

THE SPECTRUM

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL-REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

**APRIL
2025**

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

Sunday School
Confirmation
9:30 a.m.

Adult Forum
9:10 a.m.

Nursery
Staffed by Attendant
9-11:45 a.m.

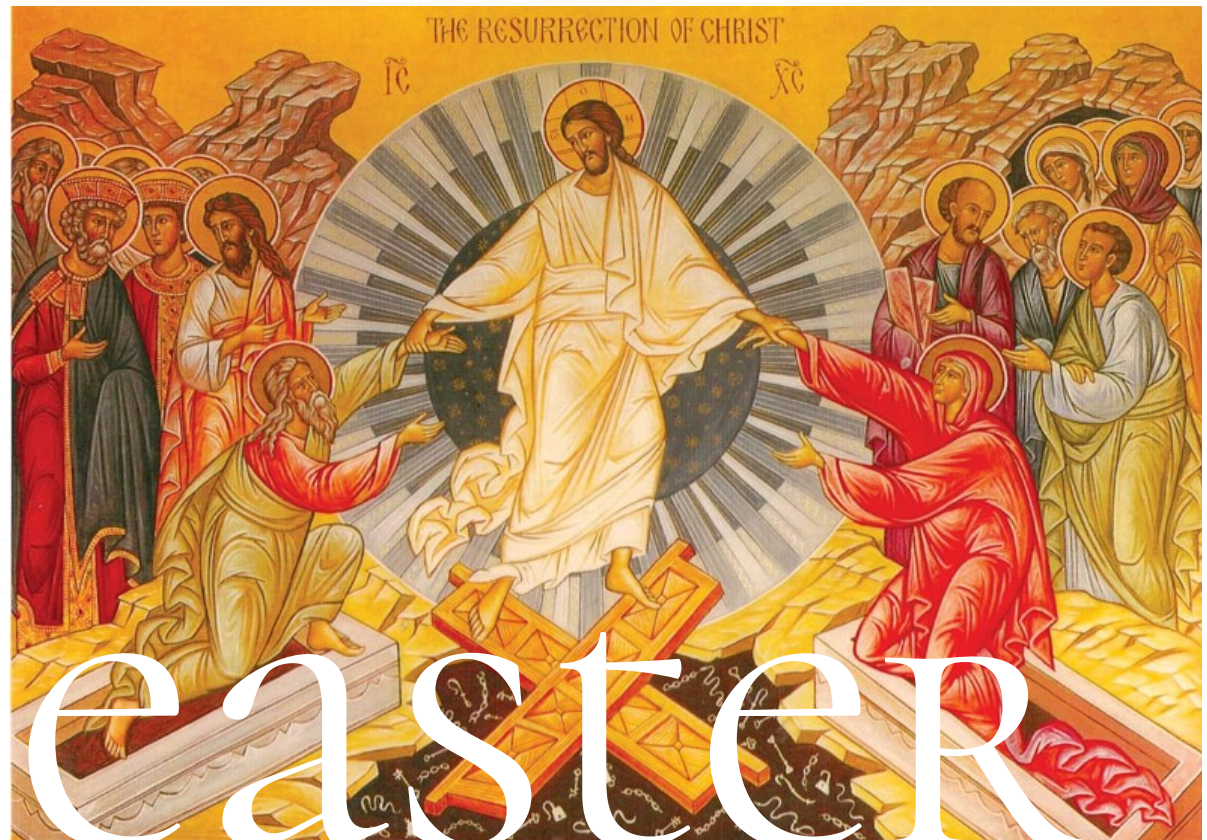
Livestream video via
SPR's FB page or look
in your e-mail on
Sunday mornings.

Visit us on the web!
www.stpaulref.org

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

100 Oxford Street N.
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 Spec-*
trum goes to print on the
15th and this date is hard
and fast. Articles received
after the 12th may or may
not be included. ter.



