

News N' Notes



ST. Paul's
Lutheran Church, School & Daycare

The First Christmas Family Newsletter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently archeologists discovered the first Christmas family newsletter ever written. The world was shocked at this marvelous find. I have printed it below. May you receive it in the spirit with which it was written.

God's Blessings!

Pastor Decker

Dear Friends and Relatives,

Well, it's that time of year for our family newsletter, and we have so much to report. Of course, you may know that my husband and I have been quite busy with the carpentry business. Our son, Joseph, will soon take over the family shop, and so we have been tying up loose ends and trying to get everything ship-shape for young Joseph.

To tell the truth, much of our lives have revolved around Joseph recently. As some of you may recall, he became engaged earlier this year. It was a joyous announcement and everyone was so happy. Frankly, we were beginning to think he would *never* get married. His fiance was a sweet girl named Mary. Everything seemed to be coming up roses for the couple.

Then, Mary found herself, "in the family way." Well, you know this younger generation! They do things differently. Our Joseph insisted that he had done nothing wrong, but we tried to be understanding. Even when he came to us with stories about talking to an angel, we tried to humor him. But you know, even a parent has limits. He insisted that Mary was still a virgin and that the child was from God. We asked how he came to this conclusion and he informed us that it all came to him in a dream. That's when I began to worry about my boy. We even thought of sending him to a psychiatrist, but unfortunately they won't be invented for another 1,800 years! So we just made do.

Continued→

Inside this issue

St Paul's Comfort Dog
.....3
With Sympathy.....3

Women's Ministry Activities4
Hearts at Home 2.04
Official Acts.....4

Let's Get Ready for Some Basketball!5

School News.....6
Musicians Always Welcome6
Missing Sheep6



January 2019

We had no vacation this year, but Joseph and Mary did, if you can call it that. As you may well remember, Caesar Augustus took a census and Joseph decided that he should go back to our old home town of Bethlehem to put our family on the tax rolls. That wasn't so bad, but he decided to take Mary with him, pregnant as she was. Imagine a young girl in her condition riding on a donkey, up and down and up and down. No wonder then she went into labor just as they got to town. And the worst part is, Joseph had made no sleeping arrangements down there. Men! Don't ever give them a job to do. The poor kids ended up in a stable.

That is where our first grandson was born! No doctor, no midwife, none of us women-folk. Nobody to help poor Mary get through it. But that Mary proved to be a real trooper. Word came back to us that the new family was doing well and would stay in Bethlehem to have the little one circumcised before coming home.

While down there, Joseph and Mary also made some new "friends." It chills me to think of it, but they took up with some shepherds. We all know how dishonest those shepherds can be. They are absolutely the bottom of the social ladder, and they had the audacity to claim to have talked to some angels. What is up with all these angels lately? Everyone has seen one, but me!

Well, the day finally arrived for the new family to come home. I don't have to tell you that I was nervous. I was about to see this little baby that had made my son act so peculiar. But the moment I laid eyes on Him, I realized that something truly was different about Him – very different but also very right. This was no ordinary child. Even His name, "Jesus," struck me. Where did Joseph come up with that name? Nobody in our family has that name. It means "Savior," and I realized that my son, Joseph, had extremely high expectations for the boy.

And for the first time, I must admit that I did not feel skeptical. Maybe it's just a grandmother's pride, but I believe it is more. This child is indeed different from any baby I've ever seen. When I look at Him, I can believe that God sent His Son into this world. Could it just be possible that this baby whom Mary delivered would one day deliver us? I wonder if this child wrapped in swaddling clothes might not be capable one day of wrapping us in His robe of righteousness. I really think that this baby whom shepherds came to adore will grow up to be the greatest shepherd.

We all look at newborn babies and think they are innocent and pure, but Psalm 51 says we are born into a wrong relationship with God from the beginning. We often say that newborn babies are the hope of the next generation. But I believe this Child is something more. He is truly pure and innocent. He is most certainly the hope of all generations. He is much more than just the infant son of Joseph and Mary. In fact, our son Joseph still insists that he is not the Boy's father. This child has a different father. He came to us from the Father of all creation. This Baby is the Messiah, the Long-Awaited One, Who will take away the sins of the world. And the Hope that we as a people have carried for so long has finally been born. What was it those angels told the shepherds? **For unto you is born in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.**

We invite you to come and see the new addition to our family. I am sure that once you meet Him, you will agree that the Hope of the nations has been born, and God has truly come to us... in Jesus."

