

THE EPISTLE

MARCH 2017



A NEW KIND OF WONDERFUL

Many of us will observe Lenten practices, whether it be giving up (e.g. meat, alcohol, procrastination) or taking on (e.g. reading of scripture, acts of kindness, intentional gratitude.) The penitential forty days of Lent are separated by Sundays, “Little Easters,” where we gather to rejoice. And while coming together in a spirit of joy to praise God is an important part of our journey, St. Paul’s will also offer weekly services during Lent to worship together with a spirit of humility through song and prayer.

Paul’s. There will be responsive singing and prayer, with words and music available for all. This style of singing is designed to be accessible for everyone, and it can be a powerful way to speak and hear God’s Word.



Wednesday evenings during Lent (March 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, and April 5th), we will have a simple soup supper starting at 5:00 pm in Brummet Hall, followed by worship in the Sanctuary at 5:45 pm, and finally a prayer walk at 6:30 pm. (Please note: there will be no Wednesday service during Holy Week.)

“Liturgy” comes from the Greek λειτουργία, literally “the work of the people,” or more appropriately “public service.” In Christianity today, there is often a distinction between “liturgical” churches—think a Catholic Mass or many Lutheran or Episcopal church services—and “non-liturgical” churches, where the service may be less overtly ritualistic. St. Paul’s incorporates elements of both into our worship. For instance, most of us are familiar with a responsive Call to Worship, or with the sung Doxology after the offering is taken. Our Wednesday service may feel less familiar, but sometimes it is good to go outside of our comfort zone to worship in new ways.



This Wednesday worship is based tradition of sung liturgy, with music by Marty Haugen, a well-regarded composer of music within mainline Protestant churches. His Holden Evening Prayer is often used as a Lenten practice within church communities who want to explore an alternative style of worship. This will be something new for us at St.

So we invite you to try out this type of worship that is both new (to us) and old (as a part of ancient traditions in the church.) We hope that this can be a way to grow spiritually, to see a new perspective on worship, and to connect with others.

“We are called to be a community of generosity and love where we invite others to join us in becoming disciples of Jesus Christ for the good of the world.”

AT THE GATE

One of the goals of this special lent edition of the St. Paul's Epistle is to communicate that there is no one way to observe a Holy Lent, just as there is no one way to Christ.

The goal is to find a way that stretches you to spiritual growth. Think of it as intentional exercise that brings us into a life more fruitful in spirit, an awareness of presence and power in the moment that is abundant in promise, and a life more like Jesus. There are many ways the church has lifted up to help us do that, but for some reason we have landed on "giving up something" for lent. Well, that is great ... for some, but it doesn't help us all. For the rest of us, we may need to "take something on" instead of giving something up.

This edition will give you some help, but if you need more, consider a creative way to stretch your spiritual growth: take a Lenten Challenge. This lent, every Wednesday, join us for a meal, followed by a worship service with special music, and a message with a challenge. The challenge will be sealed in a purple envelope (the traditional color of lent), and will contain a Christ honoring exercise that takes a calling from Jesus that we can exercise in our own real lives.

-Pastor Tony

OBSERVING LENT

Lent is traditionally a time when those new to the Christian faith enter a preparation for initiation into the church and Christian life in baptism. For those already baptized, it is a time for journeying with Christ and reaffirmation of our baptismal covenant.

Lent is not about making ourselves miserable, sad, or guilt-ridden in anticipation of Good Friday. The Sundays of Lent are not a part of the forty days of Lent, and so remain "little Easters," as are all Sundays.

The following is just a sampling of things that you can do:

* Begin a journal, write down prayer concerns, questions, fears, longings, hopes, etc. - do this intentionally, schedule it, do it!

* Consider attending our Lenten Wednesday Worship—an opportunity for prayer, reflection, and song. (Details on the front page of this Epistle)

* Give up a grudge.

* Write a letter of affirmation each week to someone who has touched your life.

* Give blood as a way of remembering the cross.

* Also, work on your own thing, you know that "issue" you really need to deal with. Name it, write it down, something maybe like this: "This season in Lent I will focus on my impatience with the people who seem to exhaust it and all that takes time." Just sort of a random, arbitrary thing to write, nothing really—okay, it's mine, I confess!

The journey isn't just about what Jesus did, it is about us. So, make it real, make it personal, make it work for you. Commit to growing in some way that truly matters, and just see where it might take you. May God guide your steps and give you strength for the journey.