Join us as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ:

Palm Sunday, April 13

8:00 a.m. Contemplative Eucharist

9:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Youth Fundraiser Breakfast Potluck

10:30 a.m. Choral Eucharist

Holy Monday-Holy Wednesday, April 14-16

5:00 p.m. Spoken Eucharist, West Transept

Maundy Thursday, April 17

7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist with Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday, April 18

7:00 p.m. Proper Liturgy with Adoration of the Cross

The Great Vigil of Easter, April 19

8:00 p.m. The Great Vigil with Christ (Capitol Hill), front steps

10:30 p.m. Easter Reception, lower auditorium

The Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Sunday, April 20

8:00 a.m. Contemplative Eucharist (Last of the year)

10:30 a.m. Choral Eucharist with Brass and Choir

IN JUST A FEW WEEKS. Christians throughout the world will gather to celebrate the Lord's passage from death to life. The deep questions of life and death are ones that the church has been asking since a Friday afternoon two thousand years ago, and the ways in which early Christians asked these questions remain the ways we continue to wrestle with our own mortality and the mortality of those with whom we are in deep relationship. No one escapes these questions, Christian or not; it is simply that Christian people ask them within the community of Jesus.

As I write to you, there is much to be anxious about. Unsettling changes on a national level join economic woes, while challenges closer to home (maybe in our own homes...) present the age-old question: in the struggle between death and life, *who wins?*

Life wins because of Jesus' resurrection. In Easter, God declares that death is an intolerable state: it cannot be allowed to exist, it cannot be allowed to flourish, it cannot (and will not) gain the upper hand. In Easter, there is no longer a question of "if" death is defeated (it already has been!). In Easter, the cycle of hurt and retribution which seem to circle in never-ending repetition is stopped. In Easter, we are called to settle into the promise of God's life that is imparted to us, all because of God's immense and – *in our own lives* – very personal love.

Life is all around you! If we are careful to look, there are signs of life around us peeking through the soil, ready to grow. Their seeds were planted long ago (in some cases, as Easter, two thousand years ago!), and their 'getting ready' for 'now' has been done in secret. Unseen and forgotten, God has not forgotten them, and it is no coincidence that Easter lines up with spring in the

northern hemisphere. This past Sunday, one of our little ones made his way back to the sacristy with his parents to give me a "high-five," apparently something he had been intent on doing all morning as they were getting ready to go to church. SPR's recent baby-boom is expanding with the birth of newborns; committees are meeting to do ministry; new members are being called to be part of this community; old members are learning, growing, changing. Life is on the move!

Indeed, the life of God is dynamic, and – *in the face of anxiety and uncertainty* – it may seem that the things I mentioned above are flippant or of small consequence. After all, how does a three-year old giving a high-five compare to great evil going on around us?

Answer: the cross. God is, of course, where God never should be: in small things that seem (like a manger, for example...), to be insignificant. The elderly member

who seems frail only seems so until we remember that they are living into a story far longer, far stronger, and far more durable than any challenges that come in particular seasons of life. The one who is struggling with a terminal disease may seem helpless until we remember that they are buoyed up by that same story (the story of God's life!). The one who is struggling mightily with their mental health may seem hopelessly lost until we remember that Jesus defeats the devil in the wilderness and is with each of us in our suffering. Grand national dramas may seem untouchable by the things of God, until we remember that we – *as God's people* – are changing things right on our own street corner by providing a roof over the heads of young people who have no place to sleep. If you want to see the kingdom of God (the kingdom of life!), you must look to the **Pastor, continued on page 4**



“Life wins because of Jesus’ resurrection. In Easter, God declares that death is an intolerable state...”

FROM THE CANTOR

As I write this column in mid-March, I am thinking a lot about *diakonia*, the Greek root word from which “deacon” is taken. Part of my Lenten routine has been reading each morning chapters from a 2024 book *Diaconal Studies: Lived Theology for the Church in North America*. I also have been invited to serve as the worship leader and small group facilitator for a conference called “To Church and World: Called, Formed, and Sent to Bridge the Gap” the last weekend of March. One requirement

for ELCA deacon candidates is a formation in *diakonia* and deacon identity, and this event fills that requirement. I’m super excited to go hang out with 40 deacon candidates and deacon mentors for a weekend at Lutherdale Camp in Wisconsin!

