

The Messenger



JESUS, OUR DELIVERER

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Matthew 6:13

They just don't stop coming, do they? Temptations, that is. Our daily lives are spent wandering in a spiritual wasteland. Our society spews out lie after lie ("You can decide your own truth!" "Your pleasure is most important!") and seems intent on numbing us into a spiritually vegetative state through the constant stream of flashy and addictive entertainment. Culture's current can feel like a raging river that is intent on dragging us down to our peril.

Temptations also well up from inside of us, even during our most "spiritual" moments. I am taking the Lord's Supper with my brothers and sisters in Christ. I see a person with whom I am having a disagreement and immediately my heart is filled with resentment. I am in the process of praying with my family while my mind is overflowing with worries about finances and my unending to-do list. I am reading the scriptures with my eyes, but my heart is wandering far away, more concerned about sports events than the eternal and enduring Word of God.

Then the Devil comes, shooting his fiery arrows at our souls, whispering deceitful inquiries into our ears and intending to take us and those whom we love straight to hell. "Are you sure that's what God says?" "Are you sure God cares?" "Are you sure God even exists?"

We fall into temptation, over and over. This is why Jesus instructed us to pray: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Temptations do come. We pray that the Lord would hold us close to His side and keep us from falling to the myriad of temptations that hit us every day. We pray that God would deliver us from the one who wants our souls!

Over and over, he points us to Jesus, our deliverer, who "was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:25). Over and over, he presents a way out of temptation so that we can stand when society's current would sweep us away (1 Corinthians 10:13). Over and over, he surrounds us with Christian brothers and sisters who are loving and brave enough to rebuke us, correct us, forgive us, and guide us. Over and over, he directs us to His word, where we hear the gospel message and are built up so that we can take our stand against the devils flaming arrows (Ephesians 6:11).

So, like Paul, we shout out "Who will rescue me?" But, also like Paul, we conclude... "**Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!**" (Romans 7:25)

PRAYER: *O God, our deliverer, we thank you for rescuing us from sin and death. Lead us not into temptation, but continually deliver us from evil. Amen*

Easter Breakfast

It's that time of year again to worship our Risen Lord! Not like we shouldn't do it daily :).

This year our annual and biggest ST. PAUL YOUTH FUNDRAISER for Easter breakfast will be much different than years past. This year we will be utilizing a "to-go" method. If the weather permits, meals may be eaten on the lawn with chairs and tables set up or bring your own, if weather is inclement then you may wish to eat in your vehicles or even take it home with you. Sign-up information will be emailed, posted on our website and Facebook similar to the sign-up for the Wednesday communion.

Meals will need to be picked up from 9-10:00 a.m. on Easter Sunday, 4/4/2021

"Breakfast platters come with (2) melt-in-your-mouth pancakes, fluffy scrambled eggs, (2) bacon strips, (2) Conecuh sausage link, fruit medley (banana, strawberry, grape), single buttermilk biscuit, cup of homemade sausage gravy. St Paul Youth thanks YOU for your steadfast support spiritually and monetarily. Donation's appreciated but not necessary for a meal!"

To sign-up [click here](#) no later than Friday, April 2."

LENTEN SERVICES

March 17.....7:00 p.m.

March 24.....7:00 p.m.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Palm Sunday (Confirmation)March 28- 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Maundy ThursdayApril 1 - 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday.....April 2 - 7:00 p.m.

Easter SundayApril 4 - 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

The City of Jerusalem The Mount of
Bethany Garden of Gethsemane

Places of the Passion



The High Priest

Pilate's Judgment

Bethphage

The Upper Room The Garden

Everyone is Welcome to Join in the Fun

There will be an **Easter Egg Hunt** on
Palm Sunday, March 28th 1 - 4 p.m.
at the new Messiah Church location
334 Old Farm Lane South, Prattville



ON SITE SUNDAY SCHOOL RE-OPENS APRIL 11!!!

We're excited to be coming together again to learn more about Jesus and study the Scriptures!! All of the following will be socially distanced and require masks. Coffee will be available in the Narthex and allowed in the Sanctuary for the adult class.

