



The Epistle

Our Response to COVID-19

Council met Wednesday evening to consider the current state of Covid-19 virus and how best to care for our congregation during this time. Council decided in accordance with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control to refrain from all worship services and in-person meetings or activities through the entire month of April. Council will meet again on April 20 to reassess the situation and determine how we will proceed during the month of May.

In summary, the following are cancelled:

- In-person Sunday morning and Holy Week worship services, including Easter Breakfast and Easter Sunday Egg Hunt—*but read below for information about online worship*
- Bible studies and Sunday School—*but read below for information about online Bible studies*
- All committee meetings and groups (i.e. Dorcas Circle)
- Community Easter Egg Hunt
- The Gathering
- Choir and Children's Choir
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* Production (due to insufficient rehearsal time before June)

We lament with you that this happens during Holy Week and will prevent us from celebrating the resurrection of Christ in

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Do Not Be Afraid



These are strange times in which we live. We're sequestered in our homes and everyone else we know is, too. You are only supposed to go out to the grocery store or other absolutely essential, critical things. Driving down the street, it sometimes feels like only you and 10 other people are awake because no one is on the roads. Parking lots and stores once full of activity are now empty. We gather together for worship online instead of in our sanctuary together. We can't visit those we love and have to keep our distance from even our dearest friends and closest relatives. This is life during the coronavirus.

It is strange. It is unsettling. It is eerie. And in the middle of the night when you slow down enough to let it sink in that it might be months before you work and have an income again or months before you see your relatives, but it maybe not too long before you yourself are hospitalized and no one will be able to be with you there, it is really scary.

Although we lament that we won't be able to gather together for Holy Week or Easter this year, Easter couldn't have come at a better time. For it precisely now during this epidemic that we most need the good news of Easter. Our gospel for Easter Sunday is Matthew 28:1-10. The women who gathered at Jesus' tomb were feeling afraid, too. The world without Jesus was strange, unsettling, eerie. To their surprise, they were visited by an angel and by Jesus himself on the road and told by both of them not to be afraid.

Jesus was alive! He had overcome death! That is still true, dear ones. This virus is scary because it brings up our mortality which may often feel far away. The good news of Easter is that Jesus has already overcome death! We need this good news more than ever because now more than ever perhaps we are ready to hear it and realize the difference it makes. Precisely when we are threatened by death Jesus says, "Do not be afraid! You have life in my name forever!"

We will need to adapt and find new ways to reach out to each other, new ways to love one another, new ways to be church together when the traditions of gathering together in person cannot be kept during the stay-at-home mandate. But we will figure it out together because Jesus is on the road with us, constantly speaking to our hearts, "Do not be afraid."

I am thankful to be on the road together with all of you and with our Lord. Do not be afraid, beloved.

In Christ,
Pastor Emily

BABY SHOWER POSTPONED

Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the shower for Pastor Emily and baby Beckering will have to be a meet and greet after the arrival. If you would like to send a gift before baby arrives, you can check the registry at babylist.com/baby-emily-beckering. In case you hadn't heard, It's A Girl! (The registry is only in case you find it helpful—Pastor & family are grateful for any gifts you choose!)

Our Response to COVID-19

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person on April 12. Holy Week, however, honestly couldn't come at a better time, for it is precisely when we feel the most isolated and hopeless and trapped that we need the good news of Jesus' resurrection and his visit to us in our homes--which he will do!

Though we are not meeting in person, we are not stopping our work as the Church. Read through this newsletter, and you will discover all the work that is still being done and ways you can engage to still be the Church together. We are still worshipping, praying, and studying the Bible together online. We are making progress on our Capital Campaign projects. We are moving forward in our Music Director Search. When we do get to worship together once again, it will be in a lovely sanctuary with new flooring, and it will truly be a joyous celebration!

