



The Spirit of St. Paul's

MAY 2024

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN
www.stpaulslutheran.ca

PASTOR'S CORNER

In Holy Scripture we find that God uses different metaphors to help us better understand who He is, who we are, and what He has done for us and for our salvation. Here are a few examples: “[Jesus said] I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst” (John 6:35); “Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life’” (John 8:12); “[Jesus said] I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). Through these different images we more fully understand our relationship with God and all that He provides.

One of the most comforting images that God uses in the Bible is Jesus as our Good Shepherd. As a shepherd cares for his flock, so our Lord Jesus guides, protects, and provides for us. Psalm 23 is the most well-known of these Good Shepherd readings, and in it we get a beautiful and vivid image of a shepherd leading his flock

of sheep beside still waters in the midst of a beautiful and serene and vibrant green valley. There are many works of Christian art that depict this scene and it brings great comfort and hope.

However, the reality is that this image doesn't quite provide the full picture of our experiences today. Our lives are not always a peaceful stroll beside a quiet brook running through a pristine green landscape in a tranquil valley. On this side of heaven we see and experience chaos, and suffering, and hardship. We wander and can

become separated from our Good Shepherd and find ourselves lost. There are predators around us who want to cause us harm. Life in this fallen world can leave us feeling scared and confused and alone.

But this is exactly where the image of the Good Shepherd becomes most meaningful. Yes, we journey through some treacherous landscapes, we slip and fall down, there are enemies and dangers all around—but we are never alone. We have the love and guidance and protection of the Good Shepherd who saves us. Jesus laid down His life for us, and by His self-sacrifice, we know the love of God who promises to bring us out of the valley of death—to green pastures and fresh pools of living water. We have the Good Shepherd's promise that as we drink of this water we will never be thirsty again and it will well up within us to eternal life. God's Word, the Gospel, is this living water that we drink and receive by faith. Jesus calls us to listen to His voice, and as we hear it, He blesses and keeps us. Where the Good Shepherd leads—we follow in faith

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Reminders

- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.
- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.
- LWMLC mites and society offerings may be put in the offering plate in an envelope separate from your church offering, mailed to the church or given to society treasurer, Marion Hollinger. Please make any cheques payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church but mark them clearly as being for LWMLC. Indicate the amount for mites and the amount for society funds.

Classifieds

Something to sell or give away? Need something? Services to offer to fellow members? Try The Spirit Classifieds first. No cost. Leave your ads at the church office or give them to the editor.

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Pastor's Corner, continued
 and trust and hope.

The Lord is your Good Shepherd. He nourishes you in the green pastures of His Holy Word. He leads you to the quiet waters of your Baptism. He restores your soul with His true body and blood, feeding and leading you from death to life. Though you daily walk through the dark valley of the shadow of death, you need not fear evil. The Good Shepherd, Jesus, has gone ahead of you through suffering and death to resurrection and everlasting life and glory. Easter shows us that

the grave couldn't hold Him and it can't hold you either.

As we follow our Good Shepherd in this life, we don't know what lies ahead. But we don't need to know because we follow safely behind our Good Shepherd who does. We hear and follow His voice trusting His promise that He will lead us safely to eternal life where we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*In death's dark vale, I fear no ill
 With thee, dear Lord, beside me,
 Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
 Thy cross before to guide me.*

(LSB #709)

God's blessings, Pastor Keith



The Board of Church Properties, along with Sherry Gore and volunteers, is organizing a yard sale/barbecue and bake sale on **June 1 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm**, come rain or shine. God willing it will be shine.

The yard sale is always a good time to bring the community and congregation together for fun and fellowship.

Proceeds will go toward new flooring in the entrance of the church, with 10% going to the local Global Gathering Place, a non-profit drop-in centre supporting refugees and

immigrants in our city. Their website says, "Our diverse programs and services help newcomers integrate and thrive. [We are] building bridges with the community to make Saskatoon feel like home."

You may drop off your treasures Monday, May 27 to Friday, May 31, with the preferred dates May 30-31. Please ensure you have a key to the front door prior to dropping off material as we will not have someone on hand for the entire week.

Keith Wallace
Board of Church Properties

STEWARDSHIP

MORE THAN A NEGATIVE

Even if you've never had to testify in court, a thousand TV shows have made you familiar with the question, "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Why not just make people swear to tell the truth? Or make them promise not to lie?

Any parent who has ever had to interrogate a child about a broken cookie jar or a scuffle over a toy knows the answer. There are plenty of ways to try to get out of trouble without *technically* lying. You tell *just enough* of the truth to skate on by.