Merry Christmas!
Ma and Pa Carpenter and
Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus





Happy New Year!

We pray that 2019 will be a year full of blessings for you and your family.

Have you ever considered being a part of Mary's ministry team? Mary's calendar gets busier and busier every month and we would love to add new handlers to the team to take Mary out into the community and be the hands and feet of Jesus to those around us. Please contact Cheryl Skelly for more information about becoming a handler.

Mary had a busy December! Along with her regularly scheduled visits, she visited some colleges to help with pre-exam de-stress. It is such a blessing to help students during some of their most stressful times. She spent an afternoon at Farm & Fleet greeting shoppers and ringing the bells for the Salvation Army and has recently started visiting the 911 Command Center.

Please continue to keep Mary's ministry team in your prayers as they, along with Mary, bring the Mercy, Compassion, Presence, and the Proclamation of Jesus Christ to those who are suffering and in need.

Please contact Mary by email, through Facebook or by talking to one of her team members, if you know of someone, or someplace that would benefit by a visit from her. Her email address is : Mary@K9Comfort.org.

Find Mary on Facebook at Mary Comfort Dog. This is a great way to stay updated on what she is doing.

With Sympathy

We remember in our prayers all those who've lost someone dear to them:

Don & Phyllis Stoker at the loss of their step-son David Bobzien;

Jack Arnold on the loss of his brother, Bob Arnold;

Scott Gestrich on the loss of his step-mother Wendee Gestrich;

Deb Natz and David Natz on loss of father/grandfather Bill Leopold.



Official Acts

Baptisms:

11-23-2018

Harper Rae Melton

Parents: Cody Michel
Melton and Samantha
Rae Eichelt

Sponsors: Sierra Eichelt
and Alex Hedding

11-25-2018

Addison L'wren Jensen

Parents: Mason &
Meghann (néé Arnold)
Jensen

Sponsors: Natasha Ar-
nold and Kevin Kolovitz

12-16-2018

Elizabeth JoAnn Santana

Parents: Ramon & Char-
lotte (néé Williams)
Santana

Sponsors: David Wil-
liams and Angela Bestal

Membership Changes:

*Adult Confirmation on
November 18, 2018:*

Bruce & Hayley Wilson

*Transferred to LCMS
Congregations:*

Ashley (néé Overley)
Rawlings to St. Paul Lu-
theran, Sheboygan Falls,
WI [Dec. 5, 2018]

Charles, Wendy and
Lorien Teval to St Mark
Lutheran, Janesville WI
[Dec. 5, 2018]

Women's Ministry Activities

Lit 'n Lattes Christian

Women's Book Club has
chosen The Masterpiece by
Francine Rivers for our next
discussion. If you are inter-
ested in participating, you'll
need to read the book and be
ready to discuss it on Tues.,
Jan. 8, at 6:30p in room 204 of
St. Paul's School.

New Women's Bible Study

**begins in January - *Alto-
gether Beautiful*** is a video-
based study of the book of
Song of Songs. Song of Songs
was written by Heidi Goeh-
mann who is our speaker for
our spring event. We'll meet
Wednesdays at 9a and 2p or
Thursdays at 6p beginning,
Jan. 9 and 10, 2019 in room
204 of the school. The cost of
the workbook is \$13.00. Con-

tact Kathy Pingel at
kpingel@stpaulsjanesville.com
by Jan., 3, 2019 to reserve
your spot and to order a book.

Broken Crayons Still Color:

Our spring Women's event,
is Saturday, March 30, 2019,
from 8:30a-3:30p.

Our guest speaker, Heidi
Goehmann from *ilovemyshep-
hered.com*, will talk about
God's grace and mercy that
comes to us when we feel bro-
ken, lost., and alone.

There will be light hearted
breakout sessions, food, fun,
and fellowship.

Registration begins in Feb-
ruary. More info to come! Con-
tact Kathy Pingel at
kpingel@stpaulsjanesville.com
if you have questions.

Hearts at Home 2.0

Conference for Christian Moms

Legacy: Gather, Grow, Go

March 15-16, 2019

Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Register at <https://www.heartsathome2.org/2019conference/>

Nov. 1-Jan.31 registration fee is \$100.

