

March 7, 2021 3rd Sunday of Lent

Mailing/Offices: 103 E. Cedar Street, Anamosa IA 52205

Website: www.stpaulanamosa.com

Fax: (319) 462-4843



Lenten Giving Project

During this season of Lent, St. Paul will be taking donations to support RIP Medical Debt.

You can donate in one of several ways:

- Send or drop off a check at the church office. **Checks can be made out to St. Paul Lutheran Church, with RIP on the memo line.**
- Put your donation in the "hospital" box during in-person worship services.
- Send money or a check with your child(ren) to WD4, where he/she can drop it into one of the "hospital" boxes.

Every \$100 donated, forgives \$10,000 in Medical Debt!

If you'd like more information about RIP, check out their website at: <https://ripmedicaldebt.org>

Donations 2/17-2/21: \$532.51

Donations 2/22-2/28: \$731.94

\$1,264.45



High School Youth: We have one spot left for the high school mission trip to St. Louis, July 25-30, 2021. We are working with Youth Works to provide a safe and quality experience. The cost of the trip is \$300 (a scholarship is available). If you are interested in going or finding out more, please contact me at 389-6153.

Pstr Rodney

100th Anniversary: And the gathering continues . . .

St. Paul volunteers continue to gather pictures from events celebrated at our church. If you have photos from Baptisms, weddings, anniversary celebrations or anything else that happened at St. Paul, please send photos to Lois to copy to use for our 100th Anniversary Celebration (photos will be returned email and mailing address are above.)

Also we are now starting to collect a short paragraph from all our members describing when you joined St. Paul and what activities you have been involved in (i.e. council, choir, ladies circles, study groups, ushering, WD4 teacher, helping with VBS. Please list your contributions to the congregation,.) Here is an example.

Mike Bickford has been a member of St. Paul since birth, being baptized, confirmed and married here. He married Nancy Freese Bickford on June 24, 1972 at St. Paul when she also became a member. They have two daughters, Holly Nicole Bickford Loney and Amber Diane Bickford Holland who were baptized at St. Paul and were confirmed here also. Mike and Nancy were Sunday School teachers many years ago, have participated and assisted with church meals, serve as ushers, and assist with communion. Nancy has served two terms on the church council.

St. Paul Seeking Technology Coordinator

We are seeking to hire a person as technology coordinator. The position would involve 5-7 hours of work per week at \$13/hour.

Some of the duties would include technology upkeep, powering up and down for worship services on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings, and sound-mixing during recordings. If interested, please call the church at 462-4841.

Please Pray for the Following People

(Why people want prayers isn't important, *the prayers are!*)

Pastor Beener, for the family of Lynn Rickels and for all facing challenges from the corona virus and natural disasters.

To add a name call or email Lois at 462-4841/stpaulanamosa@gmail.com. Names will be listed for 4 weeks and may be renewed.

GriefShare will meet on Tuesday Evenings at 6:00 pm in the lower level of the CE building. Masks are suggested but social distancing will be enforced. If you would like to attend please call Nancy Douglas for details at 319-551-3358.

AA meets in the lower level of the CE building on Tuesday evenings at 8:00 pm. Masks and social distancing are required.

Jones County Food Bank: To donate money, make checks payable to Jones County Community Food Bank and mailed to 105 Broadway Place, Anamosa IA 52205. For appointment to drop off/pick up call Julie at 462-4343. They are in need of peas, pancake mix and syrup, canned tuna, Mac & Cheese. **You may also drop off food donations to the church office during regular business hours or during WD4. Please place items under the table in the entryway. A church member will contact Julie to make arrangements for delivery.**

Readers, Ushers & PowerPoint techs: If you would like to help at one of our Wednesday or Sunday taped or in-person services call or email Barb Kleis to get on the schedule. (319) 480-1196 kleis.barb@gmail.com



1^a Come, let us
sing for joy to
the Lord

Psalm 95



Introduction: In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

First Reading: The Book of Exodus 17:1-7 {NIV}

We can understand the squabble between the people and Moses in this first reading if we see the utter humanness of the situation in which the Israelites found themselves. Wandering in the desert following Moses' lead, the people thirst, not only for water, but also to know that God has not abandoned them following their flight from Egypt. Their is concern on Moses' part that the people are rejecting the divine plan of salvation begun in the Exodus, so he cries out to Yahweh [YHWH] on behalf of the people, and God's reply is favorable. Moses is instructed to strike the rock of the hillside from which life-giving water flows. The people's thirst is quenched; their trust in YHWH, the divine plan of salvation, and Moses, is renewed.

The reading is saturated with water imagery. Water is one of our most basic human needs, and yet, very often today we take it for granted. Turn the knob and clear, fresh water abundantly flows. It was not so with the Israelites, nor is it so with many people in the world today. Desert climates make water scarce, and lack of water treatment leaves much water dangerous to human consumption. Some speculate that a war will be fought over water rights, perhaps even in the western United States as desert cities like Las Vegas and Phoenix pull more and more water from the rivers and aquifers and huge quantities of money are at stake for the holders of the water rights. Put yourself in the place of one of these parched people as you listen to this reading today, or listen to someone who thirsts to know God's love.

Horeb is another name for Mt. Sinai. The place that Moses finally acquires water is the same place from which he received the life giving commandments of God. "*Massah* and *Meribah*" comes from the Hebrew word for "test" or "trial."

Psalm 95 NIV

Second Reading: Paul's Letter to the Christians in Rome 5: 1-11 {NIV}

Imagine how relieved the Israelites were when their thirst was quenched, and then remember a time you were relieved following the resolution of a difficult situation or decision. That relief is similar to the

effects of a right relationship with God as identified by Paul in this letter: a sense of peace, confident hope, and a present share in the life of the Risen Christ. This relationship and way of life is made possible, not probable, because Holy Spirit has been poured into our hearts. He shares His divine honor with us. Our journey as a reconciling community is rooted in the belief that Jesus died for humankind when we were at our worst. Paul was boasting in the activity of Jesus because in the culture of that day, unspoken dyadic contracts ruled most interpersonal exchanges (I do you a favor, you owe me. You repay me, I owe you, etc. = *quid pro quo*) Jesus' free gift of his life for the love of humankind was not precipitated by human activity, nor could he reasonably expect repayment for his action. It was an example of ideal human love; it demonstrated the very essence of divine *agape* love. Through Jesus, we get a glimpse into the destiny of all humans who are created in God's image and likeness.

This message delivered to the Roman Christians was meant to help them deal with the questions that arose as they encountered folks who held other beliefs in their culture. What made Jesus different than other deities? Unlike the Roman gods who more often than not sounded like lustful and ego-driven humans with special powers, Jesus gave of himself fully, even unto his death. He didn't consider his divinity something to flaunt, but humbled himself so that we could participate to some degree in the relationship with God we originally had in The Garden. Jesus' life reiterates the promise of eternal life made real through trust in God.

Gospel: John 4: 5-42 {NIV}

What does the journey to faith look like? As cradle Christians, we need to reflect upon this because it is often not evident to us; it's all we've known and the decision to follow Jesus has often been made for us. As we look upon our catechumens today, and listen to this story of the Samaritan Woman at the Well, we see before us the invitation to proclaim from our hearts that Jesus is "Savior of the World" and "My savior!"

In this gospel, we hear about a deepening relationship in the way a woman addresses Jesus. She begins by calling him politely but superficially, "Sir." Later, she recognizes him as a prophet. And finally, after some conversation, she opens the way for Jesus to fully reveal who he is when she says, "When the Messiah comes he will teach us everything." To which Jesus replies, "I who speak to you am he." Through the subsequent witness of the woman and their own encounter with Jesus, the townspeople come to faith and proclaim Jesus, "Savior of the World." This final proclamation is significant because it shows that Christ's saving action was universal, not just for the Jews. Recall, the Jews and the Samaritans despised each other. The fact that Jesus chose to reveal his messianic identity to a non-Jewish woman would have shocked the Jewish hearers of John's gospel. No longer was Israel identified as the "only bride of YHWH." Like the people of this Samaritan town, *any who profess faith in Jesus as savior are a part of the new messianic era, the Kingdom of God.*

Scholars suggest that John was using this story to promote cultural innovation. His community of believers lived near Ephesus, modern day Turkey, sixty years after Jesus' life. They had experienced the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, and the dispersion of many people from Palestine. John seems to be confirming new roles for Samaritan and female members who joined his community after

Taped services are found on St. Paul website, St. Paul YouTube page or St. Paul Facebook page.

Please call the office for worship reservations: Wednesday worship by noon on Wednesday, Sunday worship by 11:30 am on Friday. Unregistered guests risk being sent home due to full in-person capacity.