We often play the game of seeing *how close* we can get to sinning without *technically* going over the line.

But in our heart of hearts we know that this is not what God intended when He gave us the commandments. He's not giving us a merely negative rule and challenging us to just barely stay away from this or that. There is much more to each

commandment than a prohibition. We shouldn't just avoid murdering people—we should be of service to our neighbour.

For each negative prohibition in the commandments there is a positive good that we are to cherish and protect. In the Eighth Commandment, that gift is the reputation of our neighbour and our relationship with him:

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbour, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

Your relationship with your family members (who are your nearest neighbours), the other members of your congregation, your coworkers and your friends is one of the most precious gifts you have been given. You need to exercise good stewardship

with this gift just as much as you need to exercise good stewardship with your life, resources, time and income. This is an especially fragile gift because it's easy to ruin a relationship with slander and talking behind

someone's back.

But speaking well of your neighbour in Christian love is absolutely free; it costs you nothing, yet it pays you great dividends. If you find this challenging at times, if you are tempted to speak ill of others, just remember that this other person is also a beloved child of God for whom your Lord Jesus suffered and died. Your Lord Jesus loves you both.

As we've reported previously, St. Paul's congregation ended the 2023 year with a small deficit of \$1,623. Thanks be to God for blessing our giving to end the year with this result—especially when we were projecting a sizable deficit as late as mid November. The response to our needs was a true blessing as we had donation revenue in the month of December alone of over \$43,000 compared to donations in December of 2022 and 2021 of about \$34,000 each year. That's an increase of \$9,000 over previous Decembers and enabled us to meet our commitments and carry out our mission and ministry.

To the end of February 2024 we are showing a deficit of \$10,427 compared to a year-to-date deficit of \$7,402 in 2023. We have committed to sharing our financial status with the congregation as best we can throughout the year so members have the opportunity to continue to support our financial needs.

Blessings and Peace.
Board of Stewardship



Enjoying Easter breakfast.

Nor'Western Zone returns to face-to-face events



Thirty-six women, from Saskatoon, Kerrobert and Aspira Hunter Village gathered at the Village on Saturday, April 6. Rental fee for the room at Hunter Village was waived

with the purchase of lunch and a coffee station. That made planning easy.

The LWMLC seminar, Oaks of Righteousness, was the chosen theme. Co-author Miranda Heidecker from Middle Lake, Sask., led the presentation. During small group discussions the room was humming with shared experiences and laughter, while contemplating the questions provided. Those attending came away with an appreciation for the Bible women studied, as Oaks of Righteousness in God's plan

of salvation, and thankfulness that we, too, are part of His plan.

An ingathering for the Saskatoon Pregnancy Options and Support Centre netted \$285, plus a donation of four beautiful, hand-knitted baby sweater sets.

The event was organized by LWMLC women from St. Paul's and Faith Lutheran churches. Plans begin soon for a similar gathering of Lutheran women in the fall.

Lutheran women support missions

A major focus for women of Lutheran Women's Missionary League-Canada (LWMLC) is the collection of mites (donations given with prayer and mightily blessed by God) to provide funding for the sharing of the good news of the Gospel.

In 2021, mission projects in Canada and in the overseas mission fields supported by Lutheran Church-Canada, were selected requiring \$251,000 to provide the promised grants. Praise God, at the end of the triennium on March 31, 2024, all grants had been paid.

A new goal and a new list of grants will be selected at LWMLC's triennial convention this July. To learn more about the proposed slate of projects watch the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEuFYFN2iiU>

EVANGELISM and PUBLIC RELATIONS

HOME!

As a child, how I rejoiced to return home at the end of my school day. Here I was sheltered from the taunts of schoolyard bullies. Here I received Christian love, understanding, counsel, and encouragement. Here expectations were clear, rules were fair, and adaptations were permitted and accommodated. Here my body relaxed and my mind calmed.

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.... I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.... You heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I” (John 14:1-4, 6, 28 ESV).

Jesus was preparing His disciples for the time when He would return to His Father’s House. He wanted them and all believers to know that He was going to prepare an eternal Home for us. Decades later, the apostle John was called up into heaven and told to write down what he saw and heard. The following Scripture passages are some of what he recorded in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ:

“Then I saw a new heaven and a

new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And He who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ Also He said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be His God and he will be my son’” (Revelation 21:1-6 ESV).

