



The Messenger

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL (WELS), GREEN BAY

March, 2024

Taking God's Test

— Pastor Jon Zabell

²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

— Colossians 2:20-23

Imagine the scenario. You're taking a big test. Your semester grade hangs in the balance. You studied hard, but as you begin the test it becomes clear you're not prepared for the questions you're seeing. You're concerned you're not going to pass. What to do? In a desperate attempt to save your grade, you create some questions of your own, questions for which you know the answers, and you hope that your homemade extra credit will save you. Will it? Hmm, not likely.

Every day we take a kind of test from God, one with only two questions. He says, "Do you love me above all things? Do you love your neighbor as much as you love yourself?" (Matthew 22:37-40). What should we do with such hard questions? Some people try to help their chances by creating their own extra

credit. They make up religious rules and restrictions about what people can eat or drink, extra rules about how to behave. They say, *Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!* Then, when they keep their own rules, even though they have failed to keep the Lord's, they hope God will give credit.

Not only are these homemade rules not worth credit before God. It's a sin to think so. If such people truly loved God (the first part of his test), they'd stick to the questions on his test instead of inventing their own.

It's good to set high standards for ourselves, but isn't it easy to fall into this *extra credit* kind of thinking? Exercising, managing our money well, eating healthy food, practicing acts of kindness: these are all good in and of themselves, but we can get so attached to our own version of what it means to be a good person that we lose sight of those basic questions on God's test: he requires perfect love for God and for neighbor. Listen to God's warning in today's reading. You can't cover up your sin with extra credit. Trying only makes things worse.

But take heart, dear fellow believer! God offers you and me something infinitely better than our homemade version of credit. God has provided a proxy to take our test for us. God has given us his Son. Jesus loved God above all things. Jesus loved his neighbor as himself. Jesus aced God's test, and it all



counts for us. Are you looking for a good grade on life's report card? Forget about extra credit. You have Jesus! Robed in his righteousness, you can be the holy person he has called you to be. In Christ Jesus, you can love God perfectly from the heart, and you can love your neighbor as yourself.

Dear Jesus, thank you for acing God's test for me. Amen.

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Holy Week 2024: March 24-31

Palm Sunday: Rethinking Real Strength

Sunday, March 24, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Holy Thursday: Rethinking Our Appetites

Thursday, March 28, 3:45 and 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday: Rethinking Sacrifice

Friday, March 29, 1:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday: Resurrection Reality:

All Will Be Made Alive

Sunday, March 31, 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Easter Breakfast is served between services.

NOTES FOR HOLY WEEK SERVICES AT ST. PAUL

Palm Sunday:

Procession with Palms: Palm Sunday worship includes a procession with palms. Children who would like to participate are asked to meet in the narthex by the church library prior to the service.

Familiar phrases from our communion liturgy ("Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest... Blessed is he...") are what the children will sing, if you want to practice beforehand. The Junior Choir will help lead.

Passion History: The Palm Sunday service will also include a reading of the entire Passion History from Mark's gospel. If you weren't able to attend midweek services, you still have opportunity to hear the story of Jesus' passion in this service and to sing many Lenten hymns.

New Member Welcome: On Sunday, March 24th (Palm Sunday), after the 10:30 service, we'll welcome the twelve new households (20 people) that have joined us as new members since last Easter with a pot luck lunch. Don't miss this opportunity to meet our newest members, and to help them get to know their church family!

Maundy Thursday worship includes Holy Communion in both services and the stripping of the altar for Good Friday.

Easter Donations: Donation sheets for Easter flowers and food items for the Easter Breakfast are on the hallway bulletin board. Stop by to sign up or call the office to see what is still needed.

Please remember to have breakfast donations at church **before Saturday, March 30, 9:00 a.m.**, so we can get everything ready for Sunday.

If you sign up to donate for Easter flowers, you can drop off payment in the office. Remember also that one of the Easter plants is yours to take after Easter services; first come, first choice.

March, 2024

Call Received

Dear Members of St Paul Lutheran Church and School,

I am writing to inform you that I have received a Divine Call to Divine Savior School in Doral, Florida. Divine Savior School is different from Divine Savior Academy. The entire student body of Divine Savior School consists of God's extra special lambs. All students that enroll at Divine Savior School have severe needs. I am being called as one of the teachers of the school.

I am also writing to ask for your prayers. Call deliberations are never easy but they are always a blessing. Please keep me and both ministries, Divine Savior and St Paul, in your prayers while I deliberate where my gifts can best be used for His Kingdom. I offer an invitation to anyone that would like to share insights and thoughts with me during this time.

