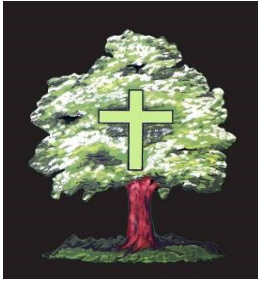


MARCH 2024



# *The Leaflet*

## **WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!**

Tree of Life was blessed to welcome two new members during worship on February 18. Jeffrey Hillwig and Linda Klein have been attending for several months, and have already given of their time and talent, including at the Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper. They run the Miller-Dunham House Bed & Breakfast in Odessa. Thanks be to God for calling them to this congregation!

## **READING THE PASSION ON PALM SUNDAY**

Following tradition, we will be reading the Passion according to Mark during worship on Palm Sunday, March 24. Unlike typical Sunday readings, the whole congregation will take part in this, with different parishioners reading the words of different people in the Passion narrative, and the entire congregation reading the words of the crowds. You are invited to help with this! A list of parts will be posted in the front of the sanctuary. Please sign up! You can simply read from the booklet, and from your seat. For any questions, please talk to Pr. Robbie.

## **ODESSA GOOD FRIDAY 'CROSS WALK'**

In addition to our 7 p.m. Tenebrae service, Tree of Life and St. Paul's Methodist will be offering a "Community Cross Walk" at noon on Good Friday, March 29. Anyone interested is invited to walk behind a cross from St. Paul's to Tree of Life, stopping occasionally for Scripture readings and prayer. In this way, on the hour that Jesus walked to Golgotha, we will also walk through the story of Jesus' Passion. (In the event of extremely inclement weather, we will remain indoors at St. Paul's.) Please consider joining for this additional time of meditation on our Lord's death for our sins.

## **JOINT WORSHIP ON MAUNDY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY**

With good turnout and feedback from last year, Tree of Life will again partner with St. Paul's Methodist for worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. This year, Maundy Thursday worship will be at 7 p.m. at St. Paul's, with Pr. Robbie preaching and Pr. Linda Ray presiding. Good Friday Tenebrae will be at 7 p.m. at Tree of Life, with Pr. Linda preaching and Pr. Robbie presiding. Thanks be to God for bringing Christians together on these holy nights!

# Council

**O** A new year is underway for TOL's Church Council. We are pleased to have our old council back, which barely consisted of four members, and to have added two more. Our new council members are Donna Parks and Carla Fiske. At our first meeting we elected officers who now are:

<b>r</b>	President Nicky Zaiser	Vice President Donna Parks
<b>n</b>	Secretary Sylvia Schill	Treasurer Denise Lindquist
	Facilities Chairman Dirk Schulze	Fellowship Coordinator Carla Fiske

**e** I'm happy to be working with such a dedicated group as we continue to grow and nurture Tree of Life. And I am very happy because it is the kind of Church Council that makes meetings fun and the job of council President very easy!

**r** We on council are eager to have your feed back on how you feel TOL is doing these days. I won't promise that we will always put your suggested changes immediately into place, but I will promise that every complaint and every suggested change will be discussed at length and given prayerful consideration. Our goal is to work together to make Tree of Life a joy to the believers and a sanctuary of peace and hope for the troubled.

May the Love of Christ be felt in us all.  
Nicky Zaiser Council President



## Midweek Soup & Study: "Holy Lament"

Noon on Wednesdays  
Feb. 21 at Tree of Life  
Feb. 28 at Tree of Life  
March 6 at St. Paul's  
March 13 at St. Paul's  
March 20 at St. Paul's

## JOINT EASTER EGG HUNT

St. Paul's and Tree of Life will join for an Easter Egg Hunt at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 30, at St. Paul's. Children will be able to find eggs and receive safely packaged candies. There will also be games, crafts and fellowship. For any questions, you can call the St. Paul's office at (302) 378-2420

# From the Pastor

## Reason to Rejoice

The calendrical quirk of Holy Week coming at the very end of March this year means that I'm sitting here writing an article for Easter month on the day after Ash Wednesday! While I can't predict the future, my guess is that when you are reading this at the end of February or beginning of March, it still might not feel a lot like Easter. We still have several more weeks of Lent, as we solemnly prepare for Holy Week and the shadow of Golgotha. Many days are still chilly and gray, and the nights still long. We'll be continuing our midweek Lenten Soup & Study exploring the theme of lament, how the writers of Scripture and we today express our sorrows to God. At first glance, it might not sound like springtime joy is just around the corner.

And yet, Easter is coming! In fact, the joy of the resurrection is always here – even on the cold gray days of Lent, and even in the cold gray days of life. Lent is not meant to be a season of despair and hopelessness. Yes, it's a season to honestly recognize the reality of sin and sorrow – but it's also a season to reflect on how Christ's death and resurrection has freed us from sin, sorrow, despair and hopelessness. Even Good Friday, while a day of humble penitence, is still good, for Christ's willingness to die for our sin is what liberates from sin and death. For the Christian, there is always hope – al-

ways reason to rejoice – even in the darkest Lenten nights. For we know that, by Christ's grace, the darkness will never have the final say.

