

May



CHURCHMOUSE

2024



Je Me Souviens

When Amy and I went on our honeymoon, we wanted to go Paris. But being relatively good at math, I didn't have to work too hard or long to figure out that I could spend one week (or less!) in Paris or two weeks in Quebec, visiting Montreal and Quebec City.

Quebec is a French-speaking province. And everywhere you go, you see Quebecois shirts, hats, and other sundry items with the French phrase, *Je me souviens*, which means *I remember*. They desire to remember their language, their heritage, and their history.

May is a month of remembrance. Some remembrances bring joy, and some bring some sadness. We will of course celebrate with joy and remember the woman of St. Paul on Mother's Day, because each woman at St. Paul is important to us. At worship that day, all the women will receive carnations as tokens of appreciation from our Women's Ministry.

To remember and honor our Trenton first responders, we will once again host Trenton Fire and Police, as well as many other first responders from other

Downriver communities, at our Memorial Service on May 22 at 5:30 pm. Our own Vicar Chris, who spent most of his previous careers in service as a soldier, first responder, and law officer, will share the message. This service is always moving. Plan on attending to support your community and honor the Lord.

As a nation, we end the month with Memorial Day weekend, when we remember all those who gave the utmost sacrifice in service to our country. President Lincoln called this ultimate sacrifice "the last full measure of devotion" as he dedicated the cemetery at Gettysburg in 1863.

It is only fitting that we remember such amazing people. We want to remember them because they represent the very best of who we are as a church and a community. So, to them, we say par Francais, je me souviens.

We have many pictures from our honeymoon. Many of them have either Amy, me, or both of us with shirts bearing the Quebec flag and their slogan in French. Every time I look at those pictures, I remember. I remember what brought us together at that

Lutheran chapel at the University of Wisconsin so many years ago. Our relationship began in that sanctuary and grew from there. Spend some time remembering God's blessings in your life. Experience the joy!

In our faith life, spending time remembering all that our Savior has done for us is healthy. Recalling in Word, song, or prayer, the work of Christ makes those feelings of gratitude swell. As you recall all the people that make your life better, don't forget to remember Him who has faithfully made you whole, alive, and eternal.

One verse that has always helped me remember was the theme verse of my previous congregation: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).
Je me souviens.

In His service,
Pastor Rick



First-team Followers

Jesus' ascension into Heaven shortly after His resurrection was "one of God's most audacious ploys," according to Pastor Frank Ramirez. "Jesus, resurrected, is Master of space and time, yet He passes on the work of spreading the Good News to His imperfect disciples, who ultimately pass it on to us (who are also imperfect disciples)."

By contrast, most Old Testament patriarchs often stayed on the throne until they died. Many of them could have benefited from a timely "exit strategy," Ramirez notes.

"As a child, I always felt that the world would have been a better place if the resurrected Lord had just taken over everything," Ramirez continues. "But though Jesus is active with us ('For where two or three are gathered in My name, I am there among them'—Matthew 18:20, NRSV), we're part of the first team now."

Our Associate Pastor

FREEDOM

Last month, I ended this article with this verse: "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13). With Memorial Day at the end of the month, May could be centered on the word FREEDOM. During this year at St. Paul, we are focusing on our GROW and GO parts of the Bridge. One leads to another! When we GROW in our faith, we then GO in love and service to others! In other words, growing in faith means realizing just how FREE we are in Christ. In that FREEDOM, the Lord calls to serve others in love. Here's some upcoming events that celebrate FREEDOM:

- In FREEDOM, St. Paul gets to participate once again in Trenton's Memorial Day Parade. What a great opportunity to celebrate the freedom we have in this country through those who gave their lives to defend it, but also the freedom from sin, death and the power of the devil we have in Jesus! If you want to walk/ride the parade route, let me or Don Busse know!
- In FREEDOM, we embrace the upcoming opportunity to be in the Trenton Summer Festival at the end of June. Ben and Robin Klus are doing a great job organizing this! Look for more ways to donate/participate in the coming weeks!
- In FREEDOM, our Strong for Life ministry will be having a blood drive here at St. Paul on September 26. What a great opportunity to donate to those in need, so that they can have the freedom that comes with good health! More details to follow!
- Finally, in FREEDOM, we get to serve one another in love. Whoever God calls you to serve, Christ has set you free through His death and resurrection so that you are free to focus on serving others in His name!