Here are ways that you can further the mission of our congregation this month:

- Watch and invite someone else to watch our online worship services which can be found at our website, stpaulreading.org, or on YouTube and Facebook. *Maundy Thursday evening, Good Friday Noon 7 Last Words, Good Friday Evening Tenebrae, The Great Vigil Saturday Evening, Easter Sunday, and all Sundays in April*
- Watch and post a response to our weekly Bible Study Sessions and invite a friend or family member to do the

same! Bible studies can be found on our website at stpaulreading.org, or on YouTube and Facebook

- Stop what you're doing at Noon every-day to pray together--the topic for the day is posted on Facebook, and in this newsletter on page 11
- Call one another to check on each other—if this is of particular interest to you, then please let Pastor Emily know and she will include you in our new phone call ministry
- Take time to complete the survey on p. 8 of this newsletter about the Music Director to help our Search Committee listen for the Holy Spirit in our congregation and the future of our Worship and Music programming. If you are a choir member, please also complete the choir-specific survey on p. 9. Mail in your survey via US mail, or complete the electronic version which will be emailed to you
- Mail in your offering to church (mailbox checked daily and deposited weekly) or try mobile or online giving to continue to support our ministries. Look for “how-to” instructions on p. 4-5 of this newsletter and an instructional video created by Carroll Mayhugh on our website/YouTube

We are the Church and during this difficult time, we are the Church together. God is with you and so are we, albeit in new ways.

In Christ,
Pastor Emily Beckering

GivePlus How-To: On Our Website

During this time when we cannot gather together in person on Sunday, it may be an especially helpful time to check out our mobile and online giving options. Please visit stpaulreading.org/online-giving/ to try it! Look for the instructional video by Carroll Mayhugh on the giving page. Or, to download the mobile app, visit the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and search for “GivePlus Church”.

Thank you to all who are also mailing in their offering. Your funding of the mission of St. Paul's is greatly appreciated. We know that these extreme circumstances have brought changes in income for some—please do not put yourself or your family in financial hardship by giving your offering; God will provide. For those whose incomes have not been impacted and who are able to continue giving during this time, thank you for sharing your blessing and for being the agents through whom God provides.

1. Select fund(s) and amount

Donors select a fund, enter the amount and choose a frequency if they have created an Give+ account.

Note: All donors can give to multiple funds in one transaction. Account holders can choose start dates for gifts and payments.

Fund	Amount
Unified Budget From 06/30/2017	\$25.00 Monthly
Health Fund	\$50.00 One Time

Total: \$75.00

2. Enter payment method

Donors enter their debit/credit card information or choose to pay with their checking or savings account.

Note: Give+ account holders can store this information for future use.

3. Complete donation

Donors review their summary and then select *Donate Now* to complete their donation(s).

Fund	Amount
Unified Budget From 06/30/2017	\$25.00 Monthly
Health Fund	\$50.00 One Time

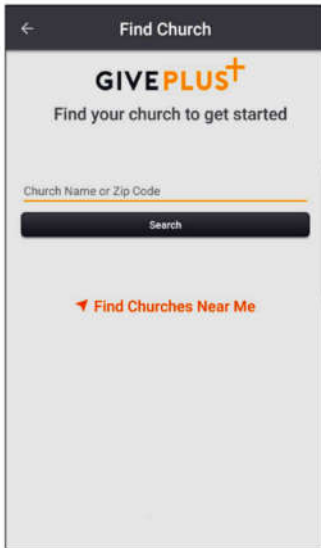
Total: \$75.00

4. Give+ account features

When logged into their Give+ account, donors can review giving history, manage recurring donations or edit stored payment methods.

