



# THE MESSENGER

St. Paul Lutheran Church

## We're Goin' to Glory!

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

And just like the tender shoots of the early plants that start their careful ascent out of the cold ground to gather in the warmth of the springtime sun, we too bask in the post-Easter glow of our once again affirmed salvation.

In my Easter Sunday sermon I spoke a bit about obituaries. I would like to specifically go back to the part where I talked about how people describe death in an obituary. By far the most common term used was variations on “passed” as in passed away or passed on. Some just straight out say the person died. Others lost the battle with a specific illness. I shared with you that I liked the ones that gave testimony to the deceased’s faith. One returned to her Lord and Savior, another went home to be with Jesus. What I didn’t share was how I want my death described in my obituary someday. I want mine to say, “Marcia made her journey to glory!” In fact, I just added that note to the hanging file in my lock box labeled, “Our Funerals.”

The inspiration for my obituary wording request comes from a sermon I heard many years ago on Good Friday when I was visiting a church with my parents where they wintered in Arizona. Pastor Myron was explaining that Jesus’ words from the cross, “It is finished!” meant that Christ’s mission on earth to save us from our sins was finished, finally and for good. Our salvation was complete and the price had been paid by his sacrifice on the cross. And then he said the words that caught both my mind and heart that evening. “And because it is finished, I am on my way to glory and can’t do a thing about it!”

I had never looked at my salvation in that light before. Of course, his statement assumed that we want salvation. God gave us free will to reject it, I suppose though I personally cannot imagine anyone rejecting the perfect joy of heaven for a miserable eternity in hell. But I think the point Pastor Myron was trying to make that Good Friday evening was that when Christ died for us, he died for all of us, and nothing we can do or say or think would have stopped him from doing that. He didn’t say, “Now, I am going to die for your salvation and if you want to opt out, here’s the form to sign.” He sacrificed his life for everyone, and it’s a done deal. We are sealed in the cross of Christ forever at our baptism and delivered at our deaths into a glorious eternal life and we cannot do a thing about it! Isn’t that wonderful??!!

And the wonder of it glows even brighter when we acknowledge that as much as we would like to think our well-behaved, faithful lives facilitate our journey to glory, that idea is so much rubbish! Our good works are only and always will only be a grateful response to a loving God and holy Savior.

Heaven then becomes, not a reward, but our home, our glorious home, to which we return when this earthly journey is done. And the human journey becomes not a series of tests to see if we deserve a heavenly reward, but a life of opportunity to praise God and serve others.

Christ has died, and has risen, and now goes to prepare a place in glory land for us, all of us sinners. We are going to glory and we can’t do a thing about it. Now that’s a Lord I want in my life. How about you? --Marcia Buchs



## MAY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

### May Birthdays

May 7 – Marvin Miller  
May 18 – Erik Solberg  
May 18- Lyle Dean Girard  
May 18- Lyndi Ann Girard  
May 19 – Frank Curtiss  
May 23 – Mark Mackinson  
May 25- Jim Girard  
May 26 – Anna Schmidt  
May 27 – Ted Bauknecht  
May 28 – Reagan Haase

### May Anniversaries

May 1 – Doug & Peggie Schneeman (1971)  
May 1 – Jim & Amanda Walsberg (1994)  
May 28 – Marvin & Darlene Miller (2011)  
May 31 – Ken & Danita Lewis (1996)

### Rebecca Circle

The Rebecca Circle will meet on Thursday, May 18 at 1:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Donna Buckler will serve as hostess and give the devotion. Marian Brown will lead the lesson. We will be starting a new study from the Gather magazine, “Salvation Now” by Rev. Dr. Anna Madsen. All are welcome!

### Bibles and Bagels

Bibles and Bagels will meet on May 11th at 9:30 a.m. at Edinger’s for breakfast and Bible study (on the precious Gospel). All are welcome to join us!

### LEO in May

LEO (Let’s Eat Out) gathers St. Paul members and friends on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. to enjoy dinner. This month we will meet on Wednesday, May 24th at 5:30 p.m. at Baby Bull’s.

### Sunday Pastoral Schedule

May 7—SAM Marcia Buchs  
May 14—SAM Marcia Buchs  
May 21—SAM Dave Griffith  
May 28—Pastor Wayne Shelksohn

## Please sign up for St. Paul’s Texting Service!

If you would like to receive text messages with reminders and special announcements, please sign up for the St. Paul Texting Service by completing the following:

1. Send a text to 81010
2. Text the message: @stpaul210



### Altar Flowers

If you would like to donate flowers in memory of or honor of someone, please sign your name on the flower chart located on the kiosk. Flowers are \$25. Make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church, noting “altar flowers” on the memo line. Thank you in advance for your donations!

### Red Bag Offerings 2023

We will continue with Red Bag collections on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

May- Lutheran Social Services  
June- Rowe Cemetery  
July- Mosaic  
August- District #429

September- ISU and U of I Community Meals  
October- Boys and Girls Club  
November- Cops & Kids  
December- Local needy families

### Graduate Blessing

We will be blessing our 8th grade, high school, and college graduates during the service on Sunday, May 14. If you have a family member who is graduating one of those levels, please pass the name to Julie Mehlberg by April 30. We ask that the graduates and their families attend the service to be recognized and blessed as they prepare for the next chapter of their lives!



## **PONTIAC CHURCH LEAGUE SOFTBALL**

The 2023 Pontiac Church League Softball season is planned to begin late May and end in early August. Games are played on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The league is co-ed and players should be at least 16 years of age. All those interested in playing are to contact their church's team representative soon: Stacy Eilts, 1st Lutheran (815) 822-1377; Cody Leach, St. Paul, Pontiac (815) 674-3341; or Roger Wahls, St. Paul, Chenoa at (815) 848-1415.



### **LEFTOVER DISHES**

There are several bowls and dishes in the kitchen that were left from recent events. Please pick them up at your convenience. Thank you!

### **Contribution Statements**

Please pick up your quarterly contribution statements which are located on the table in the narthex. Please let Dawn Boitnott know if there are any discrepancies. Her number is 815-674.8328. Thank you.

### **First Communion Class**

There will be a First Communion Class offered on Sunday, June 11th following worship. Anyone interested in being in the class should contact the office or Pastor Wayne.





SAVE THE DATE

# Lori's Beautification Day

**SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2023**  
**9:00AM-12:00PM**



**In Memory of Lori Bristow**



← **SCAN THIS QR CODE TO REGISTER**

**AND FOR MORE INFO**

**Call:** (815) 844-5847

**Email:** [tourism@pontiac.org](mailto:tourism@pontiac.org)