God's peace in Christ,
Pastor Ben



Preschool Staff Update

Farewell and God Bless You, Miss Penny

For over 30 years, St. Paul Lutheran Christian Preschool in Trenton has been meeting the educational, spiritual, and emotional needs of the youngest members of the Downriver community. In that time, we have been blessed with many wonderful staff members and no exception is our present Preschool Director, Miss Penny Bayer, who is retiring in May, following the 2023-24 school year.



For 27 years Penny has poured herself into making our preschool a positive learning environment for all the students. Her vision has always been to share Jesus with the students and their families in any way she can. Starting first as a classroom assistant, Miss Penny soon became a classroom teacher as our preschool grew and later became our director in the Fall of 2006.

To honor her and her ministry, a special farewell picnic event will be held on Sunday, June 2, at N. McLouth Park in Trenton. Miss Penny will be recognized during weekend services and the picnic will follow immediately after the 11 am service. Everyone is invited! Please bring your own lawn chairs and any yard games you might like. Also, please share this information with others you know who have been a part of our preschool family over the years. We'd love to have them join in the celebration too!

Congratulations to Our Confirmands

Firm Foundation

"... built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone..." (Ephesians 2:20 ESV).

Here are St. Paul's 14 confirmands for 2024. They received instruction and formation in the Christian faith and life over the last two years and then confessed their faith in the one, true God and the truth of His Word. It was a wonderful, blessed Confirmation service with so much love and support from their families and the faith family of St. Paul! Truly a GROW moment!

Yet, I kept reminding the confirmands that the Rite of Confirmation (and Confirmation instruction and formation) is not "the end." No, it is a "foundation," a solid rock that each confirmand may build upon for the rest of their lives as they live to know Christ and make Him known.

St. Peter says: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18 ESV). That word "grow," as Peter writes it, has a sense of continuation: "But *continually be growing* in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Growing in your faith life does not end once you are confirmed. Instead, it happens because you have that foundation built during your confirmation experience, with Jesus as the cornerstone of it all.

Continue to pray for these confirmands, that they will continually grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus after Confirmation. And I pray that all of you continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus every day, for He is the cornerstone of your life of faith!

God's peace in Christ,
Pastor Ben



Mother—and More

Though I've primarily known God as Father—along with metaphors such as rock, eagle, shepherd, potter—I also learned of Scripture passages portraying God as mother. For example (all NIV):

“For a long time I have kept silent. ... But now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant” (Isaiah 42:14).

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you” (Isaiah 66:13).

“Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them” (Hosea 13:8).

In others, God is pictured doing traditional “women’s work”: making clothes (Genesis 3:21), sweeping (Isaiah 14:23), preparing and hosting a meal (Proverbs 9:1-6), baking bread (Luke 13:21).

One of my favorite images of God is tucked in Hosea. While many modern dads nurture their toddlers this way, the tender words surely call to mind a mama’s care: “It was I who taught [Israel] to walk. ... To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them” (Hosea 11:3-4). Most importantly, God—however known—is loving and good.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

All-Abilities Inclusion Ministry

Community Partners

The following community partners are doing amazing things to enhance the lives of people with disabilities in our area. Please share this information with others who may benefit from their services.



Services To Enhance Potential (STEP) is a non-profit organization which provides support and services, especially employment services, to nearly 1,300 persons with disabilities and other mental health needs in Macomb and Wayne Counties. stepcentral.org/



The Arc Downriver is a membership organization that works directly with children and adults within all levels of intellectual and other related developmental disabilities, and their families. downriverarc.org/



Arkay Incorporated is a community-based organization that provides vocational and community based services in Wayne, Monroe, Macomb and Oakland County to the Developmentally Disabled and Cognitively Impaired community since 1983. miarkay.org/



Special Olympics Michigan provides year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. somi.org/



Mi Cookie Project bakery provides hands-on volunteer work for individuals with intellectual disabilities & Autism. sites.google.com/view/micookieproject/home?authuser=1

AIM is St. Paul’s ministry for people with disabilities. We have regular meetings to discuss ways that our congregation can better serve and include disabled people both in our congregation, as well as in our community. If you would like to get involved in this amazing ministry, please contact Lorielle Moorhaus: lmoorhau@emich.edu or 734-625-4081, or visit: splconline.com/aim.



