April 18, 2022

Dear St. Paul Church Family and Friends,

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, Indeed!

Yesterday's Easter worship services were joyous, Spirit-filled, and celebratory as we rejoiced in the resurrection of Christ Jesus. Whether you worship with us via this packet, via Facebook Live, in person, or all three, we are delighted you are part of our worshiping community.

This coming Sunday, April 24, the Sunday School children and youth will lead our annual Holy Humor worship service. For centuries, Holy Humor Sunday has followed Easter Sunday—a reminder that the resurrection of Christ is a joke God played on the devil. It is also a reminder that resurrection calls us to laugh and sing and dance.

During the service on Sunday, the children will lead us in an interactive song—one that will invite congregants to stand up/sit down as they sing. Plan to attend worship Sunday and plan to have a marvelous time.

Your Easter stewardship letter should have arrived at your home. We thank you for your ongoing generosity. The stewardship of your time, your talents, and your treasure helps spread the love and hope found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

2022's Project of the Year includes various upkeep and maintenance at St. Church. Last week, Lima Pipe Organ Company let us know that part of the Pedal 32' Contra Fagotto stop is no longer working on our beloved organ. This particular stop is not connected to the pipes, but is part of the electronic tone generators that were added in 1994. The cost to repair this will be no more than \$4,500. Our hope is that we can raise these funds by summertime to have repairs completed before September. You can mark your giving for this project as "Project of the Year."

Pastor Becky is leading a Potential New Member Class on Sunday, May 1 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room. Attending the class does not obligate you to join—it simply provides information about St. Paul Church and the United Church of Christ. The class also offers the opportunity for folk to get to know one another better.

Another project we are seeking funding for is our upcoming Art Camp Festival. Instead of our traditional summertime Art Camp, St. Paul Church is hosting an Art Camp Festival on Wednesday, June 8 in the evening. This event draws children, youth and families from New Bremen and area villages and towns. We offer a free meal, bouncy houses, crafts, games, music, New Bremen's canine officer and New Bremen's fire trucks. Last year we easily fed 500 people at the Art Camp Festival.

The cost for this year's Festival is just under \$5000. We have raised a portion of the funds, but we invite you to prayerfully consider donating to the Art Camp Festival. This fun-filled evening showcases St. Paul Church's hospitality and outreach to the community. We thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference in our community.

We thank you for your faithfulness. We thank you for your generosity. We thank you for your love for God and neighbor.

Blessings,

Roland Dector Mysa Hanenkutt

Beckyabs Rev. Becky Erb Strang

Roland Dicke Council President Council VP

Myra Hanenkratt

Senior Pastor

*** Altar Flowers are in Loving Memory of Erin Rammel by Kathy Manbeck Family.

Financial Information as of April 18, 2022 **Operating Fund Local Aid**

Beg. Balance \$0.00

Giving Income \$11,109.60(weekly) Income \$3,915.50(vtd)

Endowment Trans \$7,600.00(ytd)

Income \$107,767.17(ytd) Expenses \$98,720.89(vtd)

Balance \$9,046.28(ytd)

Building Maint & Property

Beg. Balance \$36,648.59 Income \$31,871.50(ytd)

Endowment Inc. (\$2,161.11)(ytd)

Expenses \$9,248.02(ytd) Balance \$57,110.96(ytd)

Project of the Year

Income \$646.00

Beg. Balance \$12,218.82

Expenses \$8,038.62(ytd) Balance \$8,095.20(ytd)

Blessing Pantry

Beg. Balance \$29,161.12 Income \$5,069.00(vtd) Expenses \$5,399.74(vtd) Balance \$28,830.38(ytd)

Our Church Wider Mission

Pledge \$25,000.00 Income \$634.50(weekly) Income \$8,143.00(ytd)





Thomas

April 24, 2022

,

Use this resource at home to guide your household's daily devotions.



Pray: Light a candle and open your devotion time with a prayer.

Holy Spirit, Jesus gave the gift of your presence when he appeared before the disciples. Grant us your presence and teach us to work for the world with the guidance of your advocacy. Amen.



Read: Read the key verses from Sunday's reading.

²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:27-28)



Reflect: Reflect on the scripture summary.

Thomas and the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and it would be the vehicle through which the good news of the risen Christ would be shared and received.





Connect: Connect in conversation with others in your household.

What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

Tell of a time you doubted something about your faith. Give yourself permission to doubt—doubt leads to wondering, which leads to an even deeper faith. What would you have done in Thomas' position?

For the littles: Is it easier to believe in something you can see? That's normal!



Bless: Close your devotion with a blessing.

May God grant you doubt and faith. Amen.



