



## April Showers Bring May Flowers

Hi friends,

I don't know about you all, but I have had a lot of rain come my way. Last week, I was ready to go for a run to help counterbalance the Doritos I ate, and as soon as I stepped onto the porch, the rain started pouring and pouring. There was no run that day. Then another day it was raining at seven in the morning on a Monday which is also trash pickup day. I looked out the window and saw that I forgot to put the trash can out to the curb the night before and I could hear the sound of the garbage truck coming. I ran outside in the rain and got the trash to the curb, but it was not a fun experience.

There are times in our lives when it rains, and I am not referring to physical rain. You know the kind of rain I am talking about. I'm talking about the rain that keeps us up at night; the rain that tells us all sorts of lies about ourselves. I'm talking about the times in our lives when we face struggles and it seems like the rain keeps pouring and pouring. Those April showers can be hard to deal with.

But yesterday, I saw my wife Alonna getting her seeds ready for the planting to be done. She has some of her flowers growing in the basement. With all of this, I am reminded that in May, we

will have beautiful flowers coming up in the yard. There will be a wonderful garden coming up at St Paul. Even though there is a lot of rain pouring, we will have lots of beautiful things popping up on the other side of that.

Friends, in this Easter season, may we be reminded that God raised Jesus up out of the ground after a lot of intense rain. There was hope. There was a vision of the future to come. And most certainly in our lives there will be rain, but the sun, the flowers come after the rain. And we cling to that hope with all we have. May you cling to that hope friends.

Grace and Peace  
Pastor Branden



### **Food Truck on May 17, 2023**

Workers need to be at the church by at least 10:00 AM with distribution starting about 11:00 AM. There will be a signup sheet in the Narthex. If you have grocery type bags and cardboard boxes, please bring them.

### **Save the dates for future food trucks:**

<b>Friday</b>	<b>July 21, 2023</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>September 21, 2023</b>

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## Highlights of First Quarter Council Meetings

Council continues to meet on the second Monday of the month at 6 PM. We value the support of the elected officers and committee chairpersons who keep the operation of our church moving forward. We would appreciate the addition of the following positions to make our council complete: president-elect, financial representative, property management, & youth ministry (adult and youth representative). We also need one member for the nominating committee.

- In January, the final mortgage payment was made and forward movement was made on the outreach to the community.
- Contracts for snow removal and garbage pick-up were signed.
- New stoves were purchased for the kitchen.
- Impact gifts were recommended to the voters, approved, blessed at the altar, and sent in March.
- Council approved returning to soup suppers for the Lenten season and many participated.
- Forms for the update of the directory were included in last month's newsletter. Thank you for supplying current information. If you haven't already turned yours in, please do so now.
- Repairs were made to the roof to eliminate the leak and to the boiler to provide heat to the narthex.
- The estate gift has been placed in accounts that protect it under the FDIC ruling and also glean much higher interest returns.
- We were informed recently that it is necessary to seek a secretarial replacement.
- Individuals purchasing for the church need to complete a form, get an approved signature, and use the tax exemption form, in order to receive reimbursement. This authorization assists the new accountant in properly issuing checks and reporting budgeted expenses to the council. Forms are available at the office door. A list of stores at which the tax exemption has been established will be provided.
- Council members have been attending meetings of ELCA churches, "Better Together, Blue Water Gatherings," to define goals and work together to achieve them.
- An evaluation of the current technology and suggestions for the upgrade needed are under discussion.

Members are always welcome to attend council meetings, make comments, and share ideas to fulfill our mission to Gather, Grace, Grow, Go!

In Christ's service,  
Jacques Merkau, president

## GWIP Outreach

The new direction of the GWIP project is exciting. As you know, the voters chose to approve an outreach to the homeless and food insecure people in our community with money that formerly went to pay the mortgage.

Last fall everyone was asked to consider this mission and to complete an intent card that indicated their financial support toward it. Currently, \$13,486 has been promised and during the months of January through April has exceeded expectations.

A committee has been formed to bring structure and creative ideas for its implementation. Input of your ideas, your time, and especially your energy are a key part in making this successful.

Three established organizations have been chosen to receive funds monthly. They are Harbor Impact, The Harbor, and Men's Rescue. This will support already functioning outreach to those in need and will meet our promise of \$1,000 per month in financial assistance.

Our second promise to supply 7,000 hours of volunteer effort is unfolding. People have found ways to support both on-site help and behind the scenes efforts. Our Sunday School group created and sold hearts to raise funds for Kids in Distress (\$281) and logged their hours. Our congregation purchased staples for the Harbor Impact shelves. Many other ideas are being developed and it is hoped that you will find one that puts your talents and time to work. Watch for information on the April Showers project. It might be a way in which you get involved.



GWIP Committee: Leanne & Jim Fortushniak, Pastor Branden Hunt, Marilyn Knak, Diane Merkau, & Denise Reno

### Look Up!

As a (very) amateur astronomer, I have always loved the night's sky-curtain spending hours searching for constellations (like Orion), asterisms (like the Big Dipper), and Messier objects (like the Pleiades). I love this description of the wonders overhead both day and night from Psalm 19:1-4.


*The Heavens declare the glory of God, the vault of heaven proclaims his handiwork; day discourses of it to day, night to night hand on the knowledge.*

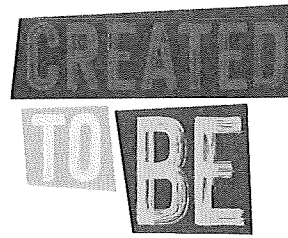
*No utterance at all, no speech, no sound that anyone can hear; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their message to the ends of the world.*

Wow.

