



The Epistle

Living With Addiction in the Shadow of the Cross

Here are some facts you need to know if you or someone you love lives with addiction.



1. Addiction is a sickness.
2. You can't make it better.
3. You deserve help for yourself.
4. You are not alone.
5. There are people and places that can help.
6. There is hope.

The hope is in Jesus Christ and that Almighty God really does have power to rescue you and those you love from addiction. The hope is that it doesn't always have to be this way and God is with you to free you from addiction's power in your mind and heart. It is evident throughout Scripture that Jesus has greater authority than any force or power; he is greater than addiction or our feelings of worthlessness. Listen to Jesus' words about you.

As you work toward living into this truth, practice celebrating small victories whenever you say "no" to immediate gratification or say "yes" to self-respect and self-discipline in any area of your life. It could be that you resisted "chewing someone out" or the urge to stay in bed all day. Encourage

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VALLEY INTERFAITH DONATION ITEM OF THE MONTH

This month's donation items for Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center are **laundry detergent and dryer sheets.**

Update from the cold-weather clothing drive: 4 more coats and 3 more hats have been donated to Reading schools since last month. Thank you for your generosity!

In the Shadow of the Cross

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children and grandchildren to do the same! You can change your brain patterns whether your tendency is to seek distraction/numbness/escape from a substance or to enable someone in their addiction. You can communicate to yourself that you are a responsible trustworthy person who can resist temptation and stand up to pressure. The Holy Spirit is at work to bring you freedom. Do not be afraid.

In Christ,
Pastor Emily Beckering

Lenten Wednesday Services

ASH WEDNESDAY IN-PERSON/LIVESTREAMED;
OTHER WEDNESDAY SERVICES ONLINE ONLY



Feed your faith, heart, and soul! Lent begins March 2 with Ash Wednesday. St. Paul's will offer in-person and livestreamed worship services on Ash Wednesday and during Holy Week.

This Lent, we are working in partnership with our sisters and brothers in Christ in ELCA congregations in the Cincinnati Conference

to do joint midweek Lenten services. For the five Wednesdays in Lent (after Ash Wednesday), we will only be virtual, and we will worship jointly with our sisters and brothers in Cincinnati by sharing the link to a worship service from a different congregation in our conference. This experience is something to which to look forward; it is a chance to connect with other Christians and to be encouraged by the Holy Spirit's work in the Greater Church.

A little bunny is on the way!



JOIN US FOR A BABY SHOWER HONORING

Kate Wollenburg, Kris Keith & Kathryn

SAT., MARCH 12th



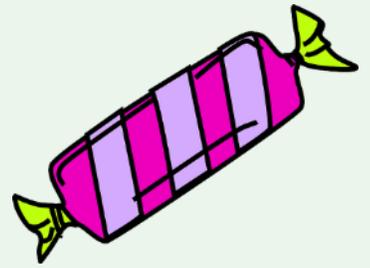
12:00PM—2:00PM

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

106 Maple Street, Reading, OH 45215

**Please RSVP to Becky @ 513.310.3338 (text or call) or
email to bbetsch@gmail.com**

**Kate is registered at www.thebump.com and
www.realclothdiaper.com (513.223.3579)**



CANDY CALL!

Want to share the goodness of God's love and the story of Easter with local children? Please bring donations of individually wrapped candies (no chocolate; Tootsie Rolls are okay) during March. It will be stuffed in Easter eggs by the Evangelism Committee on March 27 and given away at the community Easter Egg Hunt on April 9. Two years ago, more than 75 children attended!!

To give to the diaper service registry, please [click here](#) . Password: wollenburg (no capital letter)

Please [click here](#) to see the gift registry.

Mission Support Overseas: Evangelism is Alive in Malawi

In 2021, 2.2% of our budget was given in mission support to the ELCA Synod and Church-wide. This is a story about how our offerings are doing God's work.



In spite of COVID-19, ministry continues.

Those are words from Evance Mphalasa, a pastor

and acting general secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi (ELCM), words that have energized him and a team of evangelists as they spread the gospel despite the setbacks of the pandemic.