One concept I have been pondering is the *diakonia* of the baptized. Despite what I learned in my undergraduate Wester Civ course, Martin Luther never used the phrase “priesthood of all believers.” He does allude to a priesthood of the baptized, however, when he is railing against the Church for the idea that only those who had taken holy orders as priests or monastics had a calling from God to live a spiritual life. In *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, he writes, “we are all consecrated priests through Baptism...” We have priests who are ordained to administer the sacraments, but we are all called to a spiritual life through our baptism.

I would like to extend that concept to include the *diakonia* of the baptized. Jesus modeled *diakonia* for us when he washed the disciples’ feet, an act in which we are invited to participate on Maundy Thursday. There’s a sense in which *diakonia* means “humble service,” demonstrating the upside-down quality of the kingdom of God, where the last shall be first and the least is the greatest. In other places in the New Testament, the *diakon-* root words are used when the person serving has a mission from the church. In Acts 6, Stephen and six other men were chosen

to make sure the daily food distribution was reaching all the widows. Yes, their work had an element of humble service, but it also had the quality of being emissaries of Jesus, of bridging the Church and the world.

So, baptized in Christ, you are called to live a spiritual life in God. And you are also called to live a life of service, bridging the church and the world. How can you do that? So many ways! God created us all to be the unique people we are with our own gifts. Almost any activity can be an act of service if performed with that attitude! One way to serve in April to participate in Feed My Starving Children meal packing with our group on Saturday, April 5 from 9:15-11:30 at their site in Eagen (990 E Loane Oak Rd #136). There are 20 total spots available, for people ages 5 and up. Sign up at fmsc.org using the join code **W2WE8K**, or tell Sister Stacie you want to go. We’ll go out for lunch afterward for anyone who wants more fellowship time, also an important activity into which the Holy Spirit calls us!

May you have a blessed Lent and joyful Easter celebration, and may you go in peace to love and serve God and your neighbor. After all, you’ve been baptized to do just that!

+ Sr. Stacie Lightner, Cantor



Feed My Starving Children Service Event For All!

Saturday, April 5 + 9:15-11:30 a.m.

Sign up at: fmsc.org using code **W2WE8K**
or, let Sr. Stacie know: music@stpaulref.org

No experience required! We will pack food using
FMSC’s efficient and streamlined system...*a
wonder in its own right!* Many hands make light
work...come join us?

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Pastor, continued from page 2

cross. Not as a sign of the defeat of God, but as a sign of the defeat of death, and therefore the triumph of life.

As you approach the great Easter feast, I hope that you will point yourselves toward this promise. Life is for the world, and it is for you. It is for those you love and those with whom you struggle. It is for those who are sick and those who aren't, those who grasp it and those who don't, those who welcome it and those who are blasé about it. The life of God, as it turns out, is stronger than anything (anything!). Death only used to be a category. Now, it is simply an antique that got thrown away because it became useless.

The only category that matters on this side of Easter? Life. May God bless you as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord,

+Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck, *Senior Pastor*



LENTEN LISTEN SERIES: *Nurturing Your Soul: Finding Sacred Rhythms*

For our annual Lenten LISTEN series, SPR will welcome Sr. LaDonna Olson, a member of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA and a trained spiritual director. Sr. LaDonna will lead us in this year's study: "Nurturing Your Soul: Finding Sacred Rhythms." The Listen Series will conclude on Wednesday, April 9 from 7:00-8:30. You are invited to join us for one, or all of the sessions!

Each Wednesday evening we will gather to experience a way to nurture our souls using a different practice. We will use Scripture, Orthodox Icons, Creative expression and Nature. There will be time to share and suggestions for daily activities to find new ways to connect with God.

