

The Epistle

Volume 22 Issue 5 May 2023



St. Paul Lutheran Church
MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA
FOUNDED 1897

The Impossible – Not the Improbable

Do you believe you can move mountains? Before you start to plan what tools you will need, I should let you know, all you get to do is speak to them. Twice in Matthew and once in Mark, Jesus tells his disciples that if they have faith – sometimes even as small as a mustard seed - they can tell the mountain to move...and it will. (Mk. 11.23, Mt. 17.20 & 21.21) How about a tree? Certainly, that seems more manageable. But again, there are no tools at your disposal other than your spoken words. In Luke, Jesus tells his disciples that if they have mustard seed faith, they can uproot a mulberry tree and have it moved.

So, what should we make of Jesus' words here? To start, let's look at what is perhaps the most common way of interpreting this, which is, I believe, missing the mark; that is, *moving mountains or a tree by faith is a metaphor for believing we can do that which is really hard*. The usage of this metaphor remains in our vernacular, "you can move mountains!" People say this not meaning one can move a mountain or do something impossible, but rather that someone can accomplish that which seems improbable. But that's not what Jesus meant, nor what his disciples would have heard.

Putting aside modern technology that makes moving mountains feasible, for most of human existence, mountains were known as **the immovable objects**. The grass withered come fall, the flowers budded to bloom in spring, and rivers swelled and ran dry; but the mountains never seemed to change at all. They are immortal. So much so that, along with being the meeting place for humans and God, they also were believed in many cultures to be literal pillars of the earth, holding the heavens above in

place. By the understanding of Jesus' day, it's not just that people cannot move or change mountains easily – **they simply can't**.

When Jesus says to his disciples that by faith they can move mountains with their words, he is inviting them to **believe in the impossible** being done by, in, and through them - not just the improbable. This is a meaningful distinction, for them and for us. For Jesus, **the definitive impossible** is about to be breached in his life and ours – and it's something we call Easter. The dead are not raised into new life in a resurrected body which has conquered sin and death – it is impossible - just as mountains cannot be moved by faith. But if you cannot believe that you can move mountains by faith, how can you believe in new life from death? – Jesus might otherwise say to his disciples.

Conversely, as post Easter people, if you can believe in the miracle and the promise of Resurrection, then you know by faith that the impossible can happen to, through, and around you. When we fully embody and believe Easter promises, then hope springs eternal and **nothing is impossible, even those things that are**.

He is Risen! Eastertide Blessings,
Pastor Tony



■ WORSHIP

SUMMER



Summer can be a busy time, and missing church here and there can be the norm.

This summer folks who are gone on weekends (or anyone who just wants a little more Jesus in their life) are invited to our mid-Summer (make-up) worship series. Services will be informal gatherings, held outside when possible, from 6-7pm. Bring some picnic items if you choose and we'll gather for a couple of songs, Scripture, preaching, prayer and communion on four different Wednesdays this summer.

#1 - June 28

#2 - July 12

#3 - July 26

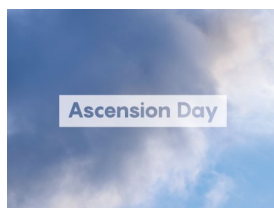
#4 - August 9

All are welcome!

Pentecost is a day of great importance for the Church. According to Acts 2, on that day, 3000 new disciples were brought into fellowship by the preaching of the Word and the



work of the Holy Spirit. As we have several who have expressed interest over the last several months, this Pentecost 2023 we are looking forward to new members joining our congregation here at St. Paul. If you are not yet a member and would like to join the church on Pentecost please contact Pastor Tony asap.



Ascension Day, May 18th

Worship at 6:30 PM

A BBQ Social at 5:30 PM will precede worship

Meat and drinks provided; bring a side dish if you wish



Christian Formation



The LAST DAY for children's Sunday School will be May 28th. The last day for the adult class will be June 4th.

