

News N' Notes



ST. Paul's
Lutheran Church, School & Daycare

What's Happening at St. Paul's?

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This past fall and early winter has been a busy time here at St. Paul's. Allow me to recap some of the church ministry highlights and conclude with a challenge to all of us.

A. Family Ministry:

1. St. Paul's family ministry is centered around the church year. During Advent 2019, 91 parents, family members, and children were signed up for a scavenger hunt looking for Christmas story objects using clues from Bible verses. Families who attended the Advent Family Night received *Advent in a Box* filled with family devotions and activities to celebrate the season of Advent and ending with a *Happy Birthday Jesus* activity for Christmas Day.
2. On January 25, 2020, from 8a–2p, LCMS Deaconess Heidi Goehmann will be leading a family retreat entitled *Protect This House*. In this interactive workshop, families of all ages and sizes will learn how to communicate and interact with each other in healthy ways that includes building our faith lives together in God's Word.
3. During Lent 2020, families will receive *Lent in a Bag*, another set of six week long interactive devotions for families to use.
4. Families should also be on the lookout for St. Paul's Family Ministry Facebook page which will give parents ideas about ways to bring the faith into their homes and to encourage, uplift, and support our families in their spiritual lives. Weekly Facebook live devotions will begin in February.

B. Women's Ministry:

1. This past fall a series of Bible studies on the book of Philippians entitled *JOY* was held in two groups with approximately sixty in attendance.

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Year to Date July 1 thru December

Budget.....	\$551,600.00
Actual	\$505,105.00
Surplus (Deficit) ..	(\$46,495.00)

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2. A new set of Bible studies entitled: *The Mighty and the Mysterious*, written by LCMS Deaconess Heidi Goehmann and based on the book of Colossians has just begun and you're welcome to join a session.
3. Deb Burma will be leading our March 14, 2020 women's retreat entitled JOY.
4. Check out St. Paul's Women's Ministry Facebook page. This page is designed to be an uplifting way to encourage, support, and inspire women in their faith walk. Daily Bible verses, articles, prayers, and live devotions and Bible studies will be part of this page's ministry.

C. Music Ministry:

1. Youth praise band led the music at a recent church service.
2. Youth musicians helped lead the music at the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

D. Youth/College/Young Adult Ministry:

1. Jr high ministry continues to meet regularly on Sunday evenings with 20 students participating in Bible studies, fellowship, and recreation.
2. Sr. high ministry now meets outside of our church and school facilities:
One group of 20 students meets after school at Milton High School
One group of 15 students meets before school at Craig High School
3. The young adult group meets Monday nights for Bible study and fellowship.
4. Recently, five college students and one high school youth served supper at GIFTS.

E. Where does St. Paul's go from here?

1. Continuing the Comfort Dog Ministry, ECHO, GIFTS, Orphan Grain Train, Class mission projects, and Stephen's Ministry
2. Initiating *RE:VITALITY* (an LCMS revitalization program for congregations) in 2020 (more on this later)

Take and Give: St. Paul's strives to faithfully serve its members in God-pleasing ways through Word, Sacraments, and serving ministries. Improvement is always needed and positive suggestions are always welcome. The challenge that I place before all of you in 2020 has three parts: (1) Daily offer specific prayers for specific ministries and staff, (2) Consider making thank offerings to your Lord for His blessings to you in the form of an additional _____ dollars to your every week offering, and (3) prayerfully consider not only attending a worship service here but also get involved in one other way at St. Paul's; for example: attend a Bible study, usher, greet, join a choir, help out with the youth, women's/family ministries, volunteer at school, join a lawn mowing team, and the like. Our LCMS brothers in Ghana, West Africa, have a saying about Jesus' blessings to us: *Take and give . . . Take Jesus' love, forgiveness, and blessing (earned for us on His Cross) and then give them away.* That is what I am challenging all of us here at St. Paul's to do in this new year of 2020. God's blessings!

Jude 24-25!

Pastor Decker

Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

The Time of Easter invites us into the story of Jesus' sacrificial death and glorious resurrection for us. Jesus' resurrection gives proof that our salvation has been completed and that our hope for eternal life is secure. From early in the history of Christianity the Christian church established Easter as the ultimate height of its worship life. Likewise, from early on the Christian church established Lent as a period of preparation for the Easter celebration. The forty days of Lent were associated with Jesus' forty days in the desert prior to His temptation and with the forty years the children of Israel spent in the wilderness. Lent is special time to reflect on *Who* our Savior is and *What* He underwent for our eternal life.