This interplay of darkness and light, sorrow and joy, will be a focus of our next adult Bible study, as we read Paul's Letter to the Philippians. Although it is a short book at just four chapters, Philippians is a powerful text. It is usually considered Paul's most upbeat letter; forms of the words "joy" or "gladness" appear 16 times, including the famous call to "rejoice in the Lord always" (4:4). This little letter also contains many famous passages: the ancient hymn on Christ's humbling himself on the cross and then being glorified by the Father (2:5-11); the assurance that "our citizenship is in Heaven" (3:20); and the claim that "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (4:13). Philippians is a powerful and moving testimony to God's joyful presence!

This joy is even more astounding, given that Paul was writing from prison and faced the possibility of death (1:14, 1:24). A question we'll explore during our conversations is how Paul finds joy even in challenging circumstances – and how we can do the same. And so, it is fitting that we will begin this adult study during Lent (and while also exploring lament on Wednesdays), but will end during our season of Easter

## Tree of Life Easter Sunday Worship—10:30 AM



The Worship & Music Committee will purchase a variety of Easter flowers using a grant from Thrivent Financial. After worship on Easter Sunday all flowers will be available to the congregation to take home. A free will offering is requested but not mandatory. All funds from the free will offering will be donated to Our Daily Bread Dining Room, MOT's local food kitchen for those with food insecurities.

# Treasurer's Report

Expenses for January 2024: \$10,582.11

Income for January 2024: \$11,606.00

The new year is starting out well. Our income is a little bit more than our expenses.

Please keep Tree of Life in your prayers and give as you are able.

Thank you to everyone for their continued generosity to Tree of Life.

~ Denise Lindquist ~

## Coffee and Conversation

Ladies – let's get together over coffee at Panera Bread (584 Middletown Warwick Road in Middletown) on Thursday, March 7, at 10 a.m. to talk about starting a Women of the ELCA (WELCA) group at Tree of Life.

Were you involved with a women's group at a previous congregation? What would you like to do together at Tree of Life? Meet me for coffee and let's chat!

Janet Adams



What in the world is WELCA? Come find out and become a part of something big.

<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/>

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## MARCH

Gloria Brewer	March 1
Edwin Kruah	March 5
Shaun Baker	March 8
Dallas Dean	March 8
Anastasia Fratta	March 9
Aleksandra Fratta	March 19
Amy Collett	March 30



*Do we have your birthday? If not, please let the office know so we are able to acknowledge and celebrate your special day.*

## KINGDOM Kids

Come join the Kingdom Kids on Fridays at 4pm. Our Kingdom Kids will be learning more about the "Heroes of the Bible," including Jonah, Noah, Daniel, Joshua, Miriam and Moses, David, Esther, Peter and John and Dorcas. And the Confirmants are now exploring in more depth both the Old and New Testaments.

We love visitors whenever you would like to stop by and see what we're up to!

Questions? Speak with Pastor Robbie or Pam Nichols.



### (Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors)

March 14th will find the OWLS lunching at the historic Middletown Tavern, "Sully's Irish Pub, located on the square in Middletown we will meet at noon. Please RSVP to Dee or George Matz by Sunday, March 10.



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### KNOT QUILTERS

Tying knots for Lutheran World Relief


Knot Quilters meet on the second Wednesday of the month to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Lately we have added the Linus Project to our repertoire, and have begun making fleece blankets, which will be given to local children in hospitals or otherwise in distress.

You are warmly invited to join us at Tree of Life the second Wednesday of each month from 10:00 to 12:00 if you would like to help support this special mission to victims of our troubled world.

Nicky Zaiser, Knotter



# MARCH 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Pr. Robbie will be in the office Tuesdays & Fridays 10 AM - 1 PM Sec. Maria will be in the Office Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 1-4 All Sunday worship services are live streamed at 10:30 AM and thereafter can be found on YouTube to view at any time. Find the link on our website <a href="http://www.treeoflifechurchde.com">www.treeoflifechurchde.com</a>						
3 10:30 Worship Service	4	5	6 12 PM Soup & Discussion @ St. Paul's	7 10 AM Coffee @ Panera 6PM Worship & Music Mtg	8 4 PM Kingdom Kids/Confirmation	9
10 10:30 Worship Service Daylight Savings Time started. Did you set your clock ahead last night?	11	12 6:PM Council Mtg	13 10 AM Knot Quilters 12 PM Soup & Discussion @ St Paul's	14 12PM OWLS outing	15 4 PM Kingdom Kids/Confirmation	16
17 9 AM Bible Study 10:30 Worship Service	18	19	20 12PM Lenten Soup & Discussion @ St Paul's	21	22 4 PM Kingdom Kids/Confirmation	23
24 9 AM Bible Study 10:30 Worship Palm Sunday	25	26	27	28 7PM Maundy Thursday Service @ St Paul's	29 12 PM Cross Walk 7PM Good Friday Service @ TOL	30 11AM Easter Egg Hunt @ St. Paul's
31 10:30 Easter Sunday Worship						