“And [one of the seven angels] carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed....And the wall of the city

had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb....The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass” (Revelation 21:10-12, 14, 18-21 ESV)

“And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:22-27 ESV).

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city;

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Home, continued also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. They will see His face, and His Name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:1-5 ESV).

As followers of Christ Jesus, how we will rejoice to arrive Home at the end of our time on earth.

There we will be counted among the great multitude of people from every nation who gather around the Throne of God and of the Lamb. There we will be free of death, pain, tears, and the taunts of the devil. There we will experience unconditional love, fullness of joy and perfect peace forever!

Until that day comes, we are encouraged by these words of Jesus:

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves

Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.... These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My Name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” (John 14:18-23,25-26 ESV).

Verla Schmirler, Board of Evangelism and Public Relations

EDUCATION

KIDS CORNER

GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

One Lord, One faith, One baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

Hi Kids!

Put your seat belts on as I give you a quick trip through the upcoming month of May!

It starts off with the Ascension of our Lord on May 9. Remember hearing about Jesus ascending into heaven 40 days after He rose from the dead?

Fifty days after Jesus rose, is called Pentecost (“Pente” means fifty). This is the day the disciples received the Holy Spirit through tongues of fire sitting on their heads. Nobody got burned, but they were able to speak in the languages of the countries around them. The people from other countries came and heard them telling them of God’s mighty works...

in their own language!! This year, we celebrate it on May 19.

In the Old Testament, Pentecost meant something different. Get mom and dad to take a look at the article written by Chad Bird—included in this newsletter—from the 1517 website. It explains that the Old Testament Pentecost was fifty days after the Passover plus many other things!

On May 26, we celebrate the Holy Trinity...Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. Three Persons, one God. This is difficult, actually impossible, for us humans to

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The Old Testament Pentecost: Why did Jesus pour out His Spirit on this particular day?

by Chad Bird

from the 1517 website

At the foot of Mt. Sinai, God told Israel how to celebrate Pentecost once they reached the Holy Land. Generations later, on the day of this Old Testament festival, Christ poured out his Spirit in Jerusalem. What made Pentecost the ideal day for this gift to be given?

Of the 364 other days of the year upon which Christ could have poured out His Holy Spirit, why did He do so on exactly the fiftieth day after Easter? What was so important about this day? It was, indeed, already a holy day, the OT Feast of Shavuot or Weeks. But

Kid's Corner, continued

understand, but all we need to do is trust God's Word on this.

Oh, let's not forget Mother's Day on May 12! It's easy to understand why God gave us our mothers! Let's remember to thank Him for them when we celebrate and honour them on their special day!

Remember to look for the activity sheets on our church's website as well as at church! The Lutheran Laymen's League site, lll.ca, also has Pastor Cooper's lectionary learning sheets to check out.

Have fun watching God's beautiful creation come to life this Spring!

Mrs. Denise Timm
For the Board of Christian
Education and Youth

why choose this feast day? What makes Shavuot so fitting a time for Jesus to give His Holy Spirit to the church?

The OT Feast of Weeks

The second major festival of the Israelite liturgical calendar was Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot in Hebrew). The "feast of Weeks" is more exactly the feast of seven weeks, for beginning on the day after Passover (the 16th of Nisan), the Israelites counted forty-nine days, then commenced the celebration of the feast of Weeks on the following day ([Lev 23:15-16](#); [Deut 16:9-10](#)). Because it fell on the fiftieth day after Passover, Weeks was also called "Pentecost", that is, "fiftieth" (e.g., [Acts 2:1](#); [20:16](#); [1 Cor 16:8](#)).

Pentecost is an agricultural festival. Believers presented to the Lord two loaves of bread, made from fine flour, and baked with leaven, as the first-fruits of the wheat harvest. In addition to the grain offering, they offered one bull, two rams, seven lambs, along with a sin offering of a male goat, and two male lambs for a peace offering ([Lev 23:15-19](#); [Num 28:26-31](#)). Since the first sheaf of the barley harvest was presented to YHWH on the day after Passover ([Lev 23:11](#)), and the first sheaf of the wheat harvest was offered fifty days later (23:15), Passover and Pentecost marked the beginning and end of the grain harvest.