Feb. 1 - 28 the fee goes up to \$120.

St. Paul's is looking to take a group of moms to the conference. We will leave at 3:30 pm on Friday, March 15 and will return the evening of Sat., March 16. The cost of the hotel room is \$45 per person. If you are interested, you will need to register on your own. Then contact Kathy Pingel at kpingel@stpaulsjanesville.com or 754-4471 ext 306 so she can save you spot for you.

This will be an amazing weekend filled with fun, laughter, and learning.

Let's Get Ready for Some BASKETBALL!

It's that time of year again. Cabin fever begins to set in and we are all looking for a diversion---something to keep us occupied during the long winter days and nights. Thankfully, St. Paul's has a special weekend coming up for all of us to look forward to. It's our version of March Madness---the Janesville Lutheran Invitational [Basketball] Tournament, or JLIT for short.

We are hosting our 47th annual A-boys basketball tournament February 22-24, 2019. We invite teams from seven other schools throughout Wisconsin and Illinois to join us for a weekend of competition and camaraderie.

You can help to make this weekend a success! We are looking for volunteers to sell and take tickets for the events as well as monitor the gym entrances. We offer food in Fellowship Hall and need help with preparing and selling food items and cleaning up. Our "Flame Room" is open, selling candy and snacks. We ask for people to serve as "Key People"- these people patrol the hallways during games and make sure that NO players or cheerleaders are in their rooms unsupervised. And of course, after all is said and done, we need people to help clean up in the gym, hallways, and Fellowship Hall. If you can help in any of these areas, please fill out the sign up sheets located in Fellowship Hall (the church basement).

Another need over the weekend are sweet treats for us to sell in Fellowship Hall. St. Paul's is known for our homemade goodies. We need bars, cakes, and pies (NO cookies, please). Dessert donations can be dropped off in Fellowship Hall the Friday of JLIT weekend.

Monetary donations are always welcome, to help us purchase incidentals throughout the weekend. You can bring your donations to the office or drop them in the offering plate during worship services. (Just be sure to mark your envelope: JLIT).

All of the money raised during this weekend is used for many supplies and equipment around school and all of the students benefit. All of the adults who help during the weekend get to meet new people and make new friends. It is truly a wonderful time for all---won't you join us?



*IT'S OUR VERSION OF MARCH
Madness
---the Janesville
Lutheran Invitational
[Basketball]
Tournament---
or JLIT for short.*

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran
Church, School
And Day Care

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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School News

Did you have a great Christmas? We sure did! The school hosted class parties, shared gifts, and performed our annual Christmas program. We had a lot of fun celebrating the birth of our Savior, and this month we are celebrating the gifts God has given us as a Lutheran school!

January 20-26 is National Lutheran Schools Week, and we will be rejoicing along with all the other Lutheran schools as we remember and celebrate what makes us unique. Check the school calendar for a full list of events taking place that week.

We are also beginning the Call process as we look for the next person God wants to place here at St. Paul's. Please pray for the school as we continue this important work.

Lastly, if you have ideas for the school, you want to help in any way, or you just want a tour, don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you for supporting our school!

Rob Lunak, Principal

Church Council 2018-2019

Jack Eden	608-751-5999
Jennifer O'Connell	608-359-3544
Rhonda Schulze	920-946-7417
Jeff Elser	608-752-5120
Tom Neumann	608-756-1978
Laura Manke	608-563-1142
Jen Ellis	608-449-3072
Jason Harvey	608-322-9443
Barb Frank	608-718-1278

Regular Worship Schedule:

Thursdays at 6:30p
Saturdays at 6p
Sundays at 8a & 10:30a

Musicians Always Welcome

Happy New Year! I hope 2019 is filled with family, friends, and good music! Musicians are always welcome to join the praise team; contact me with you would be interested in joining. The youth praise band will start rehearsing again on Sunday, January 13 at 3pm in the Sanctuary. Any student in the 7th grade or higher is welcome to join. May God continue to bless you this year.

Ann Henny



Missing Sheep:

St. Paul's is trying to locate Amanda Hanson. If you know where she is, please let the church office know at churchoffice@stpaulsjanesville.com or 608-754-4471. Thank you.