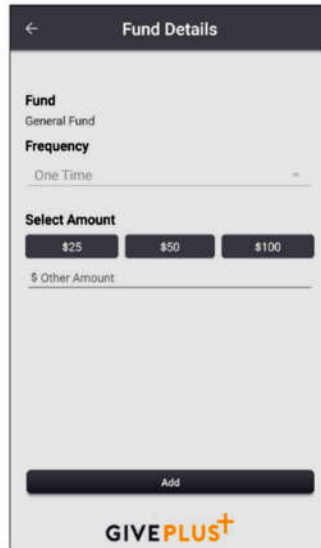
GivePlus How-To: In the Mobile App

1) Search



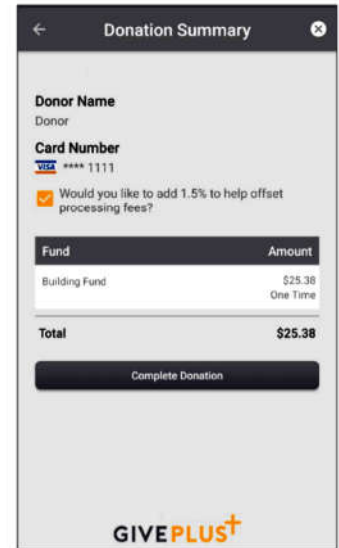
- Enter church name or tap *Find Churches Near Me* to start your search
- Select your church
- Your selected church will be displayed as your default church
- Tap *Give Now*

2) Select



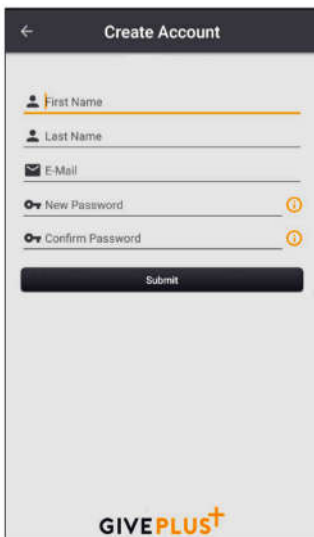
- Choose a fund and a preset amount or enter another amount
- Select *Add* to add another fund or move forward to the payment information
- Scan or enter your card or bank account information

3) Submit



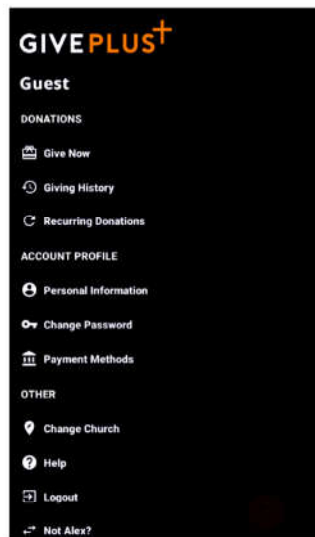
- Review your donation summary then select *Complete Donation*

Create



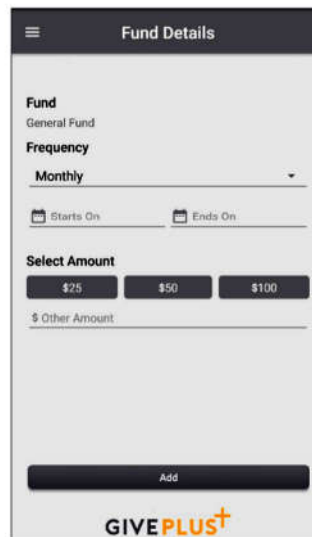
- It only takes a few minutes to create an account with an email address and password
- You'll have the option to log in using the Touch ID/Fingerprint feature or a PIN

Manage



- Tap the menu icon to manage personal information, change password, review donations or update/add payment methods

Schedule



- Next time you donate, tap *Select Frequency* to create a recurring weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or annual donation to the fund of your choice
- Note:** Your church determines frequency options

Review



- From the menu, go to *Recurring Donations* to view or delete any scheduled donation made through the GivePlus app
- Or, select *Giving History* to review your past GivePlus donations

From the Presiding Bishop: A Message to the Church



This is a transcript of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's most recent video message to the church, dated March

28. The video is available at <https://youtu.be/XzrxzAPeu2g>.

Hello, dear church. For many of us we've just finished our first week of sheltering in place, though many of you have spent two or even three weeks with physical distancing. Let's admit: it's been a huge change, a disruption and it's hard. But it also has given us some time, perhaps, to observe things and notice things we never had before.