Strict government measures issued in early 2020 closed some of the churches in Malawi and restricted gatherings to 100 people, said Feston Phiri, pastor, ELCM director for training and secretary for mission and evangelism. Churches that remained open had to provide congregants with masks, sanitizer and water buckets, unbudgeted expenses that proved financially devastating.

Additionally, the printing of Sunday school and evangelism materials—particularly those in the Tumbuka language—stopped completely because most offices were closed, Phiri said. Malawian evangelists were not deterred.

2020 was “a very hard time indeed in regard with evangelism in Malawi, but I think the whole world [was challenged],” he said. “Despite this COVID-19, as a problem, Malawi has not stopped evangelizing. [We simply used] a different approach.”

Pastors hosted two, three, even four services each Sunday to accommodate the

small-gathering restrictions. To further share the gospel, Phiri said, evangelists organized a van equipped with loudspeakers so they could preach and sing to people in their homes.

“We used this van and this singing group, which is a praise team, evangelizing, going around to different areas, reaching out to different people with this kind of way,”

he said. “This exercise was done during [the evenings] ... when people are in their houses, so it was very easy to reach them.”

Many first-world countries turned to social media to continue faith conversations and stay connected to parishioners, but Malawians lacked that luxury.

ELCM Bishop Joseph Bvumbwe created a virtual forum for Malawi pastors, providing daily updates so the pastors could stay at the forefront of helping their parishes.

“Bishop never slept; he was always helping to get us the latest information about COVID-19, always sending messages through the forums for pastors,” said Mphalasa. “Then, the pastors disseminated the information.”

This outreach—part of which was funded through ELCA Mission Support—has encouraged and increased the growth of the church, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Without your help, we wouldn't be talking about expanding the church,” Phiri said. “The church is growing so fast and so rapidly. This is very important.”



Celebrations in March



- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>3 Emily Nutt</p> <p>5 Leah Miller,
Katie Sturgill,
Maryhelen West</p> <p>11 Maddie Lohmeier</p> | <p>15 Joyce McDowell</p> <p>16 Adam Winkle</p> <p>17 Samara Bronner,
Patrick Cathcart,
Terri DeAngelis</p> <p>18 Rick & Britt Hedges</p> <p>20 Chet Laine</p> <p>21 Sean Coulehan,
Drew Harbaugh</p> | <p>22 Shirley Harbaugh,
Faith Pirrmann</p> <p>23 Molly McDowell</p> <p>24 Ed Hirt</p> <p>25 Liam Cathcart,
Karen Koehl,
Maggie McDowell</p> <p>30 Pr. Emily Beckering,
Kathy Hirt</p> |
|--|---|---|

March Ministry Schedule

Date	Assisting Minister	Livestreamer	Lesson Reader	Greeter
Mar. 2 (Ash Weds., 7 pm)	Noah Moorhouse	Jim Miller	Sherry Bronner	TBA
Mar. 6	Noah Moorhouse	John Cathcart	Kathy Hirt	Nelson Langefeld
Mar. 13	John Cathcart	Chet Laine	Sherry Bronner	TBA
Mar. 20	Donald Harris	Noah Moorhouse	Cindy Mayhugh	TBA
Mar. 27	Terry McDowell	Patrick Cathcart	TBA	TBA
Mar. 30	John Cathcart	N/A	TBA	N/A

From the Presiding Bishop: “We Are Broken”

This article was originally published in the February 2020 issue of Living Lutheran magazine.



In 1526 the reformers embarked on a program of visiting the parishes in Electoral Saxony. It's known as the Saxon Visitation. As would later be stated in the Augsburg Confession, its objective was

to determine if “the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly.”

Martin Luther himself visited the parishes in and around Wittenberg. He wasn't pleased. He found that many clergy didn't receive adequate compensation, and that the gospel was not clearly taught or understood.