God bless,
Gretchen Plitzuweit

St. Paul Book of the Month

— Pastor Ben Enstad

[**A Path Strewn with Sinners: A Devotional Study of Mark's Gospel & His Race to the Cross**](#) by Wade Johnston

The Gospel of Mark is a fast moving gospel. Mark's style has urgency. Even his words have urgency. Mark's Gospel is littered with words like: "at once" "as soon as" and "immediately." Mark's style mimics Jesus' own urgency to proclaim, "The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mk. 1:15). Jesus' mission had urgency because he had just three short years to walk the paths of Israel strewn with sinners before he would complete his ministry and mission with his suffering, death and resurrection.

Because of Mark's urgency, some people feel as though we are missing a lot of details. The author of our book of the month, Pastor Johnston, used to feel much the same way. In his preface, he confesses that in the early years of his ministry, Mark's Gospel was his "foe!" He confesses that each account seemed so much like the previous. One healing and demon possession after another, and Jesus having very little to say. He notes that, as in a race, you don't catch all the details the first time through. But you slow down and the details start coming out of the woodwork. And what Pastor Johnston realized was those details were the people!

While Pastor Johnston does not cover every one of Mark's accounts, he does help us slow down simply with his striking chapter titles. For example: *From Church with Demons to Nowhere with Everyone* – *The Only Sane Man in Gerasenes* – *Spit from God's Own Mouth* – *The Passion Streaker* – *The Day We Died*.

As you read Pastor Johnston's devotional study together with Mark's Gospel, you can quickly see these fellow sinners' lives and find yourself in the narrative. Doing so makes Jesus' application of law and gospel all the more striking — that Jesus walked the paths of this sinful world for sinners like us!

Like Mark's Gospel, this book is short (118 pages) and an easy read, with most chapters being just 3-4 pages. A person could use it as their daily devotion for a month. Or, to follow in the style of Mark, a person could easily read through the whole book in a single sitting, seeing Jesus run his race to the cross down a *Path Strewn with Sinners*.



The Messenger

School News

— Principal Stephen Miller



Our school year theme, "The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does" (Psalm 145:13b), reflects the Lord's

steadfast faithfulness and enduring love. This serves as a powerful reminder of God's constant support. We continue cultivating an environment where students flourish academically, socially, and spiritually, knowing God is always by our side.

Our St. Paul Eagles soared through cheer and basketball tournaments in February with remarkable success. Our Girls' and Boys' B Teams clinched first place in their tournaments, showcasing their talent and determination. Additionally, our cheer team demonstrated their prowess by securing a commendable 2nd place. The Girls' A team displayed significant growth throughout the season, culminating in a successful journey

from start to finish. Lastly, our Boys' A team dominated their conference, claiming 1st place. We congratulate all our athletes and coaches for their outstanding achievements and commend them for their unwavering dedication and hard work.

During the final weekend of February, our school proudly had three students partake in the Solo Ensemble competition. Caitlyn Zwieg showcased her musicianship with a flute solo, earning a well-deserved second place. Meanwhile, Isabella Carlson and Julia Terzich wowed the audience with their clarinet solos, securing first-place acknowledgments. Congratulations to these talented students for their exceptional performances!

Our school is in our Open Enrollment window, with openings in most classrooms. If you're aware of a family seeking a new educational experience or interested in touring our school, please direct them to me. Families eligible for the Wisconsin

Parental Choice Program can enroll their children in St. Paul Lutheran School at no expense. If you or someone you know has inquiries regarding the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program, don't hesitate to contact us for assistance understanding the program. We're here to help clarify any questions you may have. The window is open until April 18.

We eagerly anticipate embracing the Easter season with uplifting melodies! On March 3, at 10:30, our 3rd grade, 4th grade, and Praise Chimes ensemble will enhance our worship experience. Then, mark your calendars for Palm Sunday, March 24, when our Junior Choir will fill the air with beautiful harmonies. Finally, our 3K through 8th-grade students will joyfully lift their voices in song on Easter morning. We warmly invite you to join us as we celebrate Holy Week, embracing the musical talents of our students in worship.



LWMS News

Pill Bottle Update: In January, I shipped 800 pill bottles to CAMM-Zambia. These were pill bottles collected by the participating congregations in the LWMS Paperland Circuit. If you have donated, Thank You. REMINDER: I can only ship a specific size (1"x3") there is an example by the office collection bin. The pill bottles need have the labels removed, cannot be sticky on the outside, and must be washed. CAMM uses the pill bottles to distribute lotions, medications, etc. that they purchase in bulk.