In this time, I want us to pay attention to the two readings that are coming up this Sunday, the fifth Sunday in Lent. One is from Ezekiel, and it's the story of the dry bones. In the story, the prophet stands before this desolate place of dust and dryness and death and sees no possibility for life. And then the Lord tells him to prophesy, and sure enough sinews and flesh come upon the bones, breath comes into them, "and they stood on their feet and lived." So will we.

In the Gospel according to John, we have the story of Lazarus, who has died. And Jesus comes four days later when any hope of resuscitation is impossible. But nevertheless Jesus speaks to Lazarus, calls him out of the tomb, and then he says something very interesting. He says to the people, "Unbind him and let him

go." Jesus will call us out, has called us out, of the tomb and he speaks to us, saying to us, "Unbind the vast resources of our people and of the church, in compassion and justice and in generosity." That is the work we will do.

We need now to plan for the future, even as we live in these days. I want us to remember several things—three are very practical. The first is, this disease is not a Chinese virus, nor is it the fault of the elderly. They are not the cause of this disease; they are casualties. We need to be very careful to guard the dignity and the safety of those of the Asian community and also our elderly.

The second thing is, we really need to give thanks and pray for the health and safety of our healthcare workers, who are literally on the front lines. They're afraid they'll catch the disease and be separated from their families, that's true. Nevertheless they show up, day after day. And we should remember those other people who are considered essential resources: people who may be overlooked in our daily lives. People who do deliveries, who work in the sanitation department, even folks who are bagging our groceries at the grocery store. They're fulfilling their vocation.

And thirdly, we have to pay attention to the warnings and also the advice of medical professionals, scientists, and our local

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From the Presiding Bishop: A Message to the Church

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public officials. Sheltering in place seems the only way we have right now to slow this disease. Pay attention to them.

But more important than anything is that we have a God who is faithful and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has promised and has given us new life. Cling to that. Celebrate that. Peace, be well.

Capital Campaign Committee Report

Organ Project

As we all deal with the Covid-19 situation on a personal & public level, it has interfered with the completion of the organ project. Unfortunately organ repairs are not on the essential businesses allowed to work, so we are on hold for now.

We are very close to finalizing all work on the organ, after working through some differences in the original agreement which saved the church several thousand dollars. The vendor notified us that he has completed the revised scope of work. We have communicated several issues/concerns to the company and they have agreed to come back out and investigate our concerns as soon as he is allowed.

In the end we will have an upgraded organ that we will enjoy for years to come.

Sanctuary Flooring

The committee has been working behind the scenes for some time to research a qualified vendor and deciding on what work and areas to address. The committee recommended to Council: the vendor, type of flooring & carpet along with the removal of the east side choir loft to allow more main level floor area for special events. Council approved all of the committee recommendations. Fortunately this pandemic will allow us to move forward with the flooring with little interruption to weekly services.

During the work to remove the choir loft, we ran into some minor issues of electrical and sound system wiring that had to be relocated. Not to worry, we were able to do this with little cost and member labor. There will be some minor noticeable differences in the appearance of the sanctuary when we return to church. We are moving forward with this project. Yes, hopefully the flooring project will be complete by the time we are allowed to gather again.

Doug Lohmeier

Music Director Search: Congregational Survey

As we search for a new Music Director, the Search Committee desires your input. Please realize that we are listening for the Holy Spirit through general consensus in this survey and will not be able to honor all individual preferences. Thank you! If you'd prefer, you may fill this out electronically via the online form which will be emailed to you.

What do you envision and hope for our Worship and Music program at St. Paul's?

What skills and qualities are most needed in a Worship and Music Director?

What do you think is most needed in our Worship and Music program to make worship engaging and uplifting?

Order these components of worship according to your priorities [write numbers 1 through 8, with #1 as most important/top priority]:

- Blessing and Utilizing members' spiritual gifts
- Special music from the choir or instrumentalists
- Including children in worship
- Hearing the Word of God applied to our lives
- Making worship accessible/understandable for visitors
- Singing hymns together
- A talented, musically accomplished Worship Director
- A Worship and Music Director committed to nurturing and seeking out the musical talents of the congregation

For each pair below, circle/check your preference:

Chanting the Psalm *OR* Speaking the Psalm

Familiarity *OR* Novelty

Making Visitors Comfortable *OR* Making Members Comfortable

Honoring Tradition *OR* Adapting to Current Needs

How do you feel about special groups leading worship on Christmas, Easter, and Reformation? (circle or check one)

I look forward to their leadership every year!