Do: By acting on what we learn, we make God's word come alive. Do the following activity this week.

Take a long walk. (If you cannot take a long walk, find time to meditate.) Take with you a doubt or a challenge that has been haunting you. Work it over as you walk or meditate. Look at it from every angle. Consider all your options. Look at it from God's perspective. Ask God for guidance. See if you can come to greater clarity by the end of your walk or meditation.



Go Deeper: Go to clergystuff.com/daily-devotions for devotions on the daily readings.

Sunday, John 20:19-31, Thomas Monday, Acts 6:1-7, Seven Chosen to Serve Tuesday, Acts 6:8-15, The Arrest of Stephen Wednesday, Acts 7:1-22, Stephen's Speech to the Council Thursday, Acts 7:23-43, Stephen's Speech to the Council Friday, Acts 7:44-53, Stephen's Speech to the Council Saturday, Acts 7:54–8:1, The Stoning of Stephen

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St. Paul United Church of Christ

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New Bremen, Ohio 45869
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Email stpaulnb@nktelco.net or stpaulnb@gmail.com
Visit our website at https://stpaulnb.org
Like and follow our page St. Paul United Church of Christ – New Bremen, Ohio on Facebook
Rev. Becky Erb Strang-Senior Pastor
Roland Dicke-Council President

Welcome to St. Paul UCC, we are glad you are here!!

Whether you are worshipping online or in person, this is the house of the Lord, and all are welcome to enter and praise our loving Creator. May God's love fill you with kindness, laughter, and joy.

April 24, 2022 Second Sunday of Easter Holy Humor Sunday

Worship Leaders

Ministers
Rev. Becky Erb Strang
Sunday School/Youth
Becky Quellhorst
Tracy Oldiges
Jim Strang

The Congregation
Senior Pastor
Worship Leaders
Organist
Sr. Deacon
Music Director

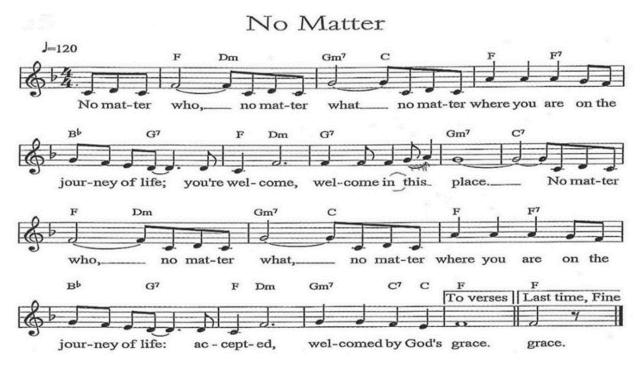
PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF CANDLES: You are invited to light a candle or candles at home in preparation for worship.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TAKING ROOT: COFFEE SHOP And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25) Each Monday afternoon from 2:00-4:00 St. Paul folk gather at New Bremen Coffee Company to enjoy one another's company. There is laughter, catching up, a debriefing of Sunday worship, and general fellowship. Pastor Becky began gathering people at the coffee shop following her 2014 sabbatical. However, the group now gathers with or without their pastor!

WELCOME SONG



CALL TO WORSHIP (Adapted from a longer call to worship written by Shari Miller Wagner (copyright © 2000 Shari Miller Wagner). Posted on the <u>Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference</u> website.)

Leader: O praise to our God of laughter whose humor sends ripples through even the river of death, who turns a tiny mustard seed into a tree, who conceals the meaning of life in a loaf of bread.

People: Like a trickster, O God, you turn our world upside-down. What is truth to the world, you consider a folly. What we consider absurd, you hold up in the light of your love.

Leader: On Holy Humor Sunday, the popular routes lead us in circles. But dead ends have doors.

People: Let us laugh and dance and sing with resurrection joy!

HYMN OF PRAISE

E Every Morning Is Easter Morning Every Morning Is Easter Morning

Words and Music by Richard Kinsey Avery and Donald Stuart Marsh





CONFESSION AND CREED FOR HOLY HUMOR WEEKEND (from http://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/04/worship-resources-for-laughter-holy.html)

Leader: We believe in God, who made us in his image.

People: We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like him.

Leader: We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

People: He had the last laugh on the devil when he rose from the dead.

Leader: We believe in the Holy Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son.

People: Our counselor, our guide, our motivator—our joy!

Leader: Forgive us, Lord, when we take ourselves too seriously, when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours as your children, when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

People: Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Take heart: God's Spirit empowers us to move from the ways of death to the ways of new life. Our sins are forgiven. Let us forgive one another and give ourselves to one another in the joyful community of the risen Christ.