Luther, in his inimitable subtle style, wrote: “Dear God, what misery I beheld! The ordinary person, especially in the villages, knows absolutely nothing about the Christian faith, and unfortunately many pastors are completely unskilled and incompetent teachers. Yet supposedly they all bear the name Christian, are baptized, and receive the holy sacrament, even though they do not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments! As a result, they live like simple cattle or irrational pigs and, despite the fact that the gospel has returned, have mastered the fine art of misusing all their freedom.” Yikes!

Luther's experience led to the publication of his Small Catechism, a “Handbook for Ordinary Pastors and Preachers.” In clear and concise language, he explained the basics of the Christian faith so that all people, not just educated professionals, could understand the great gift of the gospel and live it in daily life.

Theologian Timothy Wengert points out that Luther rearranged the typical order of medieval catechisms to make clear the evangelical understanding that the good news means law and gospel, judgment and promise. Luther “insisted on moving from law (Ten Commandments) to gospel (Creed and Lord's Prayer).”

This uniquely Lutheran understanding of the gospel is an important contribution to the Christian movement. It calls out the reality of the human condition, that we are broken and have broken creation, that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves, that we need a just and loving God who has no illusions about human nature and, at the same time, has infinite love that claims us and sets us free.

This is true evangelicalism that rejects what I call the “Billy Joel gospel” that declares: “I like you just the way you are.” God's love is unconditional, but God does not like us just the way we are—that's why we have Jesus.

I am concerned that our branch of the Lutheran movement can become watered down to the point of Christian Moralistic Therapeutic Deism—a concept developed by Christian Smith and Melinda

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From the Presiding Bishop: “We Are Broken”

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Lundquist Denton in their 2005 study of common beliefs of American youth. To paraphrase very roughly the results of their study: God exists, God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, the central goal in life is to be happy and feel good about oneself, God does not need to be particularly in one’s life except when God is needed to solve a problem, and good people go to heaven when they die.

In this philosophy, there is no awe in the presence of the Transcendent, no turning outward from self, no horror of the reality and the effects of sin—and not in the narrow sense of individual moral failings—no wonder at the intimate love of God shown in the incarnation and the crucifixion, no deep gratitude for the liberation of the resurrection.

In 2017, I called this church to study Luther’s Small Catechism. I think we did for a while. I ask that we all study it again, use it in Bible study and preaching, refer to it when navigating the demands of daily life, incorporate it in our work of justice and advocacy, use it in honest self-examination, and trust its witness to the gospel when we receive the Lord’s consolation. Luther said he needed to study it every day—and he wrote it! Let’s us do the same.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Social Concerns Collection Projects: Pill Bottles, Pop Can Tabs

St. Paul’s Social Concerns committee supports a number of ongoing ministry projects to serve those in need, both in our own city and overseas. Two collections we would like to highlight this month are pill bottles and pop can tabs.



Social Concerns collects empty pill bottles on behalf of Matthew 25: Ministries, which donates them to developing countries so that prescription medicines can be dispensed and stored more safely there. Matthew 25: accepts both prescription and over-the-counter bottles.



Our collected pop can tabs go to Ronald McDonald House of Cincinnati, which sells them to a scrap metal recycling dealer. This raises funds for their mission of providing temporary housing for families with kids hospitalized at Cincinnati Children’s.

If you have extra pill bottles or pop tabs at home, please bring them to church to help Matthew 25: and Ronald McDonald House show God’s love to the sick and vulnerable. Questions? Please contact Penny Huber, Kathy Crosby, or any other Social Concerns committee member.