Life Groups

Spring Life Group Get-Togethers

There is no specific study for Spring Life Group “Get-Togethers.” Leaders and groups are encouraged to lift each other up and select a study that resonates with your group. For example, “Thriving in Babylon – by Larry Osborne” is one such study. Kyle Hudson’s “Seekers” Life Group is doing this one starting April 29 and being done by the second week of June. Books are available through Amazon for \$15. On RightNowMedia, 18-minute videos are available (one of 35+ recommended videos in the St. Paul Library on RNM) along with participant/leader guides that can be printed out. The group plans on celebrating with a “BBQ” at their last time together before breaking for the summer. The service project for this group involves doing the Bereavement Bags Ministry and supporting the Prayer Shawl Ministry by distributing bags and shawls to St. Paul Members. Sounds like a plan! How about you?



RightNowMedia, LHM, and CPH offer theme or books of the Bible based Christian videos (and frequently downloadable study guides) that go along with the study from which to choose.

Life Groups are about building relationships. Life Groups grow in knowing Him personally and grow His Kingdom by inviting others to join in. An empty chair at each meeting reminds us of this important part of the “growing” experience. Life Groups are a place where we pray for each other and walk the talk of Christian learning and discipleship together with Him.

Leaders are key for Life Groups to thrive. It’s not all that hard. It starts with prayer and an invitation to a handful of people (friends, family, church “connections”) that could end up being a life-changing experience for all involved. Start a Life Group or join one now. You’ll never regret it.

Check out the video on “Guidelines for being a Life Group Leader” in the St. Paul Library on RNM. If you are interested in exploring what it means to be a Life Group Leader, contact one of our Life Group coaches (Karen Tarter, Kyle Hudson, Tom Wiltse, Bill Malnar or me) for a recommendation on a study or next steps for getting a group together.

Enjoy your time together!

Deacon Greg Exner (Minister of Small Groups)

Women

Women's Ministry Eastern Market Trip

The St. Paul Women's Ministry is planning an Eastern Market Shopping Event on Saturday, June 15. Holly Krawczyk, our "Eastern Market Professional Shopper" will meet everyone at Shed 5 at 8:30 am and share her favorite things about the market and recommendations on nearby shops.

Carpooling and transportation are up to individuals to coordinate.

We are not meeting for lunch as a group so that everyone can shop and enjoy the market at her own pace, but there is food and coffee within the market for anyone that is interested.

This is a free event, but please sign up [here](#). Be sure to bring cash, shopping bags or potentially a wagon depending on what you are planning to purchase.



Running Slowly

At a track meet, we sat in the stands, cheering for our son. I chuckled as a young sibling of an athlete asked, "Why are they running so slow, Mommy?"

These athletes had been training for years, and many were setting personal best times and even state records. Most spectators would provide little competition for the runners. But the child was comparing how he'd felt while running at the park, sprinting to a soccer game.

Along the track, dozens of teammates and coaches cheered. Each time an athlete passed, she heard strong, pointed encouragement. "You've got this!" "Someone's approaching; time to pick up the pace!" "Great stride—keep going!" The coaches and runners knew what was helpful and understood how hard the athletes were working.

My point: Consider who you allow to speak truth into your life. Do you listen to loved ones who "train" alongside you? Or do you give sideline critics too much space in your thoughts? Heed Proverbs 2:2 (NLT), which advises, "Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding."

—Janna Firestone

Youth Ministry

The Youth Focused on Service in the Month of March

They assembled Easter bags for fourteen residents of Downriver Estates. Each bag included a word search, candy, lotion, and an Easter card signed by the youth with a personalized message and Bible verse.

The month ended with an awesome Easter Breakfast! Seventeen youth and eleven adults set up, prepared, and served breakfast for approximately 150 congregation members. All money raised will help fund the National Youth Gathering in 2025. The youth enjoyed serving and fellowship while giving back to St. Paul.



Music Ministry

Save the Date!

The St. Paul Music Ministry Golf Outing will be held on Friday, August 2, at Lake Erie Metropark Golf Course, with an 8 am shotgun start. This outing helps to fund the Trenton



Peace Officers Memorial service, as well as the St. Paul Concert Series, so we hope you'll all be able to attend! Further information and registration forms will be available soon!

Friends In Faith

April Update

For our April trip, the Friends finally got to take their planned trip to the Detroit Institute of Arts which was originally scheduled for January, but we got “frozen out” due to the frigid temperatures that day. We enjoyed guided tours of the museum and time to wander the museum on our own. Many people commented that the docents (tour guides) made a wonderful difference in the museum experience with their knowledge of not only the artwork, but also the symbolism within the works and the history behind the art. It was a very enjoyable day; we will undoubtedly return in the future!