Wednesday, March 3

- * 6:00pm Worship (reservations only)
Reader: Ben Coyle
Usher: Ben Coyle
PowerPoint: Barb Kleis

- * 6:00pm WD4—CE Building

Saturday, March 6

- * 9:00 a.m. Zoom Drop In

Sunday, March 7

- * 9:00am Worship (reservations only)
Reader: Darla Algoe
Usher: Darla Algoe
PowerPoint: Darcie Tenley

Monday, March 8

- * 6:30pm Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 9

- * 1:30pm Scripture study Zoom
- * 6:00pm Grief Support—LL CE building
- * 8:00pm AA—LL CE building (masks & social distancing required)

Wednesday, March 3

- * 6:00pm Worship (reservations only)
- * 6:00pm WD4

St. Paul Scheduled Office Hours

Lois: M-9-2; T 9-1:30; W&Th 9-2; F- 9-noon.
Kaileen: M, Tue, Th 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. (or by phone)
Call for an appointment: Pastor Rodney, Nancy, or Brie.

St Paul Staff Emails and Phone Numbers

Pastor Rodney	blumlwa@gmail.com	(319) 389-6153
Nancy Douglas, Treasurer	njldouglas@hotmail.com	(319) 551-3358
Kaileen Weaver	cyfmsstpaulanamosa@gmail.com	(951) 553-5728
Brie Wittenburg	cyfmsstpaulanamosa@gmail.com	(319) 975-8186
Lois Ocenosak	stpaulanamosa@gmail.com	(319) 721-9893

Please call us if we can be of assistance. PLEASE leave a message if we cannot answer. We will return your call ASAP.

fleeing the Roman occupation of their homelands. John was already sensitive to the ministry needs of the Samaritans, because we learn in Acts 8:1-8, that he evangelized to them following the resurrection event. His ministry to the Samaritans actually went against Jesus' earlier decree forbidding it (Mt. 10:5). He was now trying to heal the ancient enmity between the Jewish and Samaritan members of his new community by uniting them in Christ.

What is it about this story that would lead scripture scholars to say that John was reading the history of his community backwards into the life of Jesus? 1) There is no Synoptic Gospel (Mk, Mt, Lk) evidence of Jesus' ministry in Samaria. 2) The Mediterranean world was divided by gender. Women had their needed place in society (home, kitchen); men had theirs (in the fields planting or herding, by the village gate judging and debating, or trading in the marketplace). The well was one place common to both genders, but men and women should not be there at the same time. Honorable women went only in the morning and evening. The woman of this story comes to the well at noon likely because the village had shunned her for her shameless (sinful) behavior. She was alone but in the wrong place at the right time. 3) The woman speaks to a strange man in public. Again, this is shocking because a man did not speak to an unchaperoned woman in public without arousing suspicion. Even Jesus' disciples are moved to challenge him, "What do you want from her?" He is risking a scandal among his own followers. 4) After her exchange with Jesus, the woman rushes back to the marketplace in the village. There, she becomes an evangelizer while breaking the cultural norm; she is in the arena of men. They are dumbfounded by her shameful behavior but intrigued enough to pursue further interaction with Jesus.

No doubt, women in John's community acted similarly when they engaged the men in religious and political dialogue. Some of them witnessed to the faith and the movement of Holy Spirit in their lives. The social constructs of the Mediterranean world were being eroded by the stories of resurrection faith from both women and men. Don't be distracted by the question: "Did this event really happen?" Rather, look to the story for the truths revealed in the person of Jesus: all are called to faith; all can be brought to salvation in Jesus; all are invited to be witnesses to the Kingdom of God. Does our practice of religion support these truths?

Taking it home:

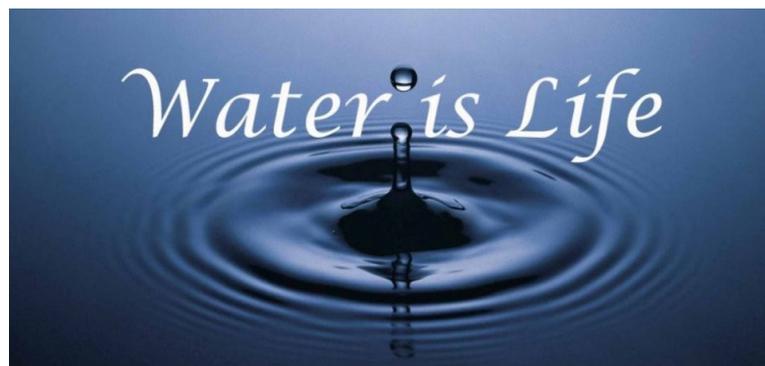
-Draw a timeline and mark six significant events in your faith life that led you to a new place in your relationship with the Triune God (death of a pet, moved houses, had a baby, lost a friend, followed a vocation or chose a career, received first kiss,

vigiled with a sick (grand)parent, competed in a tournament and lost or won....) Name the people involved in those events and how they helped you grow.