READING HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Join us at our next meeting as we welcome writer and director, **Dale Farmer!**

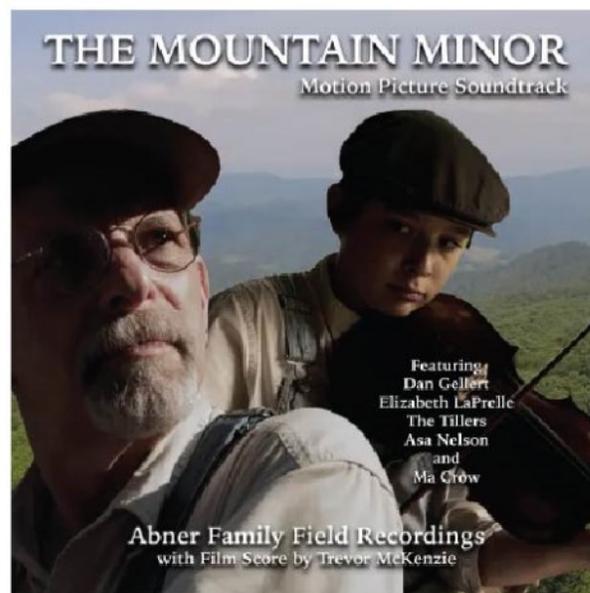
Dale was born and raised in Butler County, Ohio. Dale is a skilled multi-instrumentalist who plays in several bands in the Greater Cincinnati area and has engineered and produced several music albums. He grew up absorbing the stories and mountain music traditions of his grandparents, all of whom were Appalachian musicians and ballad singers. Heeding the advice to “write what you know,” Dale has created the story and film, *The Mountain Minor*, based on his family’s own experiences of migrating from the Appalachian mountains.

Tuesday, March 8
6:30pm

Reading Library
8740 Reading Rd

* FREE *

* OPEN TO THE PUBLIC *



**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
LIAM!**



Liam Cathcart is turning nine!
All are invited for pizza and
party games in the fellowship
hall to celebrate Liam's
birthday on Friday, March 25,
from 5-8 pm.

No gifts, please. Thank you!

A Note of Thanks from the Family of Lee Erbeck

On behalf of the Erbeck, Pirmann and Ford families, we would like to thank Pastor Emily and our St. Paul family for the outpouring of concern, care and love that has been extended to our family these past few months, during Lee's illness and passing and Jane's recent hospitalization.

Your heartfelt expressions of well wishes and sympathy through prayers, emails, texts, Facebook posts, phone calls, cards, letters, visits, food deliveries, preparation, clean-up and food for the funeral, flowers and memorial contributions, have all been welcomingly received and appreciated by us all.

The love of Christ, extended through each one of you has been tangibly felt and we are forever grateful for your kindness and generosity. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. ♥♥♥



Nancy Erbeck

Our Life Together

For emergency pastoral care, please call the after-hours line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, or to remove a person from the list, please contact the office at 513-821-0987 or mail@stpaulreading.org.

We pray for **Armstrong family** (friends of Hubers); **Samantha Asbrock** (Marie Calhoun's friend); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Jeannie Allen** (Faith Pirrmann's friend); **Pr. Lisa Bernheisel; Louise Barry; Teresa Bell** (former member); **Chrissi Bergt** (Kate Wollenburg's cousin); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Bobby** (Christian Lohmeier's friend); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Nicole Bucknam** (friend of Millers); **Jodie Calhoun; Kay Callahan** (Linda Miller's friend); **John Cathcart; Christian; Sandy Cordes; Kathy Curless; Doug Dahlien** (Harbaughs' nephew); **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jane Erbeck; Nancy Erbeck; Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Cindy Flege; Lee Frank** (Barbara Moorhouse's niece's husband); **Jeanne Fuller; Scarlett Gally** (Beth Wernery's great-niece); **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Steve Gollehon** (Elinor Schieman's cousin); **Don Grau; Jim Hammerling** (Portmanns' son-in-law); **Hannah; Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Elain Heskamp; Andrew Horton; Huitger family; 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); **Ken Keith** (Kris Keith's dad); **Chelsea King; Dennis King; Janet King; Earl (Buddy) King** (Dennis's brother); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Tom and Mike Kozee and family** (friends of Faith Pirrmann); **Chet Laine; Lewis Laine** (Chet Laine's brother); **Kelsee Lainhart** (friend of Kings); **Nelson Langefeld; Eli Liflick; Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Cindy Mayhugh; Jennifer Mayhugh & family** (Mayhughs' niece-in-law); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Jack Miller** (Becky Betsch's uncle); **Mary Mills** (St. Paul Players); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Barbara Moorhouse; Jean Nolte; Ervin, Carol, Jim, and Jeannie Oerther** (Portmanns' sister and family); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Ro-**

