



THE PROCLAIMER

January 2023

The mission of St. Paul Lutheran Church is to hear, share, and proclaim the Word of God.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

***“So teach us to number our days, that we may
apply our hearts unto wisdom.”***

Psalm 90: 12 (KJV)

Dear friends in Christ,

Finian's Rainbow is the name of a colorful 1968 musical fantasy film starring legendary dancer Fred Astaire and popular singer Petula Clark. Based on a 1947 Broadway stage musical by the same name, it is an imaginary story of an elderly man named Finian who mysteriously snatched for himself a pot of leprechaun gold in Ireland. He then secretly absconds with it in a carpet bag (convincing his very reluctant, young adult daughter Sharon to accompany him) to the southeastern United States, to Rainbow Valley, in the imaginary state of Missitucky, supposedly rather close to Fort Knox and the U.S. gold reserve. Finian finds a cornfield and buries the gold, with his fantasy belief that it will somehow multiply because of Fort Knox's gold so close-by.

Alas, when Finian's gold growth fantasy does not materialize, their adventure becomes hopeless and ridiculous to daughter Sharon, and she begins to long for Ireland again. A song begins to emerge with the question, *“How are things in Glocca Morra?”* At first, as the song is sung and as she tries to remember the past with her mind's eye, all things seem perfect and idyllic. With time, however, she realizes that her thoughts are more illusions than reality – things were not so perfect there anymore than things may have seemed to be so imperfect in her new land and place. Over time, through many imaginary scenes and adventures, she learns that her perfect images of *Glocca Morra* are not so much based on reality as on how she wishes and hopes for life to be. The story develops as an allegory of race, social class, and cultures, and asks the question, *“How much of life is reality and how much is fantasy?”* *Glocca Morra* becomes a place in one's heart to continually long and strive and pray for and toward each day of life.

As we come to the end of the old year and enter the new one, we leave the previous Thanksgiving and Christmas season behind. For many, the holidays were good times to reflect on nostalgically. For some folks, the holidays

may have been quite difficult times for one reason or another. We support one another in prayer.

We carry with us the gifts and tokens of love shared by loved ones into the new year. What will we do with them from here as we move forward? Will we bury things that glitter close to other things that glitter and buy more and more of them, and then, as we get busy in the “workaday” world, hope those things might even multiply, year by year, as Finian fantasized? Or will we use them ever-gratefully and wisely, depending for our ultimate treasure on the grace of God's love born into this world in Jesus? He will fill our hearts and help us to live with God's eternal hope in our hearts always!

I wonder what kinds of visions God has for our hearts and lives! What types of dreams and directions might our Lord have in store for us? What varieties of storms may come upon each of us? Will there be rainbows that follow? What kinds of blessings may come into our hearts if we are open to all God can do? *In 1908, a British woman, Minnie Louise Haskins, penned these words:*

***I said to the man who stood at the gate of
the year:***

***“Give me a light that I may tread safely into
the unknown.”***

And he replied:

***“Go out into the darkness and put your hand
into the Hand of God.***

***That shall be to you better than light and safer
than a known way.”***

***So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God,
trod gladly into the night.***

***And He led me toward the hills and the
breaking of day in the lone East.***

With all the chaos, difficulties, and problems we are facing in life today, it is important that we enter this new year in faith, trusting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's Holy Spirit will guide us in all our ways and endeavors. May we have a “Glocca Morra” space in our hearts, that God's perfect kingdom vision may fill our hearts to live, love, and serve together as God's faithful people and body of Christ in God's world today!

Grace & Peace in Christ,

Pastor Fred Krebs

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2023, immediately following worship.

Among the business items we will deal with at the Annual Meeting are the following:

- Approval of the 2023 Ministry Plan
- Election of individuals to serve on the Church Council from the following nominees: Cathy Grace, Walt Reichenau, & Janet Schmidt
- Election of the Synod Assembly delegates and the Nominating Committee for 2023

Outgoing council members are Lisa Atchison, LeEster Burch, & Rex Smith.

ST. PAUL CELEBRATES JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Mary Schmidt
- 2 Avery Brooks
- 4 Lynn Reichenau
- 5 Jenna Evans
Rex Smith
- 6 Caycen Potter
Everly Rabon
- 7 Joan Lindley
- 9 Casey Callahan
Gene Zesch
Kassi Reichenau
- 11 Amy Brooks
- 12 Sherry Schmidt
- 18 Steve Schmidt
- 20 Jodie Evans
- 22 Allyson Yonker
- 23 Colinn Evans
- 29 Jimroy Atchison
- 31 Sherie Clarkson

If your birthday or a family member's birthday is not listed or is listed incorrectly, please let Deb Probst know @ 325-597-2832 or dcprobst@hotmail.com. Thank you for helping us with this project.

CHRISTMAS LUMINARY

The success of the luminary can be attributed to the teamwork of many hands. The Evangelism Committee appreciates those who helped setup and take down all the scenes. We were blessed by the participation of young people and adults who made the characters in each scene come to life. A big thanks goes to Parish Life for providing food and to Parish Education for the tedious work with costumes and characters.

OH, HOLY NIGHT

As the days of Christmas Present draw nearer, the beauty of music speaks to me. As I sat listening to the offeratory played by Kylie Sparks on Sunday, December 11th, the true blessing of Christmas filled that moment, touching my heart with the special blessings of the season. To see the Confirmation students and young children of St. Paul provide the message and music in such a beautiful way, made every moment spent working worth all the effort!