The last day for the Tuesday Bible study class will be May 30th, after which the class will enjoy a summer vacation until it resumes August 29th.

Please note that there will be no Tuesday class on May 2nd and May 16th.



Save the Date!



Vacation Bible School

July 30—August 3

This summer, travel with us to ancient Babylon and learn about Daniel's courage in captivity (and also three men with funny names and a fiery furnace)

For children in preschool through fifth grade

Registration forms are available at the church

We need volunteers!

If you can help with VBS this summer, please contact Joanne Seasholtz or Lindsey Naumann

Church COUNCIL

St. Paul Church Council met on Thursday, April 20th. Here are some highlights of the meeting:

- We are looking in to financing options for a new HVAC system
- We signed a three-year contract with the WV-WMD Synod for use of church space
- We discussed plans for the summer (socials, VBS, etc.)

For Graduates

Do you know of someone graduating in May or June? Please let us know so that we may recognize them after worship on May 19th. High school and up only, please.

Call the church office 304-599-0620.



From the Piece Makers

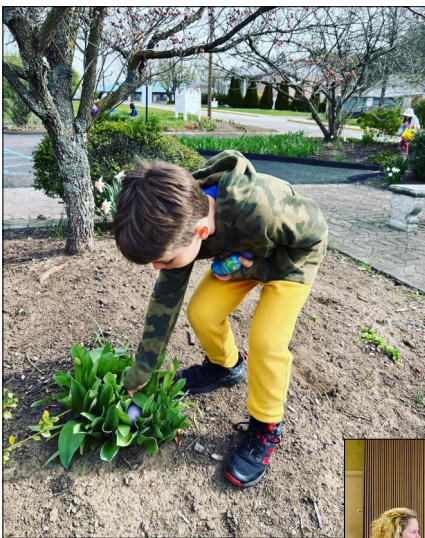
According to the saying: "April Showers bring May Flowers." At the end of May someone will receive the beautiful Tree of Life Quilt. Be certain to purchase your tickets at church from one of the quilters. Also be certain to read more about the meaning of the squares that surround the tree and the Biblical reference to each square on the hand out available in the Narthex. As a bonus two more people will win a quilt when we draw two more tickets. Be certain to purchase your tickets \$1 each or six for \$5.

The only thing that the Piecemakers would like more is for people to join us on Fridays 10-2 in making quilts for Lutheran World Relief. The process of making a quilt is divided into different tasks and we can find something that you can do. Recently Lutheran World Relief sent us a Thank You for the \$300 gift we sent to LWR recounting the many different needs of so many people in other nations.

We are also thankful to the friends who donate to our work. Thank you to Sylvia McEwuen for her gift of fabrics. Thank you to the mystery person who left us sheets which we use for the backs of the quilts. And thank you to Sherry Fox for her most generous gift of fabrics which will keep us busy for quite some time.

We also want to give a great big thank you to Jo Anne Failinger for her many years of making and sending us quilt tops and hope and pray that her husband does well in their new home.

Celebrating Easter





EASTER FOOD BASKETS

We filled 35 baskets and had extra items for Rock Forge Food Pantry.

Thanks to everyone who helped



Sunday, May 7th

is the first Sunday of the month

All who wish may come up to the rail after the service for prayers and anointing.



Got Easter eggs?

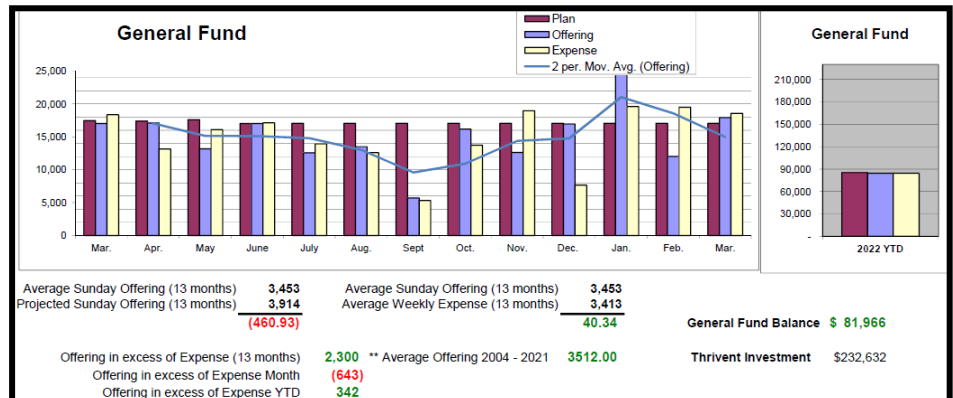


MAY	
Bathrooms	
Kitchen	J. Seasholtz
Stairwells	
Vacuum and Sweep Upstairs	Sandolfini
Sweep Downstairs	

Serving in May

SERVING ST PAUL May 2023	LAY ASSISTANT	LECTOR	USHERS	ACOLYTE	COUNTERS	BROADCAST
7 th 10:00 AM	S. Setley	S. McEwuen	D. Custer	E. Naumann	K. Shockley L. Naumann	C. Wertz
14 th 10:00 AM	M. Grimm	B. Parsons	L. Springer	Sandolfini	M. Suder W. Graham	S. Setley
21 st 10:00 AM	S. Woodruff	T. Riegel	S. McEwuen	Sandolfini	J. Bouquet M. Peters	Peters
28 th 10:00 AM Pentecost	M. Sampson	S. Setley	W. Graham	E. Naumann	M. Boroff L. Stevens	M. Boroff

Treasurer's report for March 2023





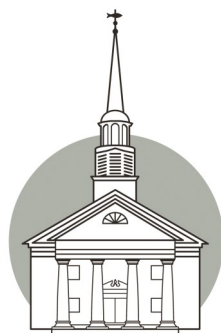
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4 9:00 AM Prayerful Walkers	5 10:00 AM Piecemakers	6
7 9:00 AM Choir, and Young Children's and Adult Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service	8	9 10:00 AM Bible Study	10	11 9:00 AM Prayerful Walkers	12 10:00 AM Piecemakers	13
14 9:00 AM Choir, and all Chil- dren's Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service	15	16	17	18 9:00 AM Prayerful Walkers 5:30 PM BBQ Social 6:30 PM Ascension Service 7:00 PM Council	19 10:00 AM Piecemakers	20
21 9:00 AM Choir, and Young Children's and Adult Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship Service	22	23 10:00 AM Bible Study	24	25 9:00 AM Prayerful Walkers	26 10:00 AM Piecemakers	27 8:00 AM Lutheran Men At Eat'n Park
28 Pentecost 9:00 AM Choir, and Sunday School for all ages 10:00 AM Worship Service 3:30 PM Circle of Friends	29	30 10:00 AM Bible Study	31			

To add a name to the prayer list, please call the office at 304-599-0620.

There is also a book for prayer requests in the narthex (entry).

Please check the prayer list for names which you have submitted, and let the church office know if a person can be taken off the list. Names will be removed after they have been on the list for 90 days. Please contact the church office to reinstate a name.

Reminder: Deadline for June newsletter is May 22nd!!!



St. Paul Lutheran Church

MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA

FOUNDED 1897

The **Epistle** is a publication from:

St. Paul Lutheran Church,
Morgantown, WV

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Pastor's office phone: (304) 212-5116

Pastor's cell (text or call): 681-209-6192

Email: pastor@stpaulmorgantown.org

Officers Of The Congregation

President: Joanne Seasholtz

Vice President: Lindsey Naumann

Secretary: Lillian Stevens

Treasurer: Steve Woodruff

Financial Secretary: Jeanne Lemasters

Council Members

Mary Haas

Grethe Myles

Lillian Stevens

Lindsey Naumann

Steve Woodruff

Joanne Seasholtz

Julie Sandolfini

Bill Graham

Mike Peters