sie Osborn (Betty Pack's sister); **Tom Osborn** (Betty Pack's nephew); **Tom Pack** (Betty Pack's son); **Eric Papin; Christian & Suzie Pereira** (Carolyn Koehl's granddaughter & grandson-in-law); **Ginny Pape; Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Cathern Pirrmann** (Adam and Nick's aunt); **Faith Pirrmann; Nick Pirrmann; Pat Popplewell** (Dennis King's friend); **Pr. Pete and Joyce Rudowski; Judy Saaranen** (Portmanns' friend); **Heather Segar; James Savoy** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Scott Schadel** (friend of McDowells); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Shear family** (Kings' daughter & son-in-law); **Knox Shepherd** (grandson of Pr. Vicki Garber); **Kate Sheridan** (Kings' family friend); **Keith Shupe** (father of Kelly Shupe); **John Smith** (Elain Heskamp's brother); **Scott Songer; Judy Songer** (friends of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Kathy Spelman and family** (Joyce's sister-in-law); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim's dad); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle's granddaughter); **Randy Thaman** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle's neighbor); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Jack Wagner; Jeanne Wagner; Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack's granddaughter); **Liviah Widders** (Portmanns' family friend); **Leslie Willet; Jean Winkle; Susan Winkle** (Jean Winkle's daughter-in-law).

At the death of: **Lee Erbeck.**

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

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman's great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (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** (Becky Betsch's brother); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey; Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadine and Barry Wisecup).

St. Paul Lutheran Church

106 Maple Street
 Reading, Ohio 45215
 Phone 513-821-0987
stpaulreading.org
mail@stpaulreading.org
stpaulpastor@gmail.com

March 2022

Mission Statement

Growing a Christian community where each is valued, accepted, and loved.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Feb. 27 Transfiguration 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) 9 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship 5:30 pm Gather Cincy Young Adults Bible Study	Feb. 28 7 pm Council Meeting	March 1	2 Ash Wednesday 5:30 pm Bell Choir rehearsal 7 pm Worship with Holy Communion	3 10:30 am Bible Study	4 7 pm Faith & Film Fridays: <i>The Chosen</i>	5
6 1 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) 9 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship After Worship: Evangelism Committee 2 pm Crochet Workshop	7 5:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Christian Education Committee	8	9 6 pm Bell Choir <i>Lenten Wednesday Service—Online only</i>	10 10:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Scouts BSA	11 7 pm Fri.—7 pm Sat.: Scouts Lock-In	12 12 pm Baby Shower
13 2 Lent 10:30 am Worship 5:30 pm Gather Cincy Young Adults Bible Study	14	15 5:30 pm Confirmation Class	16 6 pm Bell Choir <i>Lenten Wednesday Service—Online only</i>	17 10:30 am Bible Study	18	19
20 3 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) 9 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Worship	21 **Epistle Articles Due** 7 pm Council Meeting	22	23 7 pm Bell Choir <i>Lenten Wednesday Service—Online only</i>	24 10:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Scouts BSA	25 <i>Fellowship Hall Reserved from 3pm-8pm</i>	26 1 pm Gather Cincy meeting
27 4 Lent 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) 10:30 am Worship After worship: Easter Egg Hunt Prep (Evangelism Comm.)	28	29 **No Bell Choir** <i>Lenten Wednesday Service—Online only</i>	30 **No Bell Choir** <i>Lenten Wednesday Service—Online only</i>	31 10:30 am Bible Study	April 1	April 2

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Mission Statement:

Growing a Christian community where each is valued, accepted, and loved.



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ash Wednesday Service

MARCH 2, 2022
7:00 PM

St. Paul Lutheran Church

106 Maple St.
Reading, OH 45215

Phone:
513-821-0987

E-mail:
mail@stpaulreading.org

Website:
stpaulreading.org



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE