

THE SPECTRUM

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL-REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

**FEBRUARY
2025**

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

Sunday School
Confirmation
9:30 a.m.

Adult Forum
9:10 a.m.

Nursery
Kids with 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
651-224-3371
office@stpaulref.org

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.



ON OUR WAY REJOICING!

On a cold January Saturday, members of SPR gathered for our monthly Meals Ministry cooking and delivery. A dedicated group of volunteers makes this work happen, proving that Christianity is a religion about food!

CANDLEMAS CANDLES: FEBRUARY 2

On Sunday, February 2nd, you are invited to bring—from home—a candle that you might have on hand to be blessed. “Candlemas,” or “Presentation” falls on a Sunday this year, and this is traditionally the time when the church’s candles for the coming year are blessed. Your candle—however grand or modest—will be blessed and then returned to you, a reminder that Jesus is—indeed!- the light of the world.

THIS FEBRUARY 2, the Presentation of the Lord falls on a Sunday, an occurrence that happens only once every seven years. The “Presentation” is sometimes called “The Purification of the Virgin Mary,” and it is the formal end of the church’s “Christmas Cycle.” On this day, we recall Jesus’ coming into the temple to encounter Simeon and Anna, and Simeon’s declaration that Jesus is the “light to the nations.” Because of this, this day is also called “Candlemas,” because it was—historically—on this day that the “lights” (candles) were blessed for use for the coming year.

This day—no matter what it is called—is less about candles than the metaphor they call to mind: that Jesus shines light in the dark places of the world, and that—following that example—we, as Christian people, are called to be light to the world as well.

What does this mean? Well, unless any of you can glow (in which case you might want to see your doctor...), it means that Christian people are called to live in a way that mimics the life of their teacher and Lord: Jesus himself. For Lutherans, the way that we do this matters and the order in which we do it matters: we have faith first, and the ways that we live our lives reflect that faith second. The imitation of Jesus is not a “work” by which we earn God’s love, but rather a response to the graciousness of God already setting us free.

That being said, there are several ways that we can respond carefully to how God is calling us to serve the world. I will be the first to say that I am often not good at this work. We each have our own personality traits that try to bog us down in various areas, and I am no exception. I get crabby sometimes, I don’t listen as well as I should, and I often fail to see things from the viewpoint of others (amongst other “growing edges” that I have). Each of us has these parts of us that need

work, and—next month—these will garner some more intensive consideration as we head into Lent.

But there are attributes of Jesus that we are called to work on, and I would offer you—this month—the ones that I try to remind myself of in my prayers and in my work to follow Jesus; you may find these helpful on your own journey:



“Our whole life is an exercise in determining what ‘matters’ and ‘what doesn’t.’”

Prioritization: not everything we do, no matter how important it seems, requires the amount of attention we give it. Being able to discern between what is “necessary” and what might wait can free up the soul for greater encounters with God. Our whole life is an exercise in determining what “matters” and “what doesn’t,” and setting the correct priorities is—in this way—a spiritual practice. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your mind, and all your strength...and love your neighbor as yourself” is a

good measuring stick on this one. The other things we love? They can wait.

Compassion: this one is the “weft” in the fabric of the Christian life. For myself, I often find that the work of compassion gets stopped up by work that seems to take priority (see above!). But caring for one another is the work of the Christian life, and often this is most necessary when it is most inconvenient. It’s easy to have compassion on people that have it all together. It’s less easy when the person is continually making mistakes or is difficult or crabby. But practicing compassion not only supports the neighbor, it also changes us. And remember: the Christian life is about continual conversion to the way of Jesus. By practicing compassion, we help the neighbor, and we work on ourselves.

Mercy remembers that we do not know the full story of someone’s life, and—in turn—are taking seriously the forgiveness of God for ourselves; i.e., we learn to have mercy on

Pastor, continued...

ourselves. The past that you screwed up? Let it go! The person you hurt? Bless them and commend them to God's care. The one you struggle with? Bless them, too, and remember that God delights in them!

So—as we say in the baptismal liturgy: “let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Now is the time to let your light shine! So...shine brightly!

+Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck

**FROM THE CANTOR**

Do you know that *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* has the readings for each Sunday and festival in the Revised Common Lectionary listed in the front of the book, starting on page 18? As I was preparing for Bible Matters in mid-January, I was using this resource to find the readings for Sunday, and seeing the readings for all three years laid out side by side I noticed something about the lectionary that I had never noticed before.

In the Sundays after Epiphany for each of the three years, we read an excerpt from Corinthians. The appointed text cleverly starts at a different point in the book each year: Year A begins with 1 Corinthians chapter 1, Year B begins with chapter 6, and Year C (our current year) begins with chapter 12. In this way, we hear nearly all of 1 Cor and some of 2 Cor early in the calendar year over the course of three years.