This year our midweek Lenten sermons will be based on a book written by LCMS Pastor, Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard, entitled Will The Real Jesus Please Stand Up? Dr. Richard writes of his book: *Our culture today is used to choices—and lots of them. Our culture allows the sinful heart to go the way of idolatry. Therefore, our culture rejects a really important objective truth (that is, a rejection of the Holy Scripture's testimony about Jesus). Our culture believes that truth varies from person to person. All of this is what allows for such a great diversity of false Christ's in North America. Choice, idolatry, a rejection of truth: that is the landscape that we find ourselves in, and this is the landscape through which this book attempts to maneuver.*

Our midweek Lenten services and sermons will be based on selected chapters of Will The Real Jesus Please Stand Up? The schedule is below:

February 26 (Ash Wednesday)	<i>The Option Among Many</i>
March 4	<i>The Mascot</i>
March 11	<i>The Giver of Bling</i>
March 18	<i>The Social Justice Warrior</i>
March 24	<i>The Mystical Friend</i>
April 1	<i>The Teddy Bear</i>

As always, our midweek Lenten services will be held on Wednesdays at 12:15p or 6:30p. A Lenten supper will precede the 6:30p service at 5p in Fellowship Hall (the church basement). Please join us and bring a friend. God's blessings!

Jude 24-25!

Pastor Decker



Lent in a Bag

Lent in a Bag, a six week series of Lenten devotions and activities for families, will be coming later in February.

These devotions will walk with Jesus along the road to Calvary. Each bag contains all of the supplies needed for your weekly family devotion.

If you would like to receive one of these sets of devotions, contact kpingel@stpaulsjanesville.com.



Lenten Bible Study Opportunity

When's the last time you took a hammer and a chisel to the Jesus of the Bible and formed Him into your own personal Jesus?

In our world, there is no shortage of false christs. Like the Elvies who roam the streets of Vegas, these counterfeit christs look and sound like Jesus, but they couldn't be further from the real deal. [Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?](#) by Rev. Matthew Richard, not only reminds us who the real Jesus is, but reveals false christs who are embraced, loved, promoted, and revered-even by well-meaning Christians today.

So who exactly are these false

christs? Do you know them? Do you worship them? You might be surprised at the answers.

Want to learn more? Attend one of our Mid-week Lenten worship services beginning Feb. 26 and join a small group ministry series on [Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?](#).

To join a group, be watching for a sign up board, invite your friends, and/or contact kpingel@stpaulsjanesville.com. Study books may be purchased in Fellowship Hall (the church basement) in February.



Date Night Out: A Cord of Three

Date Night Out Marriage Ministry presents "A Cord of Three," a three part Date Night study based on Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

A Cord of Three strands is not easily broken. We will learn lessons from marriages in the Bible and apply those lessons to marriage today. Each of the 3 lessons will have a fun date night theme. Plus, participants can look forward to food, fellowship, and Scripture.

Each couple will create a memento to put in their homes to remind us to keep Christ in the center of our marriage. Our first date night out is Feb. 18 at 6 pm in the Women's and Family Ministry room. RSVP to kpingel@stpaulsjanesville.com by Feb. 17.



Spending Time Joyfully

January was a busy month for Mary and her team. Mary had multiple visits to Assisted Living and Memory Care facilities, along with visits to schools, the library and even a de-stressing opportunity for Milton High School students studying for finals. We continue to visit Agrace hospice patients, the jail, the 911 call center as well as several other places.

Mary spent two days visiting with students at Sycamore High School in Illinois after Christmas break. They were grieving the loss of a fellow classmate who, along with his mom, passed away in a car accident over break. The students spent time with Mary, and other Comfort Dogs, sharing stories, tears, and laughter as they remembered their good friend. Please keep this community in your prayers.

Please continue to pray for Lutheran Church Charities and the Comfort Dog ministry as all of the dogs and their teams go out into their communities to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those 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 to stay updated on her comings and goings.

"For nothing is impossible with God."