People: Thanks be to God! Amen!

HALLELUJAH!



TIME FOR THE CHILD WITHIN US

Today is Holy Humor Sunday, so let's tell some knock-knock jokes!

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Canoe! (Canoe Who?) Canoe come out and play with me today?

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Who! (Who Who?) That's what an owl says!

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Wooden Shoe (Wooden Shoe Who?) Wooden shoe like to hear another joke?

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Atch (Atch Who?) Bless You!

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Boo (Boo Who?) Don't cry; it's just me!

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Banana (Banana Who?) Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Banana (Banana Who?) Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Banana (Banana Who?) Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Orange (Orange Who?) Orange you glad I didn't say banana?

Why didn't the skeleton go to the dance? Because he didn't have any-body to go with.

Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Lettuce (Lettuce Who?) Lettuce Pray. Dear God, we thank you for the gifts of joy and laughter. We thank you for Jesus who rose from the dead that we might know life everlasting. We thank you for the laughter of this day. Amen.

PASTORAL JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys: The marriage of James Strang and Carina Belles on Saturday April 23, 2022. Congratulations Jim and Carina.

Concerns: We are continuing to pray for Donald Mohrman (St. Rita's), Carol Mohrman, Julia Paul, Greg Maurer, Bart Maurer, Jan Dammeyer, Shannon Shupp, and Dee Schroer.

PASTORAL PRAYER, SILENT PRAYER, AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (Adapted from Edward Hays in *Pray All Ways: A Book for Daily Worship Using All Your Senses.*)

God of Fools, Lord of Clowns and Smiling Saints, we rejoice in this playful prayer that you are a God of laughter and of tears.

Blessed are you, for you have rooted within us the gifts of humor, lightheartedness, and mirth. With jokes and comedy, you cause our hearts to sing as laughter is made to flow out of us.

We are grateful that your Son, Jesus, who was this world's master of wit, each day invites us to be fools for your sake, to embrace the madness of your prophets, holy people, and saints.

We delight in holy madness which becomes the very medicine to heal the chaos of the cosmos since it calls each of us out of the humdrumness of daily life into joy, adventure, and, most of all, into freedom.

We, who are so easily tempted to barter our freedom for tiny speckles of honor and power, are filled with gratitude that your Son's very life has reminded us to value only love, the communion with other persons and with you, and to balance honor with humor.

With circus bands and organ grinders, with fools, clowns, courtjesters, and comics, with high-spirited angels and saints, we too join the fun and foolishness of life, so that your holy laughter may ring out to the edges of the universe. Still our busy hearts and minds, O God, that we might hear your laughter in this gift of silence. SILENCE

Blessed are you, Lord our God, who invites us to be holy fools. All of this we pray joyfully in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: John 20:19-31

Narrator: When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

Jesus: Peace be with you.

Narrator: After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again,

Jesus: Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.

Narrator: When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,

Jesus: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.

Narrator: But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him,

Disciples: We have seen the Lord.

Narrator: But he said to them,

Thomas: Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe. Narrator: A week later Jesus' disciples were again in the house and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

Jesus: Peace be with you.

Narrator: Then he said to Thomas,

Jesus: Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt, but believe.

Narrator: Thomas answered him,

Thomas: My Lord and my God!

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Jesus: Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.

Narrator: Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing, you may have life in his name.

RESPONSE

Leader: The word of God for the people of God!

People: God is still speaking! Thanks be to God!

Many Christian churches throughout the world celebrate Holy Humor Sunday the first Sunday after Easter. In some of these congregations, the pastor dresses as a clown or jester and tells jokes and invites the congregations to share jokes. The custom is rooted in the musings of early church theologians such as Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. It was called The Easter Laugh.

Poet ee cummings had this to say about laughter: *The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.*

In his poem "Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front", Wendell Berry writes: Expect the end of the world. Laugh. Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful though you have considered all the facts.

Truly, there is much to laugh about at Eastertime—yet we hardly take time to laugh at the absurdity of the resurrection: of life from death. Today, we celebrate that God had the last laugh over death.

Ann Weems is a poet and theologian who has written a wonderful piece called, "Come to the Easter Party":

I think on Easter morning we should throw confetti in church!

No?

What about a little fanfare?

A deafening drum roll?

A three minute standing ovation?

What? Have we had the drums beaten out of us?

That we in the celebrative community can't really

Get excited about God's aliveness?

About God's love given to us unconditionally?

Have we given Easter to the lily bearers, the bunny rabbits and the patent leather shoes?

Let's face it: We live as though we don't believe in Easter.

We're the crowd—

Easily swayed, Easily scared, Easily calling for blood.