Marilyn Knak



Did  that **Vacation Bible School** is coming soon? Please mark **August 7-10, 2023** on your calendars and plan on joining us. Our theme this year is; **"Twists and Turn: Following Jesus Changes the Game"**. You are most welcome to come and join in the planning at our initial meeting on **Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00** in the fellowship hall. Look for ways to volunteer and support our VBS in the months to come. Contact Leann Smith, [leann57@iwarp.net](mailto:leann57@iwarp.net) or #810-488-5829 with questions and more IDEAS! Hope to see you at VBS!



**2024 ELCA  
Youth Gathering**  
*including* **MYLE the tAble**  
Young Adult Gathering

It's with great excitement that we announce the registration fees for the first 1,000 registrants for the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE) and the first 200 registrants for the tAble will be waived by the Gathering for the 2024 cycle. (July 13-16, 2024)

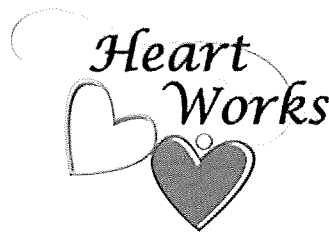
"As crucial parts of the ministry of the Gathering, we are thrilled to be able to support MYLE and the tAble in this way. Our hope is that more young people will get to experience these important ministries which we know creates a lifelong impact. We're thankful to a generous donor that makes this opportunity possible for the young people of this church."

-Deacon Tammy Jones West, 2024  
Gathering Director

Email: [office@gcsynod.org](mailto:office@gcsynod.org)

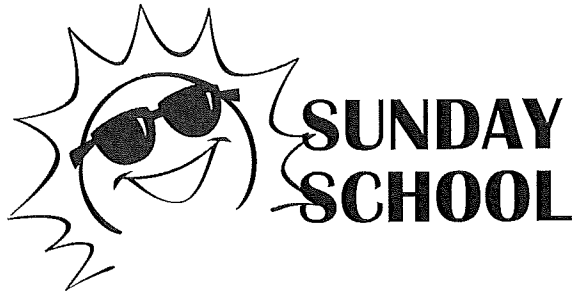
Phone: 602-957-3223

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Please join us at Heart Works on Tuesday, May 2nd, for a couple hours of fellowship as we knit, crochet, or loom items to share with those in need. We will be in the Activity Room from 10 until noon. Hope you can join us.

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The last meeting for Sunday School, until Fall, will be May 14, 9:45 – 10:45.

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The Schubert Male Chorus would like to offer their free-will "Made in Michigan" concert at St. Paul, on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 3-3:50 pm. There will be a reception afterwards.

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### OUR DAILY BREAD

The March/April/May edition of "Our Daily Bread Devotion" is available for you to pick up. They are in the slots under the mailboxes located in the church office hallway. Please feel free to stop by and pick up a copy. There are also some available in the Neighborhood Box.

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**GARDEN APPLICATIONS** are available on the church website ([www.stpaul Lutheranph.com](http://www.stpaul Lutheranph.com)) or by contacting Don Strauss at 810-434-2380. Please return the completed applications to the church.

### ONLINE GIVING

**St. Paul Lutheran Church** offers online giving through Tithe.ly, a safe and secure giving platform that allows you to give one-time or recurring gifts!

To make an online contribution go to our website, [stpaul Lutheranph.com](http://stpaul Lutheranph.com), and click on the green "Give" button in the middle of the page, select where your contribution will go (current expenses, GWIP, memorial, etc.) and whether you want it to be recurring or one time. You can use a credit card or bank account. Please consider "Cover Fees" when making your contribution. This covers the nominal fee for processing your contribution.

Thank you for supporting our ministry!

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## CELEBRATING a LIFE & LEGACY

### Funeral & Celebration of Life

There will be a funeral and celebration of life for Reverend Gerald W. Clark who passed away December 27, 2022. It will occur on Saturday, May 27, 2034 at St. John's Lutheran in Dundee, MI at 11:00 am. Those out of town can join the service from a link on the St. John's Lutheran church website,

[www.stjohnndundee.wordpress.com](http://www.stjohnndundee.wordpress.com).

Individual memorials can be shared at [dclark047@yahoo.com](mailto:dclark047@yahoo.com).

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**Kroger Community Rewards Program.** For the quarter ending July 31st from 34 families St. Paul has received \$85.06 from your rewards on purchases at Kroger. To use the rewards program you can register online at [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com). All **current participants** in the Kroger Community Rewards Program **do not** need to re-enroll this year in order to earn funds for St. Paul. The rewards program runs from May 2022 to May 2023. Our NPO number is RK460. **Registration is online only.**

**Newsletter:** The newsletter deadline for June Ray is Sunday, May 14, 2023. Articles may be submitted via e-mail ([stpaulww@comcast.net](mailto:stpaulww@comcast.net)), on a flash drive or in writing.



Melba Bartley



## Prayer List

*Prayer requests are welcomed and can be made on our Facebook page, by emailing the church office at [stpaulww@comcast.net](mailto:stpaulww@comcast.net), or with our connection cards.*

*To keep the list current, please make your request each week you wish to have your loved one's name included in the prayers.*



Monday, Wednesday &  
Friday  
10:00 am to 1 pm



**Sunday Services**  
8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School will be the 2nd & 4th Sundays  
from 9:45-10:45 for children and adults.  
May 14th will be our last meeting  
until Fall.



While all are not able to be face to face in worship in our Sanctuary, there are still opportunities to gather to hear God's Word, to pray, to sing and to be encouraged. Please join us at 11:00a.m. on our Facebook page for our livestream service.