Luke 1:37

Lit N Lattes

On Tuesday, March 10, at 6:30p in the Women & Family Ministry Room, the ladies of Lit N Lattes will get together to discuss our latest book.

This session we will focus on When You Are Near, written by Tracie Peterson.

Please purchase the book on your own and read it before we meet. See you there!



What's Happening in Finance?

December 31 marked the halfway point for our 2019-20 fiscal year. You can pick up financial reports in the back of the church or from the office if you are interested. You may have already noticed from the updates in the Newsletter and Opportunities that our offerings are falling short of budget needs. Please prayerfully consider helping us to meet our needed offerings, so that we can continue to advance the Kingdom through the awesome ministries happening at St. Paul's Church, School and Daycare!

Here is an illustration of what we could accomplish as a church body: There are approximately 550 giving households currently at St. Paul's. If each one was able to increase their giving by an average of \$5/week, that would generate an additional \$143,000 in offerings each year! Five dollars is a meal for one at McDonald's or a large latte at Starbucks. We can do this!

Please consider signing up for Simply Giving, our electronic giving system that allows you to stay current with your tithes and offerings even when you can't make it to church. To sign up click the "Donate" button on our webpage <http://www.stpaulsjanesville.com>. Set up your donation to either withdraw from your bank account or charge a credit card, and choose a one-time donation or a recurring monthly or weekly donation. If you want assistance setting up a recurring electronic donation, Stacey Marena in the church office would be happy to help you! Simply Giving also has a free mobile app called GivePlus that has most of the same functionality as the website. We are also adding a "text to give" functionality. Instructions will be on our website and on the screen before church services.

Other ways to support St. Paul's besides offerings:

- Scrip program - Since 1997, St. Paul's has received rebates totaling approximately \$290,000 to support our ministries, PLUS another \$185,000 have been returned to families to use as a tuition payment, donate (tax deductible) back to St. Paul's or receive cash. Last year alone, St. Paul's was blessed with \$23,400 support from Scrip, and families were blessed with \$16,800. But you might not realize just how much potential is still out there with Scrip. Does your family spend \$300/week between groceries, gas, clothing, restaurants & entertainment, home improvement, etc.? You can get Scrip cards for just about any business where you already spend your money. If just 200 families used Scrip at the level of \$300/week, we could earn about \$100,000 per year for St. Paul's and \$65,000 for families. For more information on how to purchase Scrip, contact the school office.
- Amazon Smile - Amazon will donate .5% of all eligible purchases to St. Paul's School. To use the program, log into your Amazon account and type "Amazon Smile" into the search box. Follow the link to set up St. Paul's as your designated charity. Then anytime you are going to make a purchase, just go to smile.amazon.com before you checkout and you will automatically create a rebate that comes back to St. Paul's School!
- Thrivent Choice - If you are a Thrivent customer and don't know about the program, talk to your Thrivent rep for more information on how to designate Choice dollars to St. Paul's.
- Company "matching gift" programs - If you aren't sure if your employer offers this benefit, I encourage you to check with your Human Resources representative to find out.

All of these programs can help to support St. Paul's at no additional cost to you!

We have started the budgeting process for the 2020-21 fiscal year. We will present the final

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What's Happening in Finance?

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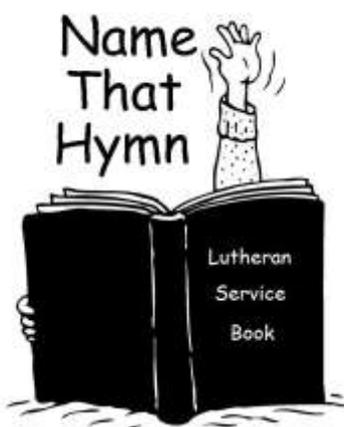
budget to the congregation for approval at the spring voter's meeting, tentatively scheduled for Monday, May 4th at 6:30pm.

the opportunity to ask questions prior to the vote, there will be a Budget Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, March 29th at 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall (the church basement).

Cindy Perkins
Business Manager

If you would like to preview a draft of that budget and have

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart,
not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
2 Corinthians 9:7*



All Fun & Games at the Adult Fellowship Club

You are invited to join the Adult Fellowship Club for great food and good times at our next meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 2020.

We meet in Fellowship Hall (the church basement) at 6p for a meal. Please bring a dish to share.