- For what are you thirsting right now?
- Today, ask Jesus for life giving water. Tell him you commit yourself to him. Ask him to show you the way.
- Do you trust God? What evidence has been provided to show God is trustworthy?
- Recall a time you grumbled to or about God and you received "a favorable reply."
- Sometime this week, when you're by yourself, see if you can recite the Apostles' Creed. See if you can write it. Do you know what the parts of the Creed mean? Take a few minutes extra this week to review the Small Catechism.
- Pray for the Water Protectors.
- Seek cleaner food for your body.

Mindfulness (set aside five minutes. breathe and read through three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images emerge in your imagination?) Now we know humans are made of the same recycled cosmic materials as the land, the plants, the clouds, and the sea. The entire human physical structure is a combination of non-human materials. For example, approximately 60% of the total weight of an adult human is water, a non-human substance. The brain is composed of 70% water, muscle tissue contains up to 75% water, blood is 83% water, and the lungs are nearly 90% water. Consequently, drinking water from a contaminated environment can result in our blood stream and other organs becoming polluted. Whenever we consume fiber from plants sprayed with toxic pesticides ... our cells are at risk of becoming tainted and damaged. This can cause disruption of the basic biological processes of our bodies.

Joseph Mitchell, *The Lens Through Which We See – Our Cosmology*, in *Loretto Earth Network News*, Vol. 19, No. 2



Orders are being taken for lilies to decorate for Easter. Lilies are \$11 and will be ordered and delivered to the church. The order form is at the church office or on the table in the back of church during in-person services. Please put your money or a check to Anamosa Floral in the brown envelope. Deadline is Sunday, March 21st. Memorials or honorariums will be in the Easter bulletin.



Lutheran World Relief news update...



For over 75 years, the Lutheran World Relief Quilt & Kit ministry has worked with caring people like you to share God's love with families around the world who face disaster, family separations, wars and poverty.

But something happened in 2020. Yes, the global pandemic. When we were facing our new normal last spring, your LWR team members at St. Paul made the decision not to ask people to shop for kit items, and we didn't gather to tie quilts because of the distancing requirements.

And now it's 2021. People around the globe still are in need of our help. We are beginning to see new life here at St. Paul, and the possibilities of a new kind of normal.

We may not be able to create a spring shipment of quilts, but we think things have changed enough to invite St. Paul folk to gather items for a shipment of Personal Care Kits for the mid-April in-gathering.

Why Personal Care Kits? When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel barely make the cut for what they can carry. The simple items included in a Personal Care Kit provide a chance to regain some dignity in situations of fear and uncertainty. Each kit includes:

- One new lightweight bath towel, preferably dark colors
- Two or three bath-size bars of soap, any brand, in original wrapping
- One adult tooth brush in original packaging (**note: we have enough at this time**)
- One sturdy comb (no picks or fine-toothed)
- One metal nail clipper

Kit items can be placed in the marked container in the entrance of the Ed building.

If you prefer to donate cash, you might choose to give a gift to purchase kit items or for the cost of shipping. Each kit costs approximately \$2.65 to ship, which includes the addition of a tube of toothpaste. Cash donations can be given or mailed to Dee Ihlenfeldt or brought to the church office, clearly marked LWR.

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
103 East Cedar Street
Anamosa, IA 52205

Return Service Requested



**COVID-19 Vaccine Interest Form—
Jones County**

Jones County Public Health encourages anyone who is interested in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine to fill out our vaccine interest form. It can be found on our website at www.jonescountyiowa.gov/public_health. If you need help with the form, you can also call 319-462-6945 and leave a message including your name and phone number. We will call you back to help you fill out the form and answer any questions.

Submitting this form will allow us to notify you when vaccine is available for you and provide you with information on scheduling an appointment. COVID-19 vaccination clinics held by Jones County Public Health and our partners will take place in Anamosa and Monticello on Saturdays, by appointment only, on a routine basis. Frequency of clinics will depend on the frequency and volume of vaccine allocated to Jones County by the Iowa Department of Public Health.