-Pastor Tony

UPCOMING SERMONS



March 5th- Lent 1
"The Narrow Road"
Matthew 7:13-23



March 12th- Lent 2
"The Kingdom of God"
Matthew 4:17, 23, 5:1-10



March 19th- Lent 3
"The Most Important Commandment"
Mark 12:28-34



March 26th- Lent 4
"The Power of Forgiveness, the Necessity of Grace"
Luke 17:3-5



April 2nd- Lent 5
"The First Shall Be Last: Humility and Servanthood"
Matthew 20:20-28

The Kay Read Recognition Award

In 1983, Mary Harvey asked me to serve on the Preschool Council and I said "yes" and that one little word has led me to 33 years of involvement with children at St. Paul's. I served on the Preschool Council at two different times and on the Christian Education Ministry for many years. I have taught VBS and currently am teaching Sunday School. Sixteen years ago, our Christian Education Ministry decided that we would reach out to our neighborhood to help our neighboring school. Cheryl Smith and I led that Outreach Ministry and we now help children in three schools. We do not do that by ourselves but with the help of the entire congregation.

I was a full time elementary teacher for 12 years and then a stay at home mom until I went back part time as a reading tutor for TUSD. Since retirement, I have enjoyed spoiling my grandchildren! I love teaching and I love little kids. They keep all of us on our toes and honest.

I was overwhelmed to be selected to receive the Kay Read Recognition Award. Kay was a wonderful person, friend to all, and most of all a loving and caring teacher. She was loved by all the children that she taught. She would be the first one to tell you that no one who works with children does it alone. It is a group effort and it does not just take love of kids but it takes a sense of humor! She had a great sense of humor and she could always defuse a situation with just a few words if we started taking ourselves too seriously. She is missed and I am honored to be given this award in her name.

-Genita Salvagio

PHOTO GALLERY



Rodeo Daze



Congratulations to Erika and Jesse on their wedding in February!



Acolytes



St. Paul's Belles' Brunch



Communion Sunday



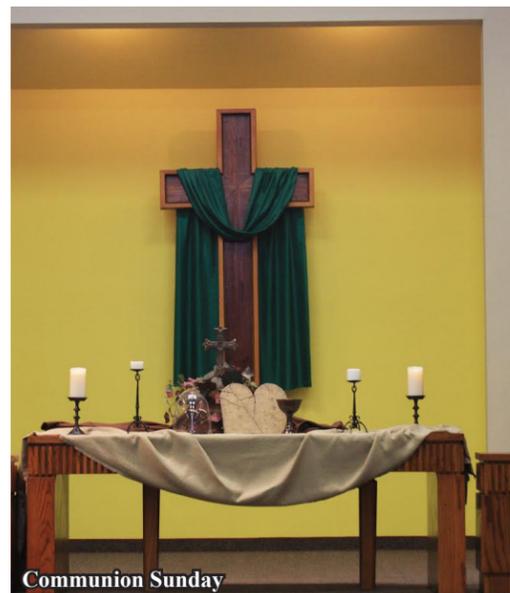
Communion Sunday



Rodeo Daze 2/23/17



Rodeo Daze 2/23/17



Communion Sunday



St. Paul's Belles' Brunch: Chapeaux Rojas



St. Paul's Belles' Brunch: Glad Hatters



St. Paul's Belles' Brunch: Desert-Roses



"New members joining at the 11:00 service."



Rodeo Daze 2/23/17



Children's Time



Rodeo Daze 2/23/17



Hosanna Choir

LAUNCH FACILITATORS

Have you signed up for our Launch Seminar? If yes, you're in for a treat!! If no, you still have time; see registration form on back page of this Epistle.

Last month our entire Epistle was about Launch except for one very important aspect....our St. Paul's facilitators. We are super excited to announce that our first ever St. Paul's Launch Seminar facilitators are Dennis Barger, Suzanne Cipra and Pat Scott. We want to give all three a big round of applause and appreciation for their commitment to make a difference!!

Let's get to know them:



Dennis Barger

Why did you volunteer to be a facilitator? Because I was asked. Because I have experience facilitating. Because I like to help out at Church.

How long you have been a member at St Paul's? 19 years

Final Comments? I've served as a member of the SPRC, interim youth director, and currently serve on the St. Paul's Foundation Board.



Suzanne Cipra

Why did you volunteer to be a facilitator? I feel like we can all benefit from knowing what our spiritual gifts are, and I am excited that we have this opportunity at St. Paul's.

How long you have been a member at St Paul's? Since February 2010

Final Comments? I hope that everyone will consider signing up for Launch, if not this time, then for one of the upcoming sessions!



Pat Scott

Why did you volunteer to be a facilitator? Primarily for two reasons: 1.) To stretch myself and to get out of my comfort zone. I have great passion and gifts for helping others and see this as an opportunity to help others identify their gifts, spiritual and otherwise; and, 2.) I enjoy being facilitator vs. a presenter. I believe this workshop will help me to hone my skills as a facilitator.

How long you have been a member at St Paul's? I have been a member of St. Paul's since summer of 2000. I arrived in Tucson on a Thursday, came to St. Paul's on that Sunday and never left. I have been able to identify my spiritual gifts as a direct result of being a member here.