Classes will run from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. and replace the streaming (Facebook) study at 9:30.

1. Hybrid Children's Class – led by Amie Smithley. Will continue via Zoom and in person in the Fellowship Hall. The nursery will be available for parent's use.
2. Youth Group – will meet in the Youth Room and led by Kyle Arnold.
3. Hybrid Adult Class – will meet in Sanctuary and available via Zoom. The topic will be "Re-Opening Christianity" from Right Now Media led by Mike Nisbet. There will be a short, thought-provoking video followed by discussion.

Even though 2020 has produced many obstacles, it has also brought an incredible opportunity for us to examine thoroughly what it truly means to be Christian.

What if we could reopen Christianity? How would we reopen? What would we look like? What would we do? What if we could start by acknowledging that we have gone far away from who the God in the Bible has called us to be? What if we could use this time to refocus and come out a stronger representation of who Jesus is?

ZOOM ORIENTATION FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL RE-OPENING

An orientation for Zoom is scheduled in advance of our re-opening. If you are not familiar with Zoom or would like a refresher and interested in attending Sunday School via Zoom, please plan to attend one of these sessions:

Evening: 6:30 p.m. Tuesday March 23; **Daytime:** 3:00 p.m. Thursday March 25. All households will receive an email with a link to this orientation. Although Zoom is very simple to use there are a few pointers that everyone should know in advance of attending a hybrid Sunday School meeting.

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

It has already been a year since we were met with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Much has transpired good and bad. We have had sickness, death, and recovery. Lost jobs to quick thinking opportunistic ways of doing business. Lock downs, quarantine, social distancing and on the positive side... families doing more together. From Church streaming only... to where we are now...gradually reopening. A vaccine that normally takes years to make and dispense to discovering and dispensing in record time (the Lord heard and answered our prayers).

All along God has been and is still with us. Much complaining and grumbling could be heard and still can be heard often from people including Christians. It reminds me of the Israelites in the desert grumbling against God who provided for them, but not up to their expectations.

Let us not be like the Israelites. Let us thank God for His ever-present love and His providential care and concern for us. He never leaves us nor forsakes us no matter how bad the conditions we live in may get.

Before you know it, we will be able to return to our near-normal activities and we have our Lord to thank for it. He has provided the technology, the medicine and everything necessary for this recovery. Let us be truly THANKFUL.

Many things have been put on the back burner (Church wise) because of the Pandemic. As soon as possible we will begin to revive our near-normal Worship, Sunday School, Fellowship, and other activities.

My Goals are listed below. These are goals that can be implemented as we go this year, and I believe will continue possibly for years to come.

Pastor Elam's Goals for 2021

I would like to **Revive the Visioning Team** with original goals to reflect the vision of 60X60 by 2025.

Begin a **Discipleship movement** in the congregation by: "Creating a Wholistic Approach to Generosity." This will include Time, Talents and Treasure (more to come). When you think about it, Christians should be the most generous people on earth.

We need to continue our **In Reach and Outreach** to the Community.

With our **In-reach**, we can begin by bringing back to life our Small Groups:

- † Pairs and Spares
- † Home groups (have at least two by 1 September)
- † Youth group up and meeting as soon as possible.
- † Women's Bible study (already meeting)
- † Men's Bible study (already meeting).
- † Start more Bible studies by having more options.

Outreach

- † Continue our relationship with **Reality and Truth**
- † Continue our relationship with **Friendship Mission**
- † Revive our relationship with **Pre-School Plus** next door with
-serving opportunities as Covid/CDC allows.
- † Partnership with the **Food Bank**
- † Partnership with the **VA Food Pantry**

Sunday School Education

- † Have **two** teachers per class
- † Provide **two** adult Sunday School classes
- † **VBS** by the middle of July.