Pentecost and the Giving of the Law at Sinai

Over time, Pentecost came to be celebrated as the anniversary feast of the giving of the Law or the establishment of the covenant at Sinai. This is attested in Jewish writings such as Jubilees (1st century BC) and the Babylonian Talmud. There are hints in the OT itself, however, that Pentecost was linked to the giving of the law. In [Ex. 19:1](#), Moses writes that the Israelites arrived in the wilderness of Sinai "in the third month" after they had left Egypt. Since they left on the day after Passover, in the middle of the first month ([Exod 12:2, 6](#)), the fiftieth day after Passover would have fallen within this third month. Also, in [2 Chr 15:10-15](#), the Chronicler describes a gathering in Jerusalem, during the third month, where the covenant was celebrated and renewed. A later Aramaic paraphrase of Chronicles, called a Targum, says expressly that the Israelites gathered in Jerusalem during the festival of Weeks.

Pentecost and the Jubilee Year

The Israelites celebrated the Jubilee Year during the fiftieth year following every "seven sabbaths of years" or forty-nine years ([Lev 25:8-55](#); [27:16-25](#); [Num 36:4](#)). During this year, any ancestral land that Israelites families had sold was given back to them. Also, any Israelite who, induced by poverty, had sold himself (or

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Pentecost, continued

been sold) into slavery to a fellow Israelite regained his liberty. Not only the people, but the land itself was “freed” from being worked. No planting or sowing, harvesting or reaping took place during the fiftieth year. Like the sabbatical year (every seventh year), the jubilee year was a great sabbath or rest for the people of YHWH and the land that belonged to him. Therefore, because of the Jubilee Year, the number fifty is closely associated with the remission of debts, emancipation of slaves, and rest within God’s protective care. Like the festival held every fifty years, so the festival held every year on the fiftieth day proclaimed the following: (1) God had freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt; (2) he had fulfilled his promise to give them the Holy Land; (3) he provided rest for them from their labors.

The Christian Pentecost as the Fulfillment of the OT Feast of Weeks

1. Fifty Day Period of Anticipation: As the days between Passover and Pentecost were symbolic of the days of waiting between the Israelites’ departure from Egypt and entrance into Canaan, when they could finally offer the first-fruits from the soil of the holy land, so these days between the Passover resurrection of Jesus and the giving of the first-fruits of the Spirit on Pentecost were days of waiting (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4).

2. First-Fruits of the Spirit: As the Israelites celebrated Pentecost, they offered to God the first-fruits of the wheat harvest (Lev 23:17), but at the new Pentecost, God

offered to His church the first-fruits of the Spirit (Rom 8:23; Eph 1:13-14). By offering to God the first-fruits of grain, the believer bore witness that whole field and crop belonged to God, whose continued blessing was requested through the sacrifice itself. Similarly, Christ places the Spirit within the believer as a pledge that the whole person, body and soul, belongs to him. He will continue to care for that person in whom the first-fruits of the Spirit are present until the “full harvest,” as it were, of the resurrection of the flesh.

3. Divine Speech from Divine Fire: When the law was given from Sinai, God appeared in a “thick cloud” (Exod 19:9); at the sound of a “ram’s horn” (19:13); with “thunder and lightning flashes” (19:16); and in “smoke...like the smoke of a furnace,” (19:18). And “the mountain was burning with fire unto the heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud, and thick darkness,” (Deut 4:11). Then the Lord spoke to the Israelites “from

the midst of the fire,” (4:12, 15, 33; cf. 5:22-26). He “showed [them] his great fire and [they] heard his words from the midst of the fire,” (4:36). At Jerusalem, on the other hand, there was the “rushing of a violent wind” from heaven (Acts 2:2); “divided tongues, as of fire, which rested upon each one of them,” (2:3); and the apostolic proclamation(s) of the Gospel in unlearned languages. In both cases, there was divine speech connected with divine fire, but the message could not have been more different.

4. The Preaching of a New Covenant: If the OT Pentecost was an annual celebration of the giving of the first covenant, then the NT Pentecost is an annual celebration of the giving of the new covenant. This new covenant was prophesied by Jeremiah (31:31-34); established by Jesus at the Last Supper (Luke 22:20); and preached by the apostles at the pouring out of the Spirit (Acts 2). Christ laid upon the listeners not the “ten words” for them to fulfill; rather, he proclaimed the fulfillment of the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms in himself (cf. Luke 24:44).

5. The Year of Jubilee: During the OT year of Jubilee, there was a focus on freedom from bondage, the gift of the holy land, and rest from labor. Jesus bestowed all three of these gifts in greater measure during his ministry (Luke 4:18-19). The Spirit who anointed Jesus to work these deeds is the same Spirit who came upon the apostles at Pentecost to preach freedom from sin, the gift of the kingdom of God, and rest in the atoning work of Jesus Christ.



Enjoying Easter breakfast.