Sister LaDonna is a member of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA. She is a certified spiritual director through Christos Center in Lino Lakes, retreat leader, and Enneagram coach through the CPEnneagram Academy. She is a widowed mother of three grown children. She lives

in North Branch with her dog, Milo. This promises to be a great time of learning—see you there!

BIRTHDAYS

4/2 Henry Hanson, Wendell Webster

4/5 Laura Carrero

4/7 Carsten Slostad

4/8 Sandra Archer

4/9 Alyn Bedford

4/10 Amy Rouillard, Margaret Webster

4/12 Anna Blaine

4/14 Marjorie Ruth

4/19 Brenda Froisland

4/21 Isaiah Ripley

4/22 Charles Petersen

4/23 Patricia Banks, Sara Gjerdrum, Lisa Mathieson

4/26 Aklilu Gjerdrum, Sam Matenaer, Victoria Smith

4/28 John Knapp

ANNIVERSARIES

4/8 Brenda Froisland and Mary Chilvers

VIGIL RECEPTION VOLUNTEERS: HELP!

Each year, SPR puts on a festive reception after the Easter Vigil, and we need your help! Mostly to put out wine/food/etc. and provide hospitality as we welcome members and friends. If you would like to help, please send your name to the office and we will get you all squared away: office@stpaulref.org.



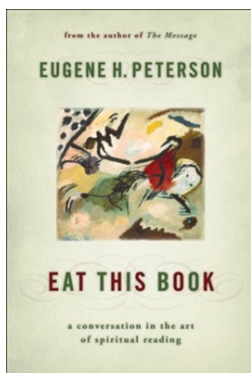
Above: SPR's Choir joined the choirs of St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church and St. Thomas More Catholic Community for Ecumenical Lenten Evening Prayer. Here, the clergy from all three parishes gather for a photo after the service.

COUNCIL CORNER

The Parish Council met on Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

- Proposed the formation of a working group to develop a rental marketing strategy for the space vacated by the Music Conservatory. Ian Block volunteered to lead this effort.
- Requested and received approval to hire an interim part time administrator to provide office support while the current administrator is on medical leave. He reported the addition of a new phone and wi-fi system, long needed and good news, that church attendance has been increasing.
- Chris Lyman, Treasurer, reported on January financial results. General offerings were lower than expected but that was offset by bell tower rental income. Expenses met current budget projections generally, remaining in the black.

+ Kristin Benson, *Council Secretary*



ADULT FORUM DURING IN EASTERTIDE

“*Eat this Book*” by Eugene Peterson

Sunday Adult Forum is a gem of SPR, and we hope you will join us every Sunday from 9:10-10:10 a.m. as we continue to learn together. Last year during Eastertide, we did a study on the story of the raising of Lazarus; this year we pivot, and will spend the Sundays of Easter reading Eugene Peterson’s “*Eat This Book: A Conversation on the Art of Spiritual Reading.*” Books are available for \$15 in the narthex and include a reading schedule. **A reminder:** because of Easter Festivities, there will be **no** Adult Forum on Sunday April 13 (Palm Sunday), or April 20 (Easter). We begin our time together “eating this book” on Sunday, April 27. Join us!

BUILDING COMMITTEE SURVEY

SPR’s Capital Campaign groundwork is being laid, and—to help us identify projects—we would like

your input! The building could easily eat up endless amounts of money, so...we need to prioritize! You can fill out a survey hard-copy in the narthex, or online through Easter. Please be sure to identify yourself; anonymous answers will not be considered, and we need to know how to contact you if we have questions about your suggestions. The Building Committee has already identified some priorities, and as we refine these, we would like to hear what you think. *One per person, please!*



PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST

Potluck Youth Fundraiser: April 13

SPR’s Palm Sunday Breakfast will take place Sunday, April 13 (Palm Sunday) from 9-10a.m. This year, **this breakfast is a pot-luck**, so we invite you to bring your favorite breakfast-y dish to share. The proceeds of this fundraiser breakfast go to support SPR’s Confirmation kids. A Free-will offering will be received, and we’d love to break bread with you. *See you there!*

EASTER DECORATING

Saturday, April 19th at 10:00 a.m.