I look forward to a much better year ahead. Let's all pull together as the family of God at St. Paul and bring the loving Gospel of God to our community.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Elam

ST. PAUL MINISTRIES NEED YOUR HELP

St. Paul's **SAFETY AND SECURITY MINISTRY** needs someone to take charge. We are praying for one person to serve in this capacity. This person would be the "go to" person for safety and security issues and will also be in charge of keeping our policies and procedures updated. After the initial review, this ministry is a very low maintenance effort requiring very little time but it is extremely important to St. Paul. Please pray about serving in this ministry and then step forward to serve.

St. Paul has a pressing need for is **SOMEONE WHO CAN PLAY THE PIANO/KEYBOARD** for the first service. Our previous musician had a change of jobs and could no longer play at the first service. Copyright laws prevent us from streaming prerecorded music videos. In order for us to stream these videos St. Paul would have to get several licenses to broadcast these videos such as broadcast, streaming and permissions from the copyright holders. Together these are very expensive.



Serve
the Lord
with
gladness

Psalm 100:2

God has told his people how important songs and music is to Him therefore it is very important it is to us. If you can play or know someone who can please contact us. Again, pray about this and then step up to this vital ministry.

For further information please contact Pastor Elam or Elders Jerry Huffstickler or Scott Arnold.

We have had some losses to our **GROUNDS CREW TEAM**. St. Paul is in need of a few good folks to join the team. This crew, headed up by Kyle Arnold, keeps our grounds looking really good and in tip top shape. We need edgers, trimmers and lawnmower drivers. If you don't know how to handle a big mower or the other equipment, that's OK, we'll teach you how to do it safely and properly. As you know, we are in the final stages of purchasing a new mower so we can all learn together. Keeping God's house in good shape and looking good is a critical ministry. So, if this interests you, feel free to contact Kyle @ 334-221-5025, Pastor Elam @334-354-7024 or me (Jerry Huffstickler) @ 850-865-1287.

ST. PAUL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- The meeting was opened with a word of prayer by Pastor Elam and chaired by Mark Wootan.
- Pastor praised all the hard work that Board and Congregation had performed, making the past year successful, even in the face of the pandemic.
- The budget was reviewed. Early January showed a shortage of incoming funds, but was made up by a large jump in donations later in January, so funding is tracking above estimates.
- Decision to table disposition of \$60K surplus until assured government requirements have been satisfied (tasker to Janet, accountant).
- Connected to discussion of surplus funds disposition, Board recommended church creates (with accountant assistance) some form of tracking cash intake/outflows to better plan for spending throughout the year.
- Board agreed to convert "COVID fund" of \$2500 to a generic "walk-up" fund to be distributed by Pastor.
- Discussion of holding Town Hall meeting, but decided to delay until budget questions above resolved.
- Pastor Elam led discussion on Goals for 2021, which centered mostly on reviving efforts within the Church and mission fields as effects of pandemic decrease.
 - Vision Team
 - Holistic approach to generosity
 - In-reach / Outreach programs
 - Sunday School Education
 - Church grounds / property
- New business discussed: request for update on security camera installation (Jerry to take for action).
- Pastore Elam closed the meeting with a word of prayer

Next meeting scheduled for 6 May 2021 (virtual). Focus will be on preparing for 16 May Voters Meeting.

Well, spring is in the air and so is the pollen. Trees are budding, grass is growing, and flowers are blooming. How about a fun day at St. Paul? We are planning our spring workday this year. This is a wonderful opportunity to get out of the house, meet with friends you haven't seen in a while and get a little sunshine on your face. We are looking at

Saturday, March 27th from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

We have plants and shrubbery to plant, hedges and bushes to trim, windows to wash and the Sanctuary needs a good dusting and cleaning. After an exciting morning, we can all enjoy a specialty pizza or two and have some real fellowship with old friends. We will use good common sense in terms of social distancing and masks. Sanitizers will be readily available if you desire. So, get out your calendars and block off 8-12 on the 27th for spring cleaning at St. Paul. See you there.



Church
Clean-UP

Upcoming LWML meetings will be Tuesday, March 16th and April 20th at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

LWML Reaches 2019-2021 Mission Goal!