I think God wants each of us to spend the days of Advent drawing nearer to Him and then to see the beauty of this Holy Night with eyes open to Him. There were many challenges leading up to that day in December: a startling announcement, a long journey, no room in the Inn, and the presence and danger of King Herod, but yet, at just the right time, the miracle that changed all of our lives occurred.

As we prepared for the Luminary on the same night, we faced our own challenges: participants getting sick, not enough Mary's, and the weariness of days of preparation, but as daylight turned to dusk on December 11th, the scenes came alive with the beautiful story and viewers of all ages, basked in the beauty of the message from Luke 2. "Long lay the world in sin and error pining". You can just feel the heaviness of these words, but then on that Holy Night, everything changed: ***Our Savior was born in Bethlehem!*** Grace came down at Christmas in the form of the baby born to Mary and Joseph and life will never be the same.

And so, my December message to you is short and simple. In our busy lives, we open many doors: we spend many hours buying gifts, hanging Christmas lights, and decorating our homes and Christmas trees, but do we really prepare for the birth of our Savior? During the busy holiday season, it is easy to lose focus on the true meaning of Christmas. The month of December comes and days pass quickly, and before we know it, Christmas Eve is here and how much have we thought about what happened on this Holy Night? So, I invite each of you, to go with me on the journey I wrote about last month...where we will experience a life-changing "Christmas with God"! I invite my dear friends at St. Paul, to Open New Doors with me.

When you step over
 The Threshold of Christmas
 There's a mystery
 For you to explore (everybody loves a good
 mystery)!
 A story.
 A message.
 Rich beauty.
 The music of color and love.
 There's a sense
 Of the Creator's presence.
 The wonder of childlike joy.
 The texture of worship,
 The power of peace.
 Turn the handle
 And open the door.
 Experience the majesty
 Of the Holy Night.
 Let this night
 Color the days that follow.

On December 11th, the children and youth closed their message to you with these words: ***We're ready for Christmas. Are you ready too? Come, celebrate Jesus! He dearly loves you!***

In Jesus name and Christ's love,
 Ann Mahnken

**MASON MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE
 CYCLE OF PRAYER**

The Mason Ministerial Alliance is asking congregations and faith-based organizations to pray for each other during the year, on a rotating basis monthly. For January 2023, we are all asked to pray focused prayers for St. Martin's Episcopal Community.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

- Approved the Report of the Nominating Committee. Nominees for 2023 Council are Cathy Grace, Walt Reichenau, & Janet Schmidt.
- Date for Annual Congregational Meeting set for Sunday, January 29.
- Council approved the 2023 Ministry Plan of \$265,128.
- Annual Reports are due in the Church Office by January 5, 2023. This includes all committees and organizations of St. Paul Lutheran.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR NOVEMBER

Congregational Giving: \$17,403.00
 Expenditures: \$19,304.61

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS TO STEWARD
 YOUR LIFE**

Have any resolutions for 2023? (It's not too late to make them!) New Year's resolutions are a great way to boost the stewardship of your life. After all, resolutions are just goals for enriching our lives. Here are some areas to consider:

Spirituality: Grow in faith by engaging spiritual practices. Resolve to pray and read scripture daily, attend worship, give generously, cultivate spiritual relationships, serve church and community.

Health: Gain vitality by resolving to lose weight, eat healthfully, exercise regularly, learn about health and nutrition and get checkups at your doctor and dentist.
Intellect: Keep your mind active by resolving to read books, check out educational programs and podcasts, take a class to learn a new language or skill.
Relationships: Resolve to make new friendships and deepen existing ones. Work on family relationships to strengthen bonds and bring people closer to you and other family members.
Leisure: Include resolutions to help you enjoy life! Vacations, hobbies, activities, getaways, day trips.
Financial: Get your financial house in order. Resolve to make and keep a budget, reduce debt, increase income, save more and become more learned in money matters.
 We are stewards of the life that God has given us. For 2023, pray for God's guidance and make a few resolutions that address your priority issues. And pray for God's help in keeping them. Blessings for 2023!

--Rob Blezard

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**STEWARDSHIP DIRECTORY
 FOR JANUARY**

Lay Reader: Cynthia Bauer
Communion Assistants: Del Roy Reichenau & Janet Schmidt
Council Rep. on Duty: LeEster Burch
Bell Ringers: Mark Lehmborg and Mike Goff
Speaker System: Bob Vacek and Mark Lehmborg
Ushers: Jerry Bearden, Walt Reichenau, Rex & Connie Smith, and Harold Albers
Property Person on Duty: Matt Schmidt
Acolytes:
 (1/1)
 (1/8) Kinsley Atchison
 (1/15)
 (1/22) Noah & Kylie Sparks
 (1/29) Reece Evans
Altar Guild:
 Flower Chairman: Nancy Brown
 Parament Chairman: Debbie Nebgen
 Communion Chairman: Sherry Schmidt
Women's Bible Study:
Morning Bible Study (First Wed. of Month at 10AM)
Bible Study Leader: Cindy Bauer
Hostess: Lynn Reichenau, at her home
Evening Bible Study (third Tues. of the month)
 Fellowship Hall at 5 PM
Memorials: Church Office 347-5582

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Rev. Fred Krebs Pastor
 Mrs. Heather McFarland Church Administrator
 Mrs. Ann Mahnken Youth Director

Church Office Hours:
 Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
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