We're the good church people

Who can't believe Jesus meant love one another—

Not all the one anothers:

Not drug addicts and criminals.

We hate injustice when it's injustice toward us;

We love mercy when it's mercy for us;

We walk humbly with our God when it's convenient.

We're Baby Believers who resist the resurrection;

We're Christmas Christians who are very good at

Celebrating Christ's birth.

We can cling to the Baby.

We're even Crucifixion Christians,

Agonizing, sympathizing,

Relating to the Hero of the Cross.

We can rock a Baby;

We can weep for a Dead Man;

But what can we do with a 33 year old who won't let the story end?

Easter scares us

Because we're the people who can't believe

That God gives us abundant Life;

We think we have to earn it.

In our pull-yourselves-up-by-your-own-bootstraps society

It's hard to remember that God doesn't buy the self-made man.

So we in the church spend our lives showing God

What good people we are,

What achievers we are,

How much we deserve God's love.

We want to pay our own way,

But Easter says it's already been paid!

Easter says, no matter how prodigal,

We can go home again!

So come to the Easter party!

Let's celebrate that Amazing Grace

That in Christ's resurrection

We are still loved even at our most outrageous.

The Lord has given us the music;

All we need to do is dance it! Come to the Easter party!

Holy Humor Sunday is a living, laughing reminder that we place our trust in a God who brings life from death, faith from doubt, and laughter from tears. We place our trust in Jesus who is both in heaven and walking amongst us. We lean upon the Holy Spirit who knocks upon the doors of our hearts, reminding us to serve Jesus by serving the world with immeasurable joy.

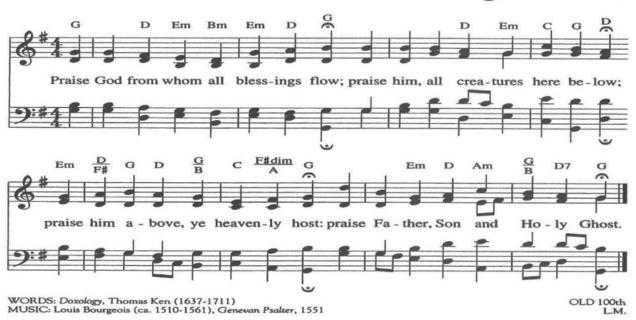
Let the laughter begin. Amen.

WE RESPOND WITH OUR GIFTS

OFFERING SENTENCES: Knock, Knock (Who's There?) Philip (Philip Who?) Philip the offering plate by donating online or sending in your gifts and tithes to the ongoing ministries of St. Paul Church.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow 34



PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Receive these gifts, O God, offered in gratitude for all the gifts of life and for your love, and use them to serve the cause of your mission in this world. May these offerings point to Jesus' way of lovingly serving all in need. Bless us as we give, and bless your world with a renewed awareness that you hold us all in your loving hands. Amen.

GATHERING

This Is the Day

652

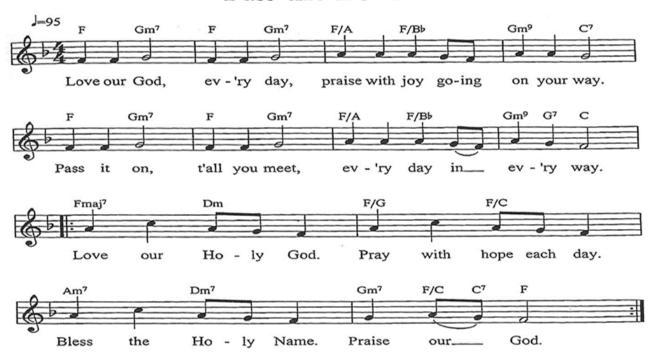


BENEDICTION(from http://www.ucc.org/50/pdfs/worship-resources.pdf): May the God of surprises bring smiles and joys to the everyday and ordinary. May the God of love be seen in all we do and say. Go forth rejoicing, for the good work has just begun! Amen.

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Pass the Love

Pass the Love



PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Leader: May you pass the peace of Christ to your neighbors. Amen

POSTLUDE



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Altar Flowers are in loving memory of Erin Rammel by Kathy Manbeck Family.

Participants-Daily Devotions-43, April 10-Sunday Worship Online-361, In Person-161, Sunday School-22, Teachers-6.

Sundays in May-Worship will be in person and via Facebook Live at 10:15am. **Sunday School** will be in person at 9:00am.

Daily Devotions-Please join us, Monday-Thursday at 11:30am, online via Facebook Live. These will air on our Facebook page: St. Paul United Church of Christ-New Bremen, OH.