Indifferent/no preference

I wish we would discontinue this tradition.

What is your perspective on hiring outside musicians to lead worship? (circle or check one)

It is worth paying outside musicians to secure talent that enhances worship.

Indifferent/no preference

I wish we would discontinue this practice and only use members of the congregation.

Which type of music do you prefer in worship [check all that apply]?

- Traditional music from the LBW (green hymnal)
- Transitional music from the WOV (blue hymnal)
- Spirituals from the TFF (maroon hymnal)
- Contemporary Praise Songs (songs from Christian radio)
- Music from the 10th, 12th, or 13th centuries
- Organ and piano
- Violin, flute, bassoon, brass, clarinet, saxophone
- Electric guitar and drum set
- Acoustic guitar and occasional percussion instruments (bongos or djembe drums)

What musical talents do you possess that you'd be willing to share?

What else would you like the Music Director Search Committee to know?

Music Director Search: Choir Member Survey

The choir has an essential role in our worship life since you function to support and enhance worship. As we search for a new Music Director, the Search Committee desires your input. Please realize that we are listening for the Holy Spirit through general consensus in this survey and will not be able to honor all individual preferences. Thank you! If you'd prefer, you may fill this out electronically via the online form which will be emailed to you.

What skills and qualities are most needed in a Music Director?

What makes you feel discouraged as a musician?

How do you learn best? What is your learning style?

[check all that apply]

- ◇ Listening to a recording prior to rehearsal
- ◇ Sight-reading
- ◇ Rehearsing my part with my voice section
- ◇ Having an accompanist play my part
- ◇ Other _____

Would you be interested in learning how/more about how to read music?

Would you like to continue wearing vestments at every service? *[circle one]*

Yes No Only at holiday services

What else would you like the Search Committee to know?

What have been some of your favorite pieces you have sung here at St. Paul's recently? *[check all that apply]*

- ◇ "Come Down, Lord"
- ◇ "Did you think to Pray?" By William O. Perkins
- ◇ "Kyrie" By Sonja Poorman
- ◇ Other _____

What type of music do you wish you sang more of as a choir *(give examples)*?

What type of music do you wish you sang less of as a choir *(give examples)*?

What makes you feel energized and encouraged to participate in choir?

Our Life Together

For emergency pastoral care, please call Pastor Emily Beckering, 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, call Penny Huber, 513-931-6420. To remove people from the list, contact the office.

We pray for **Annabelle** (daughter of friends of Katie Schieman); **Mary and her granddaughter Kyra** (friend of Paul Pieper); **Berkeley** (Carol Curlless's great-grandson); **Pr. Lisa Bernheisel; Louise Barry; Teresa Bell** (former member); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Bobby** (Christian Lohmeier's friend); **Brent and Katie** (friends of Elinor Schieman's granddaughter); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Jodie Calhoun; Christian; Kathy Curlless; George Demetriades** (Portmanns' friend); **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Dick** (Linda Miller's brother); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jerry Doan** (Jean Winkle's son-in-law); **Norb Eble** (Portmanns' friend); **Eckerle and Wuestefeld families; Tom Eckerle** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Lee Erbeck; Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Ben Ferguson** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Micki Ford** (Fords' niece); **Jeanne Fuller; Jason Garcia** (Mayhughs' nephew); **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Hannah; Matthew Harrison** (Seals' neighbor); **Elain Heskamp; Richard Hoffman** (Cindy Mayhugh's brother); **Andrew Horton; Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Jo and her daughter** (Jeanne Fuller's friends); **Joan** (Penny Huber's friend); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Dennis King; Jay King** (son of Jamie King); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Lewis Laine** (Chet Laine's brother); **Richard Lane** (Elinor Schieman's nephew); **Regina Laursen** (Portmanns' friend); **Nick Mayer** (Elinor Schieman's grandson-in-law); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Doris Minton; Barbara and Jack Moorhouse; Jean Nolte; Ervin Oerther** (Portmanns' brother-in-law); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moor-