May Event

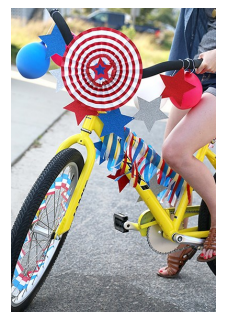
Our May event is a trip to Amish Country in Ohio where we will see the play “RUTH” at the Ohio Star Theater. After the play we will partake in some good old country cooking, with some of the participants spending the night (or two) in Sugar Creek at the Carlisle Inn. It promises to be a wonderful time with fun, food, and fellowship!



Memorial Day Parade

Red, White & Blue Bike Brigade!

Join us! Be a part of the Trenton Memorial Day Parade Red, White and Blue Bike Brigade! We’re looking for kids and families of all ages who would like to ride their bikes or walk in the Trenton Memorial Day Parade on **Saturday, May 25**. Decorate your bikes and join us as we share our church with our community. It’s always a fun time! Invite your friends to be a part of the fun too! Contact Don Busse for more details or to let us know you will be participating. The parade starts at 10 am.



A House United

When President Lincoln declared in 1858, “A house divided against itself cannot stand,” he was echoing Jesus. Scribes thought Jesus was casting out demons by Satan’s power, so Jesus responded, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ... If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand” (Mark 3:23-25, NIV). There are countless modern examples: Civil wars. Families torn apart. Business partners going separate ways. Even churches splitting.

Jesus used the “house divided” image to point out the nonsense of the scribes’ words. It takes someone other than the “strong man” (v. 27), or demon, occupying a space to cast that demon out. Evil can’t drive out evil. Sin isn’t stronger than sin. Hate doesn’t solve hate. Violence doesn’t end violence. Two wrongs don’t make a right.

Jesus came to “bind” evil with goodness, conquer hate with love and teach us the same. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus treats all people with love—even those who oppose Him—so that, in the end, we all will be a house united by God’s goodness.

Church Council

April Update

Church Council met on April 9, reviewing policy as we continue implementing the Bridge concept into our ministry, in addition to reviewing several exciting upcoming events.



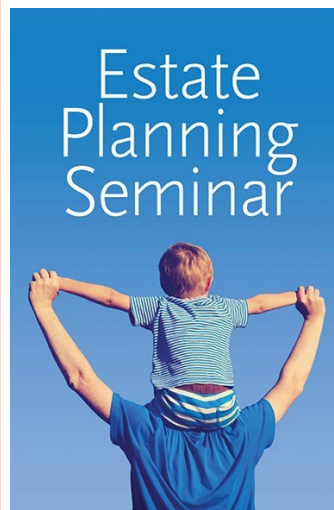
Members of Church Council also continued discussions of an article that highlights upcoming church trends as we explore ways to provide meaningful opportunities for all ages to Live to Know Christ and Make Christ Known!

Church Council is composed of members of the congregation who strive to demonstrate Christian leadership principles and represent you! We welcome you to please reach out to Mike Binion, Donna Doss, Bruce Knapp, Kelsi Gautz, Ali McLaughlin, Shawn McNamara, Lindsay Moretti, Dori McPherson, Elisabeth Hipke, Jennifer Riley, or Pat Shope at any time, or email ChurchCouncil@splconline.com with any questions or comments.

Financial Planning Ministry

Estate Planning Seminar

The next Financial Planning Ministry Seminar is scheduled for Tuesday, May 7, at 7 pm in the Upper Atrium. Join us for this free seminar to learn how to get your estate in order. Childcare is available. [Register here.](#)



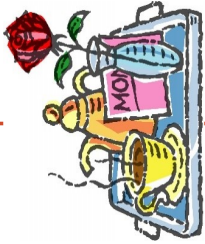
May 7 @ 7:00 pm
Upper Atrium

childcare
available

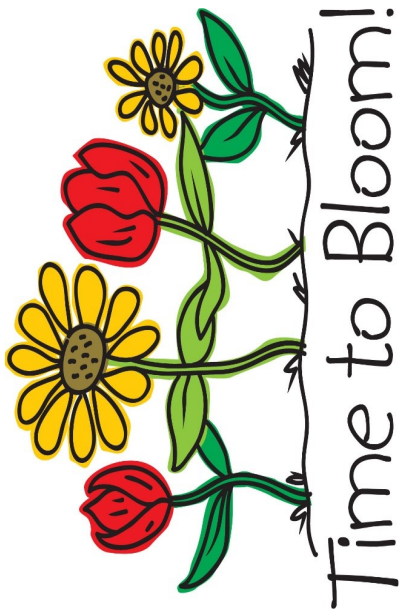
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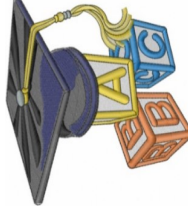




SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						
<p>8:30 Adult Bible Class 9:30 Worship HC 11:00 Praise Worship 11:00 Prime Time & Story Time 12:00 Senior High Bibles & Brunch 12:00 Preschool Graduation Picnic</p>	<p>6:30a Men's Bible Study 11:00 Intentional Christian Grandparenting Video 3:00 Men's Golf 6:00 AIM Open Gym 6:30 Mission Monday 7:00 Bereavement Support 7:00 Bells of Praise Reh 8:00 AA</p>	<p>1:00 Patchwork Quilters 6:30 PLACE Seminar 7:00 Estate Planning Seminar</p>	<p>7:30 Men's B'fest Study @ BB 10:00 Women's Bible Study 11:00 Widows Group Lunch 11:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry Mtg. 6:45 Yahweh Yoga</p>	<p>9:00 MOPSMoms Next 2:00 Ladies' Bible Class 6:30 Worship Choir 7:00 Alzheimer's Support</p>	<p>8:30a Men's Fellowship 6:00 JH Friday Night Live</p>	<p>9:00 God Connects Class 10:00 Spring Clean Up 5:00 Worship HC</p>
<p>8:30 Adult Bible Class 9:30 Worship HC 11:00 Praise Worship 11:00 Prime Time & Story Time</p>	<p>6:30a Men's Bible Study 3:00 Men's Golf 6:00 Autism Acceptance Support 7:00 Bells of Praise Reh 8:00 AA</p>	<p>7:00 Church Council</p>	<p>7:30 Men's B'fest Study @ BB 10:00 Women's Bible Study 1:00 Men's Ministry to Tiger Game 7:00 Divorce Adjustment Group</p>	<p>8:30a Men's Fellowship</p>	<p>8:30a Men's Fellowship</p>	<p>9:00 God Connects Class 5:00 Worship</p>
<p>8:30 Adult Bible Class 9:30 Worship HC 11:00 Praise Worship 11:00 Prime Time & Story Time</p>	<p>6:30a Men's Bible Study 3:00 Men's Golf 6:00 Autism Acceptance Support 7:00 Bells of Praise Reh 8:00 AA</p>	<p>7:00 Church Council</p>	<p>7:30 Men's B'fest Study @ BB 10:00 Women's Bible Study 1:00 Men's Ministry to Tiger Game 7:00 Divorce Adjustment Group</p>	<p>9:00 MOPSMoms Next 2:00 Ladies' Bible Class 6:30 Worship Choir 7:00 Alzheimer's Support</p>	<p>8:30a Men's Fellowship</p>	<p>9:00 God Connects Class 10:00 Spring Clean Up 5:00 Worship HC</p>



PS Mother's Day Teas



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>8:30 Adult Bible Class 9:30 Worship HC 11:00 Praise Worship 11:00 Prime Time & Story Time 3:00 Rejoicing Spirits Worship 5:00 AIM Open Gym 7:00 Sr. High Youth Activity</p>	<p>6:30a Men's Bible Study 11:00 Intentional Christian Grandparenting Video 3:00 Men's Golf 6:00 AIM Open Gym 8:00 AA</p>	<p>1:00 Patchwork Quilters 7:00 Elders' Meeting</p>	<p>7:30 Men's B'fest Study @ BB 9:30 Women's Bible Study 5:30 First Responders Memorial Service 6:45 Yahweh Yoga 7:00 Divorce Adjustment Group</p>	<p>2:00 Ladies' Bible Class</p>	<p>8:30a Men's Fellowship</p> 	<p>5:00 Worship</p>
<p>8:30 Adult Bible Class 9:30 Worship 11:00 Praise Worship HC 11:00 Prime Time & Story Time</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED 8:00 AA</p> 	<p>12:00 Homebound Team</p>	<p>7:30 Men's B'fest Study @ BB 9:30 Women's Bible Study 6:45 Yahweh Yoga 7:00 Divorce Adjustment Group 7:00 Lauren Daigle Concert Women's Ministry Event</p>	<p>11:30 Bible Study Committee 6:30 Worship Choir</p>	<p>8:30a Men's Fellowship</p>	 <p>Church Office closes at 1 pm until Labor Day Weekend!</p>