Birthday Card Shower!!!! Please join us in wishing Walter Kanorr a very Happy Birthday on May 5th. Walter has recently moved into Divine Nursing and Rehab at The Laurels of Shane Hill in Rockford. Address is 10731 OH-118, Rockford, OH 45882. Walter will be ecstatic to receive your cards and know we haven't forgotten him.

Game Day! Today Sunday, April 24 from 2-4 P.M. in the church Assembly Room. There will be refreshments and snacks. We will have various games and puzzles or you can bring a game of your own to play with someone. This event is geared for all ages.

Bible Study: Unafraid—Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times

We are living in uncertain times. Many of us are afraid. Some of us are without hope. We do not know what the future holds.

Beginning Thursday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m., Pastor Becky will lead a five-week Bible Study following Adam Hamilton's book <u>Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times</u>.

Because the study includes a video each week, this Bible Study will be in-person only unless we can work out how to include Zoom technology. Questions? See Pastor Becky **BOOK CLUB ANNOUNCEMENT!** Book Club plans to start back up in June 2022! If you have any interest in being on the contact list to be notified of upcoming events, please text or email Cami Flenar.

The goal will be to read one book each month and meet, either virtually or in person, to discuss the book of the month. A variety of books will be on our reading list, such as Adult, Young Adult, Middle-Grade, Biographies, and more! If you think you may enjoy reading with a group and covering topics ranging from kindness, community, family, love, perseverance, inspiration, and more, please reach out via email or text to be included on our Book Club list!

St. Paul UCC Prayer Chain-I, Jeff Paul, will be the new leader of the prayer chain going forward. I encourage all members of St. Paul UCC to be involved in the prayer chain. For those interested please email or text me and let me know how you would prefer to receive the prayer requests (either email, text or both).

For those wanting to submit a prayer request, you may either email or text me with the details as you would like me to present them to the prayer chain. I will get your request out as soon as possible. I'm looking forward to building this ministry of St. Paul. Jeff Paul

Blessing Pantry-is accessible during these hours - Tuesdays 5:30pm-7:30pm, Wednesdays and Thursdays 1:00pm-3:00pm. The Pantry will be closed Mondays and Fridays. All Donations Welcome - Blessing Pantry Needs-Baby Wipes, Diapers (size 3-6), Dish Soap, Body Wash, Shampoo, Conditioner, Razors, Shaving Cream, Deodorant, Toothpaste, Feminine Hygiene Products, Bandages, Kleenex, Napkins, Paper Plates, Baggies, Garbage Bags, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Laundry Detergent, and Pull Ups (size 2-6). Thank you! There is a container outside the East and North Educational Building doors for donations.

Troop 95 Eagle Scout Projects-Jared Weigandt and Jordan Weigandt Trees, Benches and Corn Hole Boards will be added to the playground. Donations should be made payable to Troop 95 and sent to Troop 95, 8

Rummel Creek Dr, New Bremen, OH 45869. Please write Jordan or Jared Weigandt on memo line. Thank you.

May/June Upper Rooms-are available at the East entrance to the education building and on the round tables in the sanctuary. Or please call the church office if you would like one and we will gladly mail one to you.

Mailbox-There is a mailbox outside of the East Educational Building door for any correspondence you may have for the church and would like to drop off. Please lift the flap and drop through the slot on the top. Thank you!

Bulletin Availability-weekly bulletins are available for download on our website **stpaulnb.org**. Just click the yellow **BULLETINS** box in the upper right hand corner.

Calendar-Week of	f April 24, 2022
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Sunday	9:00am	Sunday School
	10:15am Worship	o In Person & via Facebook Live
	2:00pm-4:00pm	Game Day
Monday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	2:00pm-4:00pm	Coffee Shop-New Bremen
Tuesday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	5:30pm-7:30pm	Blessing Pantry Open
Wednesday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	1:00pm-3:00pm	Blessing Pantry Open
	6:00pm	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Thursday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	1:00pm-3:00pm	Blessing Pantry Open
	6:30pm	Bible Study
Friday	Noon	Office Closed

E-Giving @ St. Paul

Online – Make a donation on our website: stpaulnb.org

Text – Make a donation to our Number: 833-308-0048

How To Give by Text (Example - my amount for the example is \$25

(minimum amount is \$5.00))

- > For general fund giving: Send 25 space gl (hit send)
- > For building & property fund giving: Send 25 space bp (hit send)
 - > For Blessing Pantry: Send 25 space pantry (hit send)
 - For project of the year giving: Send 25 space poy (hit send)

Once a text amount is sent:

Registration Link- Sent via text the first time a donation is made. Thank you! Please visit (link) to register.

Donation Confirm- Sent via text each time a donation is made.