Sing the Doxology, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!" The LWML, by God's grace, has reached the mission goal of \$2.1 million set for the 2019-2021 biennium.

This means that all mission grants selected for this biennium can be funded! God has great plans for spreading His Gospel story through those ministries. He has great plans for the 2021-2023 mission grants as well.



[39th Biennial LWML Convention](#)

[Lexington, Kentucky](#)

June 24–27, 2021



YOUR OLD EYEGLASSES DONATION – IN THE WELCOME CENTER

What is Needed?

Adult-sized Glasses

Children-sized Glasses

Non-prescription Sunglasses

Why Are Donated Glasses Needed?

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that of the 153 million people worldwide who have poor vision, 138 million or 90% live in African, Asian or Latin American countries. This is because in many of these countries people cannot afford the cost of a simple pair of eyeglasses. Sadly, more than 4 million pairs of eyeglasses are discarded every year in the U.S.

How Do Donated Glasses Help Others?

Donated eyeglasses can enable an adult to secure a job and support his or her family; a child to succeed in school; a senior to continue to live an independent lifestyle; a mother or father to see their child's face clearly for the first time, and people to hear the Gospel message while they are being fitted for their glasses.

For more information https://www.mostministries.org/eyeglass_ministry_faq



WOMEN OF THE WORD

BIBLE STUDY

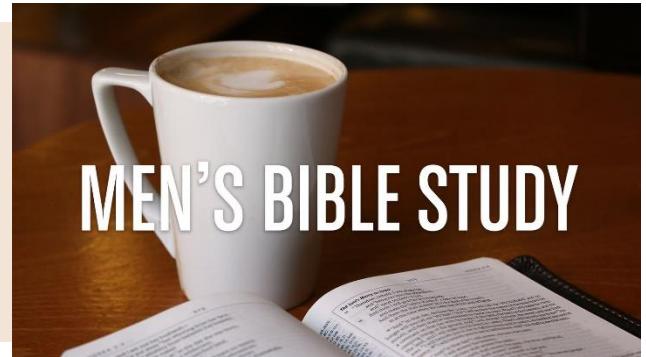
Thursday, March 25 & April 8
11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Bible study helps us to gain a better understanding of who God is and his role in our lives. I have found, that the more we dive into God's Word, the more his word changes us to become more like Jesus.



Women of the
WORD

Join Pastor Elam on
Friday, March 19th & April 2nd at 7:00 a.m.
for Bible study and breakfast.
Meet at the Farmer's Market Café (315 N. McDonough St.).
For more information contact Pastor Elam.



ST. PAUL JANUARY 2021 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

February Budget.....\$23,333

February Gifts.....\$25,614.73 (budget exceeded by \$2,281.40 – Praise God!)



March..... Joan Nightengale
April Neil Foulger
MayRenee Perry

The St. Paul Church Office
will be closed the
week following Easter.

Steve Nightengale	3/16	Debbie Kennedy	3/27
Catherine Freine	3/17	Janet Rosin	3/27
Jill Garnto	3/17	Jon Garnto	3/28
Scott Arnold	3/19	Sue Gill	3/28
Ann Ohme	3/20	Ann Maines	4/1
Gayle Lisenby	3/22	Deborah Mikulka	4/1
Diane Wootan	3/24	Berna Wittkop	4/1
			Wyman Cabaniss 4/3 Jack Smyly 4/9
			John Blumentritt 4/5 Teri White 4/9
			Jackson Smith 4/8



Happy Anniversary

EJ & Tessa Antoon	3/19	Ryan & Jordan Bozeman	4/4
Larry & Karalyn Maevers	3/28	Syd & Jackie Marquis	4/5
Jason & Carrie Lueck	4/1	Nick & Debby Thomas	4/6
Carey & Terry Elam	4/3	John & Mary Ficzere	4/12

Please submit pictures/information for the newsletter by the 12th of each month to dhoward@knology.net.

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER
To activate the prayer chain, contact Margaret Carlson at 334-567-0964 or the church office at 272-6214.