



St. Paul's Epistles



St. Paul's Celebrates, Declares, and Demonstrates the Love of God in Jesus Christ to Sarver and Beyond.

"Quarantining" & Noah's Ark

As I'm typing this, we're entering our second month of quarantine due to COVID-19. If you're anything like me, it's getting a bit taxing. Because of this, I thought we'd dive into one of the greatest "quarantine" endeavors of human history: Noah's Ark. Now, I put "quarantine," in quotes because Noah and his family's isolation was not in response to a novel Coronavirus or any virus for that matter, but rather, they were being "quarantined" from God's judgement against sin. This said, when we look Noah's story, we discover something that will help us social distancers persevere.

Spanning several chapters in Genesis, the story of the flood is captivating to say the least. The scene begins with the devastating news that, "**Genesis 6:5-6** ⁵The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart." Those are some heavy words if you ask me. Right then and there, our story was finished, but then, "**Genesis 6:8** Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD." As a result, God calls out to him:

Genesis 6:13-14, 17-18 I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark... ¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

Following those words, Genesis says that Noah, "did all that God commanded him."

In the next chapter of Genesis, the time comes for Noah and his family to enter the ark (note that it was a CDC acceptable gathering of 8). Now, one of the things that's tough to wrap your head around in this story is just how long Noah and his family were in the Ark. With the famous 40 days and 40 nights of rain, we often assume it is roughly a bit more than a month, but that is not the case. When you look closer, you discover that Noah and his family had to endure an entire year of forced quarantine with two of every kind of animal and all the smells that come with it. Can you imagine what that must have been like? Seriously, put yourself in Moses sandals on his 142nd day of quarantine. The rains have stopped, but the waters are still raging. You look out your window and all you can make out is wall to wall sea. You wonder if maybe God has forgotten you. How does faith your faith stay afloat (no pun intended) amid such dire circumstances?

Well, Noah only had God's Word and promise to cling to. That is what kept his faith alive in his quarantine. I love the way Martin Luther puts it in his lectures on Genesis. "Because the earth was covered with water and they had no ground on which to set foot," Luther says, "there was only the Word of promise to give them support as they drifted over that vast mass of water." He continues:

"From the day when Noah entered the ark nothing was said to him, nothing was revealed to him, and he saw no ray of grace shining; but he clung only to the promise he had received, although meanwhile the waters and the waves were raging as though God had surely forgotten them."

What was this word of promise? I quoted it earlier, "**Genesis 6:18** I will establish my covenant with you and you shall come into the ark..." Those words that promised both survival and restoration were Noah's hope and stay amid his forced quarantine.

So, how does this speak to us in our quarantining? Well, like Noah, our only hope and stay amid these uncertain times is God promise. A promise that is beautifully expounded by the apostle Peter, when using the ark as an analogy for baptism declares:

1 Peter 3:21-22 ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this (the ark), now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

In other words, just as God worked out his covenant promise to Noah by providing the ark as a means to escape judgement, so he gives us baptism as a means to do the same. Therefore, as we live our lives in a broken and judged world where we suffer, experience uncertainty, and where God often seems distant; like Noah, we have a certain promise from God we can cling to amid our quarantine: "*I have established by covenant with you, you have come through the waters of baptism.*" And as Paul says, "**Romans 8:28** We know that for those who love God all things [forced quarantine included] work together for good, for those who are called [if you're baptized you've been called] according to his purpose." May those words be a hope and stay for you amid the current flood of uncertainty, anxiety, and danger. ~Pastor Shawn



Due to continuing issues with Facebook Live,
we are moving our 10:10am Sunday Service
Live Stream directly to our
website: www.stpaulssarver.com.
Everything you need will be directly on
our homepage!

FYI: our new streaming provider is Youtube. We will continue to post links, embeds, and past videos of our services here on Facebook so you can share it with your friends.