The LWMS Paperland Circuit Spring Rally is on Saturday morning, April 20, at St. Paul, Appleton, co-hosting with Immanuel, Town of Clayton. The theme for the Rally is: "We Proclaim the Word of Life". The main speaker is Pastor Ryan Kolander, talking about his work at the Detroit Hispanic Mission. The Business Meeting portion of the Rally, includes election of officers and selection of new Home and World Mission projects to support for 2024. All are welcome to attend the Rally. A sign-up sheet is on the LWMS table located outside

the office. Sign-up before April 1.

61st Annual LWMS 2024

Convention: Registration is now open. Early Bird Registrations must be postmarked by April 1, 2024. If you have attended a recent LWMS Convention, you should have received a convention newsletter in the mail, which includes registration information. Registration forms are on the LWMS table outside of the office. All convention information is also available on LWMS.org. If you have any convention related questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Planning way ahead, our congregation will host the LWMS Paperland Circuit 2025 Fall Rally. The last time we hosted an LWMS Paperland Circuit Rally was in 2016. Hosting a Rally is a big effort, so we will be looking for lots of volunteers. More details will come as the date approaches.

SAVE THE DATES:

- LWMS Paperland Circuit 2024 Spring Rally, April 20, at St. Paul, Winne-

conne. Immanuel, Town of Clayton will co-host.



- LWMS 2024 61st Annual LWMS Convention, June 27-30, 2024 Hosted by Minnekota Circuit in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Check www.lwms.org for registration, lodging, etc.
- LWMS Paperland Circuit 2024 Fall Rally, October 12, at St. Matthew, Appleton. Eternal Love, Appleton will co-host.
- LWMS Paperland Circuit 2025 Fall Rally, October 11, at St. Paul, Green Bay.

May GOD continue to bless the efforts of our Missionaries and LWMS.

Lisa Koenig
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"We Proclaim the Word of Life"

I John 1:1



The Messenger

LET'S GO LOVE • LISTEN • LEAD

LEARN TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS



Let's Go Bible Study: God's people want to tell others about the peace, joy, and forgiveness they have in Jesus but may feel unsure how to do this. Join us at this new Bible study opportunity as we learn simple, practical ways to reach out to the lost souls God has brought into our lives.

When: Monthly, starting Tuesday, March 5, 6:30 p.m.

Where: Meeting Room

For more information or any questions, please contact Jason Schmidt, Outreach Committee Chair (outreach@stpaulgreenbay.com or 402.415.9941).

Built on the Rock Update

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

— *Philippians 1:3-6*

By God's grace, our building project is nearing completion. As the last pieces fall into place, let's call to mind the building project our Savior is accomplishing in our hearts and

lives. Even from the first moment he called us to faith in Christ Jesus, he had our final redemption in mind, the day when he brings the good work

of our salvation to completion and we will be with him forever in the glory of heaven. As we begin to use our new space for ministry, we pray that he may begin and continue his saving work in many more hearts and lives for generations to come.

As for timeline, construction should be wrapping up in early March. A dedication service is being planned for our morning services on **Sunday, April 14**.

Another celebration is in the works a month later. On Mother's Day of 2021 we kicked off our three-year Built on the Rock gift campaign. We'll give thanks to God and celebrate the wrap-up of this effort this Mother's Day: **Sunday, May 12, 2024**.

Gifts and pledges continue to roll in. Three years ago we prayerfully set a goal for ourselves: \$1 million in pledges and gifts toward our \$4.5 million loan for our building project by

this May. We give thanks to the Lord for moving the hearts of God's people so that we've been able to meet that goal already this February. To him alone be the glory for providing for us so richly and for filling us with gospel-worked generosity in gratitude for our Savior's work of redemption. We pray that he continues to be with us in the future, enabling us to continue to support this project and all that it means for gospel ministry now and for generations to come, so that many more souls of children, families, and people of all ages may be cleansed and fed in the saving good news of Jesus Christ our Lord, news that connects us to him for all eternity through faith in Jesus.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

— Psalm 118:1





St. Paul Lutheran Church exists to celebrate our freedom from sin, death, and hell through Jesus Christ; to nurture our church family with God's Word for lives of service to Him; and joyfully to share the good news of salvation with the world around us.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL (WELS)

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Latin America Mission Update

from the WELS Missions Blogs

Luteranos Confesionales Colombia celebrated 50 years of preaching God's word in Colombia at the end of February! God has richly blessed the spreading of the gospel from the very beginning of this Latin American world mission field. What began as a three-man WELS missionary team has now extended through national leadership into many new cities in Colombia and continues to exponentially growing through the online presence of *Academia Cristo*.

We thank God for his continued guidance and blessing, allowing [Luteranos Confesionales Colombia](#) to share the gospel for 50 years.