All hands on deck! We would love it if you would come and join us as we deck out SPR for Easter! Many hands make light work (of course!), and we have a place for you to help no matter your skill level. Come for the whole time, or part of the time...we will put you to work!

EASTER EGG HUNT

Easter Sunday, April 20th at 10:00 a.m.

SPR will host an Easter Egg Hunt for little ones for the second year in a row on Easter Sunday at 10:00 a.m. The hunt will take place outside (weather permitting), or in the lower auditorium (if it is wet). This doesn’t take long, but is a lot of fun, and especially good for little ones to do to celebrate.

APRIL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Thank you to all the volunteers who help make the 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning services “run.”

Sunday, Apr 6, 10:30 AM: Lent V

Kathy Thomforde, Ian Block - Assisting Ministers
 Jim McGowan, Cynthia Peyton - Lector
 Roman Hund, Hilary Hund, Deanna Sande, Kristen Damberg - Greeter and Usher
 Steve Ruth, Marjie Ruth - Coffee and Treats
 Sebastian Badilla - Acolyte
 Jamie Block - Cantor

Sunday, Apr 13, 10:30 AM: Palm Sunday

Amy Rouillard, Aaron Brown - Assisting Ministers
 Margaret Schuster, Anthony Hedlund - Lector
 Dorcas Adedigba, Kristin Benson, Eldora Pearson, Cheri Gohr - Greeter and Usher
 John Johnson, Karen Allard - Coffee and Treats
 Elizabeth Adedigba, Mikko Matala, Matias Badilla, Lu Beckman - Acolyte
 Mike Banks - Cantor

Thursday, Apr 17, 7:00 PM: Maundy Thursday

Ian Block, Aaron Brown - Assisting Ministers
 Mya Wagner, Joe Voss - Lector
 Ed Stuart, Joe Voss - Greeter and Usher
 Matias Badilla, Noelle Puroway, Lu Beckman - Acolyte

Friday, Apr 18, 7:00 PM: Good Friday

Amy Rouillard, Joe Voss - Assisting Minister
 Jamie Block, Kayla Ulsby - Lector
 Anthony Hedlund, Eldora Pearson - Usher

Saturday, Apr 19, 7:00 PM: The Great Easter Vigil

Aaron Brown, Amy Rouillard - Assisting Ministers
 John Whalen, Cynthia Peyton - Lector
 Hilary Hund, Roman Hund, Deanna Sande - Greeter and Usher
 Erica Perl - Cantor

Sunday, Apr 20, 10:30 AM: Easter Sunday

Victoria Smith, Kathy Thomforde - Assisting Ministers
 Kayla Ulsby, David Gjerdrum - Lector
 Anne Halgerson, Jim Halgerson, Joshua Weichel, Kristen Damberg - Greeter and Usher
 Ellis Bedford, Daniel Adedigba, Henry Hanson, Lu Beckman, Mikko Matala, Alexander Salo - Acolyte
 Carsten Slostad - Cantor

Sunday, Apr 27, 10:30 AM: Easter I

Jamie Block, Ian Block - Assisting Ministers
 Carla Hagen, Alyn Bedford - Lector
 Joe Voss, Ed Stuart, Cheri Gohr, Kristen Damberg - Greeter and Usher
 Carla Hagen, Teresa Ortiz - Coffee and Treats
 Elizabeth Adedigba - Acolyte
 Jim Bowen - Cantor

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

SPR is in the preparatory stages of a major Capital Campaign, and our goal is to keep you updated on developments as they occur. Right now, the Finance Committee has been formed and has met, chaired by Sarah Matala. The Building Committee is in the process of forming now, and an update on that will be coming next month.