Our entertainment for the evening starts around 6:45p. We'll play some games of "Bible Trivia" and "Name that Hymn"!

Come test your knowledge, make new friends, and enjoy an evening together! You'll be glad you did.

Orphan Grain Train

Our next collection is Saturday, February 8 from 8a to 11a in Fellowship Hall (the church basement).

This special ministry of St. Paul's Fellowship Club collects gently used clothing to be given to those in need.

Clothing must be clean and in good shape. No missing buttons; zippers work; no tears or stains.

Please DO NOT bring items early—bring only on Saturday, February 8, 2020.

All items will be taken to the gathering point in Westfield, Wisconsin for shipping.

Questions? Call Pastor Jim Hendrikson (373-0985) or Harland Kobs (752-6100).

JLIT Comes to St. Paul's

Help Us As We Welcome Basketball Teams from Wisconsin and Illinois

St. Paul's congregation will host the 48th annual Janesville Lutheran Invitational (Basketball) Tournament, also known as JLIT, the weekend of February 28, 29 & March 1, 2020. This major tournament brings seven boys teams along with their families, cheerleaders and pom pom squads for a weekend of Christian competition.

Volunteers Needed in All Areas

We have many opportunities for you to be a part of the excitement that makes this weekend so much fun! We need help of all kinds! Food is served in Fellowship Hall (the church basement), and we are seeking donations of desserts—bars, pies, cakes, cookies, etc. that we can sell to compliment the wide variety of meals that will be offered. Donations of baked goods may be brought to Fellowship Hall on Friday, February 28 between 1-4 p.m. We are also looking for people who can help with those meals—from working in the kitchen, cleaning tables and sweeping floors, helping with desserts and nachos and ice cream.

"Flame Room" is open, selling candy and snacks. We need people to man this booth. We are looking for people to sell tickets and people to collect tickets at the door. We need people to patrol the hallways of school to make sure that NO players or cheerleaders are in their rooms unsupervised or roaming the halls. We need help in the parking lot and help cleaning up in the gym after the games. We need people to clean in the hallways and Fellowship Hall each evening.

In order to make such a big event work well, and assure that a good time is had by all of our members and guests that weekend, it takes work from everyone in the congregation. In short, WE NEED YOU!

Everyone benefits from this tournament---from our school which is able to purchase many supplies and equipment, down to each worker who is able share in fellowship and cooperation with others in our faith community. Please consider helping us by signing up on the JLIT Volunteer Sheets in Fellowship Hall following the services today. It's a great way to make new friends and feel a part of the St. Paul's Faith Family.

The



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

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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Official Acts

Baptisms:

December 28, 2019

Lucas Elliott Olsen

Parents: Jacob A. Olsen and Paige Owens

Sponsors: Nathan Olsen, Brittaney Kelly and Dolly Owens

January 19, 2020

Leviathan Joshua O'Connell-Medrano

Parents: Charles Tweedy and Maddisyn O'Connell

Sponsor: Peyton Keena

January 19, 2020

Dean Travis O'Connell-Medrano

Parents: Charles Tweedy and Maddisyn O'Connell

Sponsor: Peyton Keena

Death:

12-16-2019 Robert D. Burton

Membership Changes:

Transferred from LCMS:

Daryl & Kathy Wimer from Trinity Lutheran Church, Beloit WI
[January 6, 2020]



We
the

With Deepest Sympathy

remember
following in

our prayers as they mourn the passing of someone special to
them.

Please remember:

- Claudine Burton on loss of husband, Robert Burton
- Betty Finger on loss of husband, Alfred Finger
- Carolyn Seekamp on loss of sister-in-law Bev Seekamp
- Shane Fleming, Cody St. Michael, Cara and Carly Fleming on loss of father/grandfather Dennis Fleming
- Hayley Wilson, Jett and Tate Wilson on loss of father/grandfather, Herbert Mandel

Church Council 2019-2020

Jeff Elser	608-752-5120
Tom Neumann	608-756-1978
Laura Manke	608-563-1142
Rhonda Schulze	920-946-7417
Jason Harvey	608-322-9443
Barb Frank	
Jack Eden	608-751-5999
Jennifer O'Connell	608-359-3544
Angie Stephens	608-921-0808

Regular Worship Schedule:

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