Final Comments? Being a member of St. Paul's has provided dozens of opportunities to be of service to hundreds of people in and around Tucson, in Arizona and other parts of the world!

How will our facilitators be trained?

Prior to the Launch Seminar Weekend (March 11 & 12) all three facilitators will spend time via conference call with Reverend Sue Nilson-Kibbey, Launch Seminar creator. Sue will be facilitating the seminar on Saturday, March 11 while training Suzanne and Pat. Suzanne and Pat will co-facilitate the Sunday, March 12 Launch Seminar which will allow them to put their newly acquired skills into practice.

Launch will be offered during second quarter 2017 (date TBD) and we will call on Suzanne and Pat to co-facilitate while training Dennis for further sessions. The goal is to offer Launch at least once per quarter. Our facilitators have made a two year commitment to facilitate Launch Seminars. We will be looking for additional facilitators in 2018.

Special Thanks

Lynn Young would like to thank everyone for their notes, cards, calls and well wishes concerning her recent diagnosis.

Condolences To...

We send our prayers and condolences to those who lost friends and family members, and especially to the friends and families of:

Jim Madganz (d. February 10th)

George Bird (d. February 13th)

Kristopher Lester, grandson of Jack & Anita Vick (d. February 25th)

Shirley Bingold (d. February 28th)

Prayer Walking...What Is It?

The Australians have a term called "Walkabout" which is a spiritual transition, most commonly for boys transitioning into manhood; but it could also be a spontaneous journey through the wilderness of one's choosing.

Walkabout/Prayer Walking is a focused intention to commune with God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and is not unlike any other time, place or position of prayer. Of course, a prayer walk doesn't have to be a literal "walk"; however, walking usually enhances our senses, which can result in a spiritual transition. And walking has a way of clearing the cobwebs from the mind to hear the "Teacher." (Isaiah 30: 18-21)

Prayer Walking may be experienced individually or in a group, and in any place and time of your choosing. The purposes will vary: meditating on a passage of scripture, seeking guidance for an issue, praying for individual concerns, or for those who are ill, or giving thanks and praise for blessings! We can pray for God's guidance for St. Paul's UMC and how we, its people, can follow the example of Christ's mission. (Luke 10 . . . I am sending you out into the world; Go! Tell the Good News; Be the Good News.)

I don't know who first coined the phrase "Prayer Walking" or even when it began, but I believe the practice is as old as time and that we have all had the experience! If you walk and talk to God . . . you are Prayer Walking! It's that simple. In recent years, church groups have gathered to walk and pray together for their communities, their country and the world.

Walking with God the Father in the Garden must have been an act of prayer. I grew up believing the image of the hymn, "In the Garden." The chorus says, "And he walks with me, and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own; and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known." (inspired by John 20: 11-18)

Jesus walked with his disciples. They heard him speak. They asked him questions. They had conversations that I can only imagine! On the road to Emmaus, after his death, Jesus walked among them, clarifying, reassuring, and explaining to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (Luke 24: 13-53)

From a very young age, I believed all my thoughts were conversations with God. Yikes! . . . how intimately he knows us! Around the age of nine, I remember specifically asking God for something. The answer to that petition came 32 years later in the form of one Hal Cowart! I had asked God if I could marry a Pastor! (And by the way, this was at a time in my life when I spent months and months "walking" with crutches.)

SO . . . how about you? Would you like to participate in a Prayer Walk? Just invite a friend or two; set a time and place and . . . go for it! Pray as you begin! Pray for the purpose of the walk. Pray that you will come to know the Father deep and wide, and that you may see the world through his eyes and heart! Pray that you will have the courage to make his love known to the world. Pray for your ability to ask for forgiveness and to forgive quickly. Pray the prayer that Jesus taught . . . the Our Father. Begin your walkabout! Be still and listen with all your senses. Trust me, the Spirit of the Loving God will walk with you!

- Becky Cowart 2017

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**WORSHIP
SUNDAY SERVICES**

8:00 A.M.
Traditional

9:30 A.M.
Contemporary

11:00 A.M.
Traditional



SAVE THE DATES

Holy Week

Palm Sunday - 4/9

Regular Sunday Services; Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday - 4/13

6:00 pm; Sanctuary

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service - 4/16

6:00 am; Memorial Garden

Easter Sunday - 4/16

Regular Sunday Services; Sanctuary

- **Launch Workshops - 3/11, 3/12**
9:00 am (3/11), 11:00 am (3/12);
Brummet Hall
- **Spring Break Food Drive - 3/12**
- **Youth Rummage Sale - 3/25**
7:00 am - 1:00 pm; Brummet Hall
- **Youth Confirmations - 4/2**
11:00 am Worship Service; Sanctuary

For more details on upcoming events, visit
www.stpaulsumctucson.org.