The next step for the Finance Committee is to be in contact with various consultants/resources to advise this campaign. For our 2016-17 Campaign, we employed Mark Davey and Associates as our consultant, and the Finance Committee feels that this was a good use of resources and energy.

The “timeline” for this Campaign is for it to launch sometime in the fall, meaning that we will be preparing and laying the foundations (no pun intended) in the spring and summer of this year. Please pray for the success of this work as we begin, and we promise to keep you in the loop and informed as we move ahead!

MEDICAL LEAVE

SPR’s Parish Administrator, Jennifer Walding, is away on medical leave. Our prayers go with her as



she navigates some health issues, and—to that end—we ask that you would be patient with some administrative tasks that might take a bit longer than usual. In the interim, we have hired Dona Hryniewicki, who will be working limited hours in the office; please stop in and say hello if you are in the building. If you would like to send Jennifer a card, you can simply send it to her at the Parish Office and we will see that she gets it!

QUILTING AND KNITTING *for Charity* **Join us on Saturday April 5 at 10:00 a.m.** You can sew, arrange blocks, iron, tie layers together, cut fabric! All knitters, crocheters, and quilters invited. Work on your own projects. Join in on the fun! Bring a snack to share; coffee is provided. Contact Gwen Peyton at gwenpeyton5@gmail.com.

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 cooked in the church kitchen at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday April 12.** Volunteers 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.



WEDNESDAY LENT SCHEDULE

Lutherans love them some Lent, and we hope you can join us each Wednesday as we gather for fellowship, worship, and learning:

- 5:30-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper (Lower Aud.)
- 5:30 p.m. Wings of Grace Handbell Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Holden Evening Prayer (church)
- 7:00 p.m. LISTEN Series with Sr. Ladonna Olson
- 7:00 p.m. Choir

ST. GRUBBY'S DAY

Saturday, May 3, 10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Looking ahead, we hope you can join us on **Saturday, May 3** from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. as we scrub away the stain of sin. This is a joyful opportunity to spiff up our space for spring, and

treats are provided. Come for the whole time or as long as you can...the coffee and treats are on the house!

WARMING HUB UPDATE + A Successful Run! + SPR's Warming Hub ended at the end of March, and it was a successful season. We are thankful for the opportunity to work with Ramsey County, and the Warming Hub saw (on average) about 20-30 guests each night. We look forward to serving our community in this way again, and remain committed to this ministry!

BREAKFAST CLUB + Join us Sunday, April 6 at the Louisiana Café on Selby Ave. after the second service. All are welcome to join this time of fellowship, good conversation and food.

SCHEDULE CHANGE + Farewell, 8:00! + The 8:00 liturgy **concludes its run on Easter Sunday, April 20th.** Starting April 27, we return to one liturgy at 10:30 a.m.

ISAIAH UPDATE + ISAIAH kicked off a Deep Listening Campaign via forums the last three Sundays in March. There was a large number of participants who expressed their concerns about how they or their loved ones are being affected by the current political reality. A survey was used to stimulate people's thoughts. Small groups allowed people to express those pains more deeply. The goal is to increase the number of people who take the survey to more fully represent the congregation. The results of this will be communicated in early May. Please consider participating if asked. Longer term, the survey results will be combined with those of the other ISAIAH congregations in St. Paul and the East Metro.

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. If you are giving electronically, you may use the QR code at right, which is safe, fast, and efficient! You can donate to either the Good Samaritan Fund or the Parish General fund (in addition to your regular pledge). Give it a try!



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ST. PAUL-REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH
I N T H E C I T Y F O R G O O D

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Above: March 14th, affectionately known as “Pi(e) Day” (3.14) is an opportunity to put baking skills to the test. Here, SPR member Victoria Smith shows off a cherry pie that she made which had to be sampled by the parish staff to make sure it had enough sugar. The staff of SPR is always available to test sweets that you may send in our direction as a public service to our community. Happy 3.14!