Wednesday Noon Devotional and Prayer

This Easter Season, Pastor Shawn will be leading a brief devotional and time of prayer every Wednesday at noon on facebook.com/stpaulssarver. The subject will be praying in pestilence. Note, you do not have to be a member of Facebook to view these. Just simply click “*not now*” when the website prompts you to join. Also, if you are unable to make the 12oclock live stream, the video will continue to be available on the newsfeed.

Diaper Drive Change

St. Paul's Virtual Diaper Drive

Due to COVID-19 we are moving our diaper drive for the Trylife Center online. Go to <https://trylife.center/get-involved/st-pauls-virtual-diaper-drive/> or scan the QR code below for more details.



Given the current crisis, Trylife is struggling to get the donations that they need, so spread the word!



Luther's Corner

“Perseverance does not come without a great struggle.”

Martin Luther’s Lectures on Genesis



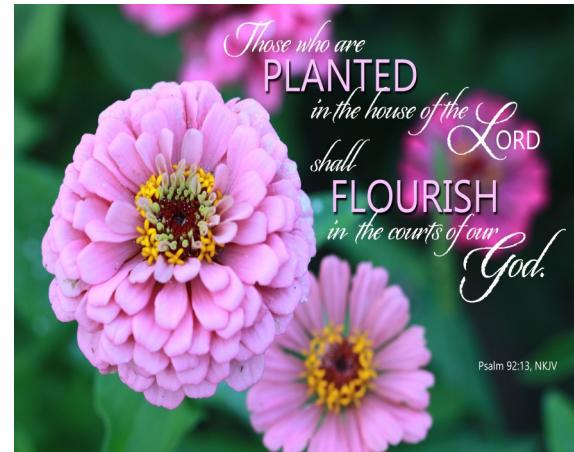
A graphic for online giving. It features a hand holding a smartphone displaying a digital donation form. To the right of the phone is the word "GIVE" in large green letters, with "ONLINE" stacked below it. Below "ONLINE" is the logo for "TITHE.LY" featuring a small green tree icon and the text "Innovative church giving". A green bar at the bottom contains the website address "stpaulssarver.com/give".

Please remember you may also mail your contributions directly to St. Paul's



Offering Breakdown for Month of April			
Category	April Total Received	YTD Received	Annual Budget
General	9,817.50	41,240.76	
Loose	-	1,104.00	
Flowers	22.50	140.50	
Lenten	5.00	307.00	
Maundy Thur.	102.00	127.00	
Good Friday	212.00	212.00	
Other	7.31	180.31	
Total Current	10,166.31	44,696.01	170,334.00
Benevolence	630.51	3,007.51	12,000.00
Total Received	10,796.82	47,703.52	182,334.00
Building	1,925.61	11,671.41	

	Needed	Received
General	13,422.92	10,166.31
Benevolence	846.16	630.51
Building	3,296.48	1,925.61



MAY Birthdays

5/1	Abbey Bekina	5/16	Brendan McGregor
5/2	Scarlett Kaminski	5/17	Julianne Mariotti
5/3	Linda Barnett	5/18	Emmy Marcinko
5/5	Marcus Cashell		Sonya Schmeider
	Morgan Cashell	5/20	Pat Braden
	Judy Shelton		Sue Marcinko
	Julie Speer	5/23	Michael McGinnis
5/8	Clarence Negley		Kendra Smith
	Lorrie Simmons	5/24	Hobie Kenton
5/10	Maxx Lang	5/26	Joyce Bastin
5/11	Leigh Ciganik	5/30	Roberta Pflugh
5/13	Jessica Judak	5/31	Vince Ciganik
5/14	Kathy Nee		Isabella Clouse
5/15	Carlie Doerr		
	Conrad Kaminski		

A Prayer for Memorial Day

We remember, O Lord, all those people throughout the years who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country, for liberty, for us. Whenever we breathe the air of freedom or claim the right to justice or enjoy the privilege of worship, fill us with gratitude for those who selflessly gave the last full measure of devotion — their very lives — for our benefit.

May these brave men and women now know the joy of eternity and your presence. And may the families of the fallen



receive comfort and peace amid their grief. Help us as we minister to their needs. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.