Academia Cristo: During the last months of 2023 and the beginning of 2024, our Lord of the Harvest continued to bless the work of the One Latin America Team and *Academia Cristo*. The team focused on the transition from using a mobile app to WhatsApp for its first tier of study. New groups were started in Deltona, Florida; San Jose, Costa Rica; and Lima, Peru. Steps were taken to further reshape *Grupo Sembrador en la Ruta Cristo*, *Academia Cristo*'s church planting program and materials. A podcast on a Christ-centered life was implemented. The instruction function took steps to ensure the *Academia Cristo* curriculum is aligned around the team's church planting goals. Missionaries continued to make visits to key students, leaders, and groups.

The team began preliminary work on creating a plan for today's group gatherer to become tomorrow's mission counselor. This is in anticipation of exponential growth of students and church planters in the *Academia Cristo* program.

A Few Quick Stats:

- 2.2 million average weekly social media reach (user looks at the material for over 3 seconds)
- 2,767 finished the four self-study courses either through the mobile app or WhatsApp
- 764 completed one *Discipulado Uno* course
- 95 completed *Discipulado Uno*
- 35 completed *Discipulado Dos*
- 32 *Grupos Sembrador*



The anniversary celebration
in Medellin, Colombia



March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 6:30 PM — "The Granny Awards" — Drama Production by Grades 3-4	2
3 8:00 AM — Communion Service 9:15 AM — Bible Hour 10:30 AM — Communion Service Grades 3-4 Sing Praise Chimes 11:45 AM — Sunday Catechism	4 5:30 PM — PTO Meeting 6:30 PM — Communion Service 7:30 PM — Special Voters Meeting: Bylaws	5 1:00 PM — Ladies Aid 6:30 PM — Let's Go Bible Study 6:30 PM — ESL Class 7:00 PM — Board for Member Care 7:30 PM — Outreach Committee Meeting	6 6:00 AM — Breakfast Bible Study 9:00 AM — Women's Bible Study 3:45 PM — Midweek Lenten Worship 4:30-6:15 PM — Lenten Supper 6:30 PM — Midweek Lenten Worship Grades 1-8 sing 7:30 PM — Choir	7 9:00 AM — Bible Study 10:30 AM — Building Meeting 6:30 PM — ESL Class 7:00 PM — Women's Group at Tucson's	8 End of the Third Quarter 4:00-5:00 PM — Food Pantry Distribution	9
10 8:00 AM — Service 9:15 AM — Bible Hour 10:30 AM — Service 11:45 AM — Sunday Catechism	11 6:30 PM — Service	12 8:30 AM — Fellowship Breakfast 5:30 PM — Tech Committee 6:00 PM — Stewardship Committee 6:30 PM — ESL Class	13 9:00 AM — Women's Bible Study 3:45 PM — Midweek Lenten Worship 4:30-6:15 PM — Lenten Supper 6:30 PM — Midweek Lenten Worship 7:30 PM — Choir	14 9:00 AM — Bible Study 10:30 AM — Building Meeting 6:30 PM — ESL Class	15	16
No School — Spring Break						
17 8:00 AM — Communion Service 9:15 AM — Bible Hour 10:30 AM — Communion Service 11:45 AM — Sunday Catechism 3:00 PM — Catechism Class Bowling	18 6:30 PM — Communion Service 6:30 PM — Board of Christian Education	19 6:30 PM — ESL Class 6:30 PM — Church Council Meeting	20 6:00 AM — Breakfast Bible Study 9:00 AM — Women's Bible Study 3:45 PM — Midweek Lenten Worship 4:30-6:15 PM — Lenten Supper 6:30 PM — Midweek Lenten Worship 7:30 PM — Choir	21 9:00 AM — Bible Study 10:30 AM — Building Meeting 6:30 PM — ESL Class 7:00 PM — Men's Bible Study Group	22	23
24 8:00 AM — Palm Sunday Service Junior Choir Sings 9:15 AM — Bible Hour 10:30 AM — Palm Sunday Service Junior Choir Sings New Member Welcome follows the 10:30 service 11:45 AM — Sunday Catechism	25 6:30 PM — Service	26 2:00 PM — Early School Release 6:30 PM — ESL Class	27 6:00 AM — Breakfast Bible Study 9:00 AM — Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM — Choir	28 No School — Holy Thursday 9:00 AM — Bible Study 3:45 PM — Holy Thursday Worship with Communion 6:30 PM — Holy Thursday Worship with Communion	29 No School — Good Friday 1:00 PM — Good Friday Tenebrae Service 6:30 PM — Good Friday Tenebrae Service	30
31 8:00 AM — Easter Festival Worship Grades 3K-8 Sing 9:15-10:15 AM — Easter Breakfast 10:30 AM — Easter Festival Worship Grades 3K-8 Sing						