house's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Rosie Osborn** (Betty Pack's sister); **Eric Papin; Don Pflieger** (Kings' brother-in-law); **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Paul Pieper; Faith Pirrmann; Pat Popplewell** (Dennis King's friend); **James Savoy** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Brenda Schumacher** (Marilyn Portmann's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Keith Shupe** (father of Kelly Shupe); **Jason Simpson** (Freda Faulkner's grand-nephew); **Elizabeth Smith** (Elain Heskamp's sister); **Scott Songer; Judy Songer** (friends of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Jack Spelman; Betsy Stone** (Portmanns' granddaughter); **Susan** (Elinor Schieman's niece); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle's granddaughter); **Teresa** (friend of Marty Lohmeier); **Randy Thaman** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Jack Wagner; Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack's granddaughter); **Jean Winkle; Susan Winkle** (Jean Winkle's daughter-in-law).

At the death of: **Carol Leonard.**

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Louise Barry, Jack and Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte, Heather Segar.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Jared Forst** (Jim and Loretta's grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl's son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn's granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl's son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Doris Minton's son); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey; Mack Thompson** (Freda Faulkner's grandson); **Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadin and Barry Wisecup).

Praying Together at Noon Each Day

Terri DeAngelis and Leslie Willet had a creative idea for how we can be the church together during this time: by praying together every day at noon, wherever we are. Here is a schedule for the daily topic or group of people for whom to pray, but feel free to pray for whomever the Holy Spirit brings to mind. Know that when you pause and carry your loved ones and the world before God, your sisters and brothers in Christ are joining with you, too.

Monday— For those who are lonely or isolated during sequestering, that they may experience Jesus’ presence with them. For guidance and inspiration about how we can be the presence of Jesus for one another.

Tuesday—Our city, state, and federal leaders and all political leaders and elected officials around the world, that they may make decisions that protect those under their care with wisdom and justice for all.

Wednesday—Healthcare workers, first responders, police officers, members of the armed services, all public servants, and “essential workers” who must continue to be exposed to risk, and their families.

Thursday—Those who are furloughed, unemployed, or without an income during this crisis, that God may provide for all of their needs.

Friday—The victims of the Covid 19 virus and their family, friends, and loved ones; and those most vulnerable around the world with no access to life-saving healthcare.

Saturday—Members of St. Paul Lutheran Church, past present and future, that God would guard and protect us all from harm and connect us in new ways to strengthen the bonds of love.

Sunday—Religious leaders of all faiths and denominations around the world, and our Synod leaders: Bishop Suzanne Dillahunt and Assistants Pastors Bob Abrams and Katie Kerrigan, that God may sustain them and guide them to equip the Church for such a time as this.

Celebrations in April



3	Betty Kline, Adam Pirrmann	23	Nancy Erbeck, Logan Pirrmann
9	Spencer Lohmeier	27	Bridget Cathcart, Connie Lohmeier
16	Janet & Dennis King	29	Lee & Jane Erbeck
20	Joey Bronner, Teagan Cathcart	29	Jim & Linda Miller
21	Carroll Mayhugh	30	Nick Pirrmann

St. Paul
Lutheran Church

As a community of Christian believers, we are called by God to use the many gifts He has given us, within the church and the community, so others may come to know Him.

Director of Music Search

Our dedicated committee has met via phone and accomplished revising positions and organ descriptions. We will be posting on multiple relevant websites soon.

The Search Committee will be accepting resumes for organist, choir director or a combination known as the Director of Music.

The Search Committee will be sending a survey via email to you so the committee can receive your likes, dislikes and wishes for the music department. Please watch your email for this important email. (The survey is also printed on page 8 of this newsletter, so that you can fill it out on paper and mail it in if you prefer.)

Cindy Mayhugh, Chair

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE