of every people.”

Presentation Day – or “Candlemas” (Candle-Mass) as it is sometimes called, was – thusly – a day when people would bring candles to Church to be blessed. In northern climes, this makes perfect sense; by February second, everyone is starting to get a bit of cabin fever that will last for a little while longer, yet. It is no accident that “Groundhog Day” has coopted Candlemas, a day to ask – together – how much longer the dark, short days of winter will last.

These questions are not new, and – as I write to you this month – they are also particularly timely as we enter another surge of COVID-19. How much longer? How much longer will we have to muddle through this haze of unknowing? And if you're tired, you're in good company. I cannot tell you how many members of our parish are simply *tired*.

But, I take heart from the story of Simeon and Anna. The scriptures tell us that they were advanced in age, Anna having lived for decades after her partner had died. Simeon says in his song that – now that his eyes have “seen salvation” – he can “depart in peace.” I wonder how much Simeon was ready to go, holding on just a little longer until

he got the green light (Jesus!) that his time of waiting (“How long, O Lord?”) was over. We do not hear of either Anna or Simeon's departure from the scene; simply that they understand that God has a promise for them, that they wait, and that the time of their waiting is illumined by God.



“...I would urge you to exercise the same gentleness with the people you are called to hold.”

In these days of waiting, I will urge you again to be gentle with one another. People are getting a little punchy these days, with the raw nerves of COVID-19 joined to the confinement of a Minnesota winter. It's ok, of course, as long as we remember that others – too – are doing the best they can to navigate waters we had hoped we would be clear of by now. We're not; in fact, we're back, tilling ground that many of us are all-have seen before.

So, as Anna and Simeon gently took up the child Jesus in their arms to proclaim him the Light of the World, so I would urge you to exercise the same gentleness with the people you are called to hold. Everyone of

course says that this is a good idea, and it is, until there are stressors on the system. Then, the gentleness we had once pledged gets re-thought as impractical, or “not in this case,” or simply forgotten, or ends up as a victim of our own internalized brokenness. Don't do this. The Christian call to gentleness and a forgiving understanding is only as good as it is under stress, and we call to mind Luther's explanation of the 8th Commandment: to assume the best of our neighbor, even when that is hard. The truth is that it *is* hard, very hard, in fact. But, so – now that I think of it – is crucifixion.

So, be gentle with those around you.

Be gentle with those who are driving you a little bit nuts.

Continued on page 3...



FROM THE CANTOR

Our Old Testament lesson for February 6 is Isaiah's vision of the Lord sitting on a throne, surrounded by seraphim who cry out "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord." We join this celestial hymn every time we celebrate Holy Communion. There is Rwandan hymn that tells the story of Isaiah's vision and how the song continues to ring out. In stanza 3, it further connects the song to the vision in Revelation of all those gathered around the throne of the Lamb, where singing continues. May joyful praise reverberate in your heart as well!

Heaven Opened to Isaiah

1 Heaven opened to Isaiah, showing him
God's glorious throne:
Lord of might, high and exalted, temple
flowing with his robe.
Seraphim flew all around him, humbled at
the holy sight.
As they circled they were singing, calling
out with all their might.

Refrain

"Holy, holy, you are holy," ev'ry angel voice pro-
claims; "All the earth reflects your glory; ev'ry
tongue sings out your praise!"

2 Seraphim continue singing; cherubim still
lift their praise.
Earth and all its creatures worship; moon
and stars are still amazed.
Now above creation's chorus comes
another fervent cry:
all of earth's redeemed are singing, "Glory
to the Lord on high!" *Refrain*

3 One day heaven will be opened and before
the Savior's throne,
saints from ev'ry time and nation will begin
their endless song:
"To our God of all salvation, to the high and
holy Lamb,
to the blessed Holy Spirit be forever praise.
Amen!" *Refrain*

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Sr. Stacie Lightner

FROM THE VICAR

I pray that you are able to stay safe and healthy, especially in the midst of this COVID surge, which has made for a rocky start to the new year. May God's healing presence bring you peace and hope in this time of need.

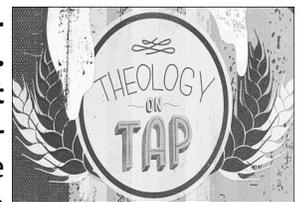


Winter term at the seminary is a much-welcomed respite from the busyness fall and spring semesters. My spring semester begins at the end of the month, but I am currently enjoying a break from my typical schedule of classes. For now, I am taking just one class, an elective on the many Christian frameworks for understanding spirituality, vocation, and mission. I am greatly enjoying the class, especially its emphasis on ministries of justice and reconciliation, as well as the holy mysteries of faith.

As of now, **Theology on Tap is still scheduled to meet at 7 p.m. on Friday, February 11 at BlackStack Brewing (755 Prior Avenue, St. Paul).** I hope that you will be able to join us for this time of fellowship and conversation, but please stay home if you do not feel well—there is always next time!

*Peace,
Vicar Elizabeth*

THEOLOGY ON TAP +
is scheduled to meet at 7 p.m.
on Friday, February 11 at
BlackStack Brewing (755 Pri-
or Avenue, St. Paul). Please



be sure that you are in a
mask. This is a great time of fellowship, conversa-
tion, and community building as we chew on some
big theological questions. We welcome young
adults...and the young at heart.

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Be gentle with those with whom you struggle.

Be gentle with yourself.

Light a candle(mas!) if things are getting hazy and the way forward is difficult to see.

And, like Simeon and Anna, remember: there is more light today than there was yesterday, the sign and the promise of Immanuel: "God-is-with-us."

Peace, Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck

A note: *The Presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple (Candlemas) is observed by the Church on February 2nd, the formal (and final!) end to the Christmas cycle of the Church's life. We urge you to light a candle and say a prayer for the world this day...and then let the candle burn as a reminder of Jesus as the light of the world.*

COUNCIL REPORT

SPR's Parish Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 11, and took action on the following items:

- A huge thank-you to the Building Committee, especially the Tuesday Crew, for all the faithful and hard work they have done to ready the apartment for showing. We are grateful to the leadership of Brian Olson, Pam Peyton, Jim Halgerson, John Johnson, and quite a few others who jumped in to help get tasks done. Thank you!
- The apartment is now ready to be rented and showings have commenced. The 2022 budget calls for it to be rented by February, so—hopefully—by the time you get this newsletter, all of that will be squared away.
- There are a great many members of the parish who are ill with Covid-19, more now than at any time during the pandemic. We continue to hold this up as our chief concern in our life together.
- In that vein, we have accepted new directives from the Health Professionals' Group, including a reduction (for now) in programming. Our hope is that these matters will only be "on hold" until Lent (March 2), at which time they can resume again.
- The Parish Council voted to recommend the 2022 Budget to the congregation for passage at

the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30th. This meeting will be moved to Zoom for health reasons and because we wish as many members of SPR to be able to participate as possible. Please watch the Friday e-mail and other announcements for how you can join this meeting.

- Similarly with the Budget Q&A on Sunday, January 23.
- The Nominating Committee has met and will be presenting names to the Annual Meeting for new members of the Parish Council. We are especially grateful to all who have served this past year.

BIRTHDAYS

10 Roman Hund, Christopher Taykalo

11 Deb Horne

12 Cheri Gohr

15 Alton Proctor

17 Diane Aase

19 Dalante Peyton, Drew Puroway

20 Grant, Tanner and Kaydee Rouillard-Horne

21 Barb Merchant

24 Michael-jon Pease

26 David Moen



HEALTH PROFESSIONALS' GROUP

New Modifications In Place Until Lent

The SPR Health Professionals' Group continues to monitor the situation re: Covid-19 (Omicron), and—to that end—has recommended some

changes that will be effective immediately. We hope that these are short-term solutions as the Omicron wave passes, and the Group will reassess again in early February. In the meantime, the following is in place until the beginning of Lent (March 2):

- Sunday Adult Forum: on hold;
- Sunday School: on hold;
- Coffee/Treats after the 10:30 liturgy: on hold.
- Confirmation: as usual.
- Midweek Lenten Prayer: as usual.
- Parish Meetings, including Annual Meeting: on Zoom.

NEW MEMBERS + Have you noticed some new faces in SPR's pews? We hope you have, and we are delighted to welcome a sizeable class of new members who have chosen to make SPR a part of their journey in Christ Jesus. We welcome among us:

- **Kelly Bartnick and Alex Wuebker**
- **Jean and Stewart Scott**
- **Susan Martyn**
- **Marumba Tete**
- **Mary Kasten**
- **Joe Herbert**
- **Lyndee, Adam and Alex Salo**

We welcome all of these new members to SPR, who will be formally received among us on Transfiguration Sunday, February 27th. Welcome to SPR!

COUNTERS NEEDED + SPR is in need (always!) of some additional Sunday morning counters. What does this entail? It's fast and easy work, but exceptionally important as we hold in place financial controls that help us to run a tight ship. Is this glamorous work? Not exactly, but it's super important—and a very real way you can help SPR. Training is provided, the time commitment is about once a

Below: SPR member Nadia Ramirez was featured on the front page of the Pioneer Press, leading other student protesters in seeking distance-learning options during COVID for St. Paul students.

month. Contact Pam Peyton to volunteer: pam_peyton@yahoo.com.

FORGIVE: LENTEN MIDWEEK WORSHIP

Lenten midweek worship (Holden Evening Prayer) will be happening starting Wednesday, March 9 at 6:30 p.m. In lieu of our LISTEN Series, this year each week will feature a short homily on forgiveness:

- *Forgive Your Enemies (3/9)*
- *Forgive The Past (3/16)*
- *Forgive the Future (3/23)*
- *Forgive the Church (3/6)*
- *Forgive Yourself (3/13)*



Above: Many hands make light work! Here, the volunteers for Meals Ministry gather in SPR's kitchen to prepare and deliver meals to members who are homebound, have recently had surgery, or were recovering from COVID-19. Thank you to all!



FEBRUARY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

We are so thankful for all the volunteers who help make Sunday morning “run.”

February 6 Fifth Sunday after The Epiphany

Margaret Schuster, Elizabeth Callen, *Asst Ministers*
Mark Sandberg, Victoria Smith, *Lectors*
Paige Johnson, *Acolyte*
Max Rouillard-Horne, *Cantor*
Deanna Sande, Kristen Damberg,
Tamika Ramirez Tom Webb, *Greeters/Ushers*

February 13 Sixth Sunday after The Epiphany

Bonnie Olson, Elizabeth Callen, *Asst Ministers*
Jim McGowan, Colleen McGuire, *Lectors*
Mya Wagner, *Acolyte*
Erica Perl, *Cantor*
Jim and Anne Halgerson,
Jan Swenson, Dorcas Adedigba, *Greeters/Ushers*

February 20 Seventh Sunday after The Epiphany

Aaron Brown, Elizabeth Callen, *Asst Ministers*
Jim McGowan, Diane Aase, *Lectors*
Abby Hanson, *Acolyte*
Jamie Hocmuth, *Cantor*
Roman and Hilary Hund,
Eldora Pearson, Cheri Ghor, *Greeters/Ushers*

February 27 Feast of The Transfiguration

Aaron Brown, Elizabeth Callen, *Asst Ministers*
John Whalen, Jim McGowan, *Lectors*
Max, Grant, Tanner Rouillard Horne,
Carlos Ramirez, *Acolytes*
Jim Bowen, *Cantor*
Dorcas Adedigba, Kristen Damberg,
Jim and Marilyn McGowan, *Greeters/Ushers*



Above: SPR was decked out on Christmas Eve, surrounded by luminaria as worshippers left, a reminder that “...the light shines in the darkness.” The Christmas Cycle of the Church’s life formally ends on Candlemas, February 2. **Below:** A sizeable crew gathered on January 18th to take down SPR’s Christmas Decorations. A special thank-you to Sara Gjerdrum and Charles Olson who have led this effort for twenty-two years! In addition to good work done, helpers enjoyed some festive goodies afterward.



HOLY EUCHARIST LIVESTREAM + SPR’s Sunday Eucharist is livestreamed every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. via SPR’s Facebook page, or at www.stpaulref.online.church. Similarly, SPR now has a YouTube channel where services are archived. Simply go to YouTube and search “St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church.”

Left: SPR’s Advent Wreath was lowered, providing a beautiful Advent view of the high altar. Thank you to all who helped decorate for SPR’s Christmas celebrations!

BIBLE MATTERS. VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAYS + Because the Bible does matter, you are invited to join us each week on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Watch the weekly emails for up to date information.



ADULT FORUM FEBRUARY

On Hiatus Until Lent

In our continued efforts to be adaptable and flexible regarding the Omicron variant of COVID-19, Adult Forum is “paused” until Lent (and, we hope, no longer than this...). We will resume the Sunday after Ash Wednesday, March 6th at 9:10 a.m., and we hope you can join us. As part of our Spring Adult Forum Series, we will push the study by LSS “My Neighbor is Not For Sale” to the spring. Because we continue to have to be rather...creative with the schedule...please watch announcements for when this will take place.

BUILDING UPDATE + SPR’s Building Committee and Ardila Remodeling have finished the extensive work that needed to be done to prepare the apartment for rent. The Office Suite is ready to be rented. Thanks to all who have volunteered to get these spaces back to working order; the Tuesday Crew, especially, has done an outstanding job. Please thank them when you see them!

MEALS MINISTRY! + Once a month, SPR members help each other by preparing and delivering meals for members who may find it challenging to always have a home-cooked meal. Meals will be cooked in the church kitchen at **9:00 a.m. on February 19**. Volunteers are needed; if you can chop, cook, package, measure or just like to socialize, please join us. The alley door will be open. Your contributions for this ministry are greatly appreciated. For more information please contact Gwen Peyton, gwenpeyton5@gmail.com.

BREAKFAST CLUB + Like Adult Forum, we are putting a temporary “pause” on Breakfast Club until after the beginning of Lent. This means that we will gather again (hopefully!) on Sunday, March

20th. Again, please watch announcements carefully in case there are any changes.

QUILTING *for Charity* Sat. February 5, 10:00 a.m. You can sew, arrange blocks, iron, tie layers together, cut fabric! Work on your own projects. Join in on the fun! Bring a snack to share. Coffee provided. Contact Gwen Peyton at gwenpeyton5@gmail.com.

SYNOD CAPITAL CAMPAIGN + The Saint Paul Area Synod has launched a Synod-wide Capital Campaign under the theme of “Planting Hope.” Much is envisioned for the Campaign, including a partnership venture with Lutheran Social Service to build a service center on the East Side of St. Paul. The Campaign goal is 2.7 million dollars, and lead gifts are already underway. As part of SPR’s Annual Stewardship Campaign, about \$2500.00 has been raised so far from SPR for this effort. Interested in giving? We’d love to talk to you! You can e-mail Pr. Shebeck at pastorpatrick@stpaulref.org, and we can get you hooked up with ways you can give.

THE SPECTRUM: A NEW LOOK You may have noticed that the *Spectrum* looks a bit different this month. This is because our publisher, J. S. Paluch, has gone out of business at the end of 2021. Please bear with us as we make this transition!

SUNDAY SCHOOL will go on pause (again!) until Lent as we get through this latest rise in COVID-19 diagnoses in our community. We want to make sure it is safe to return, and—following the advice of the Health Professionals’ Group—we think that it is prudent to hit “pause” on this. Every week, however, you can find a “Virtually Sunday School” lesson in the Sunday E-mail. Watch for updates as we continue to be flexible.

DONATE TO SPR USING YOUR SMARTPHONE! *A great way to donate whether you are at church or out and about!* Now you can give from anywhere in the world! It’s fast, easy, and secure. Search your app-finder for “**GivePlusChurch**,” download it, click “sign up,” and follow the instructions. You can donate to either the Good Samaritan Fund or the Parish General fund (in addition to your regular pledge). Give it a try! **Thanks to all who are using this quick and easy way to donate!**

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❖ P A R T I N G S H O T ❖

ORGANSOUP AT ST. PAUL-REFORMATION



Sarah Palmer, organ
Thursday, February 3 at 12:20 p.m.

The celebration of a century of SPR music continues on Feb. 3 with Sarah Palmer, a junior at St. Olaf College studying with Catherine Rodland and majoring in Organ Performance. Sarah is the winner of the American Guild of Organists/Quimby North Central Regional Competition for Young Organists. Please bring a non-perishable canned good as a donation...you're in for a treat!