Corinth was a bustling and prosperous urban center that was ethnically and culturally diverse. It seems that the church in Corinth was similarly diverse, including people of differing class and wealth levels. 1 Cor addresses some issues of conflict within the community, urging them to set aside conflict in favor of unity in Christ. At this time of year, after we have spent time pondering the wonders of the Incarnation during Christmastide, it seems apt to turn our attention to what it means to live out the love of Jesus in community for the sake of the world. In this fractious and polarized

political climate, it seems even more urgent.

The portions of 1 Cor that we hear this year are among the most well known and beloved of Paul's writings. We hear that there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit gives them all. We explore the metaphor that we are the body of Christ. We learn that Christ is the first fruits of the dead and dwell in the assurance of the resurrection.

February 2 is the festival Presentation of Our Lord, when Jesus was presented in the Temple in Jerusalem in accordance with Jewish law. Since this festival falls on a Sunday this year, it takes the place of the readings for Lectionary 4C, including the famous “love chapter” that you have probably heard read at countless weddings, 1 Cor 13. Since we will miss reading it together in worship, I offer it to you here in strophic form, written by Andrew Donaldson, former president of The Hymn Society of the U.S. and Canada:

*Although I speak with angel's tongue,
my faith, my knowledge all surpass,
but have no love, my gifts are vain
as clanging gong or blaring brass.*

*For love is patient, love is kind,
and never vain with boasting pride;
love bears all things, all things endures.
All things must end; love will abide.*

*For now we peer at darkened glass;
our visions end; our tongues all cease.
In part we know, in part now see:
then we will see love face to face.*

*The gifts are many, the Body one,
and into one are all baptized.
Beloved, share one heart, one mind,
one hope, one faith, one love in Christ.*

Text © 1995 Andrew Donaldson. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-703900. All rights reserved.

The Spectrum Published Monthly
St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church
100 Oxford St N St. Paul, MN 55104
Issue: Volume 44 #2



LENTEN LISTEN SERIES

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

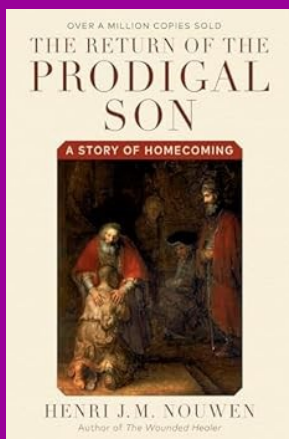
us in this year's study: "Learning the Discipline of Prayer." The Listen Series runs every Wednesday during Lent **starting on Wednesday, March 12** from 7:00-8:30. You are invited to join us for one, or all of the sessions!

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. We are thankful for Victoria Smith who has stepped in to help steer the ship. We anticipate that Jennifer will be back with us in late March or early April.

BIRTHDAYS

03 David Seed
 05 Zinashwork Gjerdrum
 08 Alex Wuebker
 10 Roman Hund, Christopher Taykalo
 11 Deborah Horne
 12 Cheri Gohr
 15 Alton Proctor
 17 Diane Aase
 19 Dalante Peyton, Drew Puoway
 20 Aspen Rouillard-Horne, Grant Rouillard-Horne
 Tanner Rouillard-Horne
 24 Michael-jon Pease
 26 David Moen, Kayla Ulsby



Lenten Retreat at St. John's Abbey

Tuesday March 25—Thursday March 27

Through a generous subsidy from the SPR Endowment, you are invited to join us for a Parish Lenten Retreat at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville. This three-day retreat will center on the Gospel for Lent IV: the parable of the prodigal son. We will make use of Henri Nouwen's "The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming," but much of our days will be spent in quiet, prayer, and rest.

We have twelve spots available that include meals and lodging in the Abbey Guesthouse. The Endowment's gift covers most—but not all—of the retreat's cost. Cost for the full three days, including meals and lodging: \$125. Registration opens on Ash Wednesday, March 5. Watch for more information!

COUNCIL CORNER

The Parish Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 14 and took action/heard information on the following:

- Council was informed that Jennifer Walding, office administrator, will be out indefinitely on medical leave. Temporary staffing provided by Victoria Smith was approved by the Council. This will cover the administrative tasks for the next 8 weeks.
- Susan Martyn, Vice President, updated Council on the results of the well-attended January 12, 2025 Listening Session, which was scheduled to present the changes to the existing Constitution and By Laws. A request was made during the Listening Session to consider changing the congregation mission statement to, In Christ. In the World for Good. In the World for God. The Council approved offering this as a friendly amendment to the Council approved SPR Constitution (By Law C.4.05.11).
- John Rent, Treasurer, presented the 2025 budget. Results from December have not yet been received for the 2024 budget year. Projected revenue from pledged offerings shows an increase in 2025 over 2024. Capital expenditures were increased in the 2025 budget to address unforeseen costs related to building and infrastructure. Insurance and technology (internet) costs continue to be an area of concern and will be addressed in 2025. A balanced budget for 2025 was presented, inclusive of debt service from last capital campaign. The Council approved the 2025 Budget. John Rent was thanked for his outstanding work as the Council Treasurer.