# MARCH VOLUNTEERS

Date	Usher	Acolyte	Worship Assistant	Altar	Fellowship	Offering Counter
Mar. 3	G. Matz	Olivia Brill	J. Pileggi	M. Campbell	B. Bullock	M. Campbell
Mar. 10	B. Lindquist	Kaitlyn Yetko	E. Kruah	G. Zaiser	N. Zaiser	E. Kruah
Mar. 17	G. Matz	Anders or Aleksandra Fratta	J. Adams	M. Campbell	C. Fiske	M. Campbell
Mar. 24 Palm Sunday	M. Campbell	Liana Yetko	G. Zaiser	N. Zaiser	C. Lewis	G. Zaiser
Mar. 31 Easter	C. Lewis	Olivia Brill	J. Adams	S. Vetrano	C. Fiske	M. Campbell

Want to volunteer ? Contact ~Gene Zaiser, Coordinator~



Cont'd from page 3

celebration. For the Good News of Christianity is both cross and empty tomb, both the Lord who died and the Lord who rose, both Jesus coming to us in our nights of hardship and Jesus bringing us new days of peace.

We will begin our discussion of Philippians at 9 a.m. Sunday, March 10. As always, everyone is invited!

And may we all know the hope of Christ, even during our Lenten journey.

The cross is real and must be faced, just like the sins and sufferings of life are real and must be faced. But neither sin, suffering nor the cross is the final word. The final word comes on a Sunday morning, in an empty tomb, and in glorious proclamation that "He is risen indeed!"

A blessed Lent, and a joyous Easter life to you all,  
Pr. Robbie+





## **Another Successful Pancake Supper**

TOL's annual Pancake Supper once again was a great night of fellowship and making the community aware they are welcome at TOL. We had several visitors from St. Paul's Methodist Church—who are also joining TOL to hold joint Lenten luncheons as well as Holy Week Services.

Thank you to the many people who helped shop, prepare, set up, cook, clean up and the many jobs in between. All proceeds (approximately \$400) will be donated to Our Daily Bread.



Have you noticed a few new items in TOL's Sanctuary?

Thank you to the Interior Review, Worship & Music and Altar Guild Committees for finding and installing the "stained glass" window films for the windows, for the Tree of Life Stained Glass to the right of the altar and for the new, deep purple altar banners for Lent.

We thank all who helped make these upgrades possible with a special thanks to Nicky Zaiser and Janet Parks for purchasing the Tree of Life window; to Maxine Campbell and Denise Lindquist for purchasing the purple material and Denise's beautiful sewing in making the banners; to Hanno Schill (an unbeknownst, unofficial committee member to both Worship & Music and Interior Review) for

making the framework and installing the Tree of Life window.

There are so many things, big and small, that happen around Tree of Life. Everyone's efforts are truly appreciated.



# Tree of Life Lutheran Church

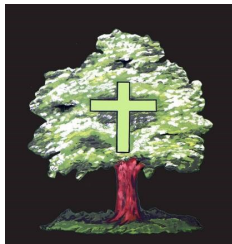
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Odessa, DE 19730-0064

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[www.treeoflifechurchde.com](http://www.treeoflifechurchde.com)

[www.facebook.com/TreeofLifeLutheranChurch/](https://www.facebook.com/TreeofLifeLutheranChurch/)



**This is Christ's church. - There is a place for you here.**

*We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.*

## **STAFF**

Rev. Robbie Ketcham

Duane Dillard, Music Director

Maria Gue, Office Manager

## **COUNCIL**

Nicky Zaiser, President

Donna Parks, Vice President

Sylvia Schill, Secretary

Denise Lindquist, Treasurer

Carla Fiske

Dirk Schulze

## **COUNCIL / COMMITTEE LIAISON**

Altar Guild

Christian Ed— Analise Fratta

Outreach—Denise Lindquist

Property— Dirk Schulze

Stewardship—

Worship & Music— Sylvia Schill

## **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Altar Guild—Maxine Campbell

Facilities— Dirk Schulze

Christian Education— Pam Nichols

Fellowship - Carla Fiske

Interior Review—Janet Parks

Outreach

Stewardship—Gene Zaiser

Worship & Music—Sylvia Schill

## **VOLUNTEER CHAIRS**

Burning Bush—Pam Nichols

Financial Secretary— Ed Bullock

Leaflet Editor—Donna Parks

OWLS—Janet Parks, Dee & George Matz

Quilting Circles—Nicky Zaiser

Volunteer Coordinator—Gene Zaiser

Webmaster— Paul Schuler

Worship Folder—Gail Russell