+ Kristin Benson, Council Secretary

BIBLE MATTERS

Please join us **via Zoom** on **Winter Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.** for this time of study, fellowship, and learning as we look forward to the coming week's lectionary texts. Zoom link will be in the

ADULT FORUMS IN FEBRUARY

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:



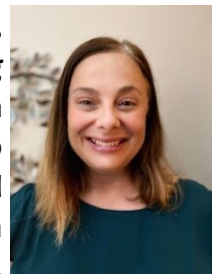
February 2: Fresh Energy: J. Drake Hamilton + J. Drake Hamilton is Fresh Energy's senior director of science policy. J. represents Fresh Energy at global climate summits and witnessed the historic 2015 Paris Agreement.

February 9: Carla Hagen, SPR member and Author on her latest book: Muskeg + The Minnesota-Canada Borderland Trilogy was born from the stories Carla grew up hearing from her mother and others in her hometown of Baudette, Minnesota. Carla recently published the second in the series with *Muskeg*, best described as a love story and an adventure story full of suspense and a touch of northern Minnesota magic.



February 16: Lynne Megan, TSE + TSE is a not-for-profit company that supports people with developmental and other intellectual disabilities. TSE has grown to support over 300 individuals in four training sites and at over 100 community businesses throughout the Metro area.

February 23: Michon True-Smith, Interfaith Center at Augsburg University + Michon has worked in the non-profit sector for close to 20 years. She has supported organizations making a difference in an array of community needs, including education, housing, and equitable services for people with disabilities and immigrants.



FEBRUARY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

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

February 2 Presentation of Our Lord

Kathy Thomforde, Jamie Block, *Asst. Ministers*
 John Whalen, Peter Huckfeldt, *Lectors*
 Ellis Bedford, Lu Beckman, Sebastian Badila,
 Matias Badilla, *Acolytes*
 Erica Perl, *Cantor*
 Anthony Hedlund, Ed Stuart, Annette Hines,
Greeters/Ushers
 OPEN, *Coffee/Treats*

February 9, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Amy Rouillard, Joe Voss, *Assisting Ministers*
 Kayla Ulsby, Mark Sandberg, *Lectors*
 Elizabeth Adedigba, Henry Hanson,
 Noah Johnson, *Acolytes*
 Margaret Schuster, *Cantor*
 Dorcas Adedigba, Kristin Benson, Hilary Hund,
 Roman Hund, *Greeters/Ushers*
 John Johnson, Linda Dahlen, *Coffee/Treats*

February 16, Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Ian Block, Jamie Block, *Assisting Ministers*
 Susan Martyn, Jim McGowan, *Lectors*
 Noelle Puroway, *Acolyte*
 Mike Banks, *Cantor*
 Ed Stuart, Bonnie Olson, Jan Swenson, Roman
 Hund, *Greeters/Ushers*
 Marilyn Harder, Karen Allard, *Coffee/Treats*

February 23, Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Victoria Smith, Kathy Thomforde, *Asst. Ministers*
 Mya Wagner, Diane Aase, *Lectors*
 Daniel Adedigba, *Acolyte*
 Carsten Slostad, *Cantor*
 Jim Halgerson, Anne Halgerson, Kristen Damberg,
 Eldora Pearson, *Greeters/Ushers*
 Jim Halgerson, Anne Halgerson, *Coffee/Treats*

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,



Above: One of SPR's century-old electrical boxes...Looks perfectly safe!

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!

HAVE YOU RETURNED YOUR 2025 PLEDGE CARD?

If not, not to worry! There are two ways you can do it:

- 1.) Return the **pledge form**/paper pledge card via the mail;
- 2.) **Make your commitment online** using the link in the Friday e-mail, via our website, or on SPR's Facebook Page. *Thank you in advance!*

QUILTING AND KNITTING *for Charity* **Join us on Saturday February 1 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 February 15.** 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.



BREAKFAST CLUB + **Join us Sunday, February 2** at the Louisiana Café on Selby Ave after the second service. All are welcome to join this time of fellowship, good conversation and food. No agenda: just fellowship!



THEOLOGY ON TAP + **February 20, 7:00 p.m.** at Saint Paul Brewing, 688 Minnehaha Ave E, St Paul. All are welcome!

BUILDING UPDATE + The Tuesday Crew and others continue working on multiple repair, improvement projects, including replacing a window in the office kitchen and a thousand other tasks that make this building run!



NEW BISHOP IN EL SALVADOR!

In mid-January, the Lutheran Church in El Salvador consecrated its new Bishop Guadalupe Cortez de Huevo. Here, outgoing bishop Gomez hands the new bishop his crozier, a special shepherd's staff that is symbolic of the episcopal office.

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!**

The Spectrum Monthly Newsletter
St Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church
100 Oxford St N
St. Paul, MN 55104

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT No. 517



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PARTING SHOT



Portable mattresses, snacks, and coffee for the Warming Hub at SPR. These are used every night during the cold winter months to provide safety and a place for those in need.