



A Member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

# The Messenger

*"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message,  
and the message is heard through the word of Christ."  
(Romans 10:17)*

## St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and School

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### **Downsize?** by Pastor Sims

*"Honey, I think we are getting too old to take care of such a big place. I can't keep up with all the repairs that are needed to keep the place looking nice and running well. The walls are falling around our ears. Water is coming in from everywhere, above and below. Our income is not what it used to be. It has been tough trying to handle all the bills. We can't keep relying on the kids to pay for our lifestyle. Is it time for us to downsize?" "Dear, is it really that bad? (contemplation)... You know, you might be right. All the kids have grown up and moved farther away and don't come to visit as much as they used to. We don't even hear from some of them and others don't come by at all. The boys used to be good at helping run the place, but they don't seem to care about it anymore. Sometimes I wonder how they view this place; like a club that they belong to or as their house that belongs to them."*

I am sure there are a few people who have had this conversation with their spouse. It is a hard conversation to have, but at some point, it becomes a necessary one. This conversation is one that St. Paul's may need to have. Is it time for St. Paul's to begin such a dialog? Why? Because like that husband and wife, we have some major challenges.

If members read the annual report, they would see that our weekly worship attendance was down from 2016 -123 in worship to 2017 - 117. So far in 2018, we are averaging 105. This is a concern. There are many who may have gotten out of the practice or good habit of worshiping on a regular basis. There may be others who have chosen to use that time for family things or who have stopped attending for some other reason. So, the question, do members see St. Paul's as a place to which they belong and simply have a membership, like the YMCA or a time-share or a country club, where

they can get away for an hour or two and not worry about how or who makes sure everything is running properly? Or do they see it as their house of worship, God their Father's house, which means they take ownership in it and how it functions? My prayer is that we all take ownership of St. Paul's as "our Father's house" which means it is my home for spiritual food and nourishment, for peace and comfort, for forgiveness and strengthening my faith and for enjoying the fellowship with my brothers and sisters.

Maintaining a house costs money and our offerings are down. Take a look at the weekly bulletin amounts. In January, we were over \$10,000 short of what is needed to support the work of the Lord at St. Paul's. In February, we were over \$12,000 shy. As a congregation, we have some serious work to do when it comes to our stewardship. Some members have complained about the school draining our resources. Not true. As a matter of fact, the monies that come from the Education Choice program of which the school is a part, are actually sustaining the church.

We just finished our Bible class on *hilarious giving*. Study booklets were given to members, even if you didn't attend the class, so that you could gain some understanding that our giving involves more than dollars. It involves our heart, first. Our God loves a cheerful, hilarious, giver of time, talents and treasures.

Having time to do things is a challenge for everyone. The lack of the men in our congregation willing to take time to serve or to be active in the functioning of the church is another concern. We have about 80 men who are eligible and able to serve, but there are only 15-20 who are on boards or committees. Some are wearing two or even three hats. It is this group that will show up for voters'

meetings. Brothers, this is shameful. The Lord has given us a responsibility to be about his work, yet we choose to stand on the sideline and watch as things fall apart. Do you care how things are going? Or is everything fine, if the doors open on Sunday morning or will be open for a wedding or funeral. This attitude needs to change if St. Paul's is going to *be all it can be*; a place where the body of Christ is working together for the common good of the members of Christ's body and for the spreading of the gospel in God's kingdom work.

These are some major challenges. There are some major decisions that need to be addressed and made. But in all these things, we need to remember that we have a God who rules over all things for us, just as he promised and is able to do more than we can imagine. We have a Savior who has paid for and washed away our sins of neglect and apathy. We have the Holy Spirit who can strengthen us in every good work.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we have cut many things and have gone without other things. I pray you are not ready to downsize, but to rebuild and to grow. The way to start rebuilding and strengthening this body is by making worship AND Bible class our number one priority. It is through God's Word that we grow in our faith and knowledge. It is through that same gospel that we encourage and build each up.

The apostle Paul reminds us of the importance of the body functioning as a body: *Now the body is not made up of one part by of many... If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. (1 Corinthians 12:14, 26)*

## **Evangelism**

The Evangelism Team is planning and looking forward to numerous fellowship and worship opportunities to share our love of Jesus our Lord and Savior. Those great Lenten soup suppers and worship services provide a wonderful opportunity for us to invite friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

The Annual Family Bowling Event, "Pins, Pizza, and Pop" is very soon on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 - 6:00 PM at Wayne Webb Columbus Bowl, 3224 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio. Cost is \$15 per person, which will include non-stop bowling for three hours. Shoe rental (if needed), and pizza and

pop are included. Plan to get there at 2:30. We'd love to see you!

The Evangelism Team is following up with recent visitors by calling, sending notes, or stopping by. They are also following up with the people who received Christmas boxes in the same way. Some of the visitors have commented on how friendly we are. Keep up the good work!

On a Saturday in March we will have an opportunity to pass out Holy Week and Resurrection Sunday fliers in the neighborhood. It will likely be in the morning. Check the bulletin for the date and time.

The team is getting ready for other events in the spring and summer. We will likely participate in the Merion Village Yard Sale in May, the Merion Village Garden Tour in July, and the Merion Village Festival in September.

The Evangelism Team's next meeting will be March 12<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Come join us, all are welcome.

*Pat Ratz*  
*Evangelism Team Member*

## **Family Bowling Event**

Our Annual "Pins, Pizza, and Pop" Bowling Event will be held on **Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**. It will be at the Wayne Webb Columbus Bowl, 3224 South High Street, Columbus, OH, from 3:00-6:00 PM. Cost: \$15.00 per person, which will include **non-stop bowling for three hours**, pizza, pop and shoe rental (if necessary). Sign-Up sheets are posted at church or you may call the office to sign up.

## **Pollyanna Party**

This year's Pollyanna party will be held on Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 PM in the upper room. All are welcome to this women's Secret Pal group so bring a friend to join us! This year's hostesses are Dawn Howell, Tina Cordrey and Suzanne Geiger.



The Lord in his wisdom took the soul of his servant **Jeffrey Gramelt** to himself in heaven on Tuesday, February 13, 2018. Visitation was held at Schoedinger Midtown Chapel. His Christian funeral was conducted at church on Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30 AM.

Interment followed at Green Lawn Cemetery.

We pray for comfort for her family in the knowledge of the resurrection to eternal life.

### **Thank You**

I want to extend my sincere thanks for all of the flowers, phone calls, cards, visits, hugs and well wishes during the time of my recent surgeries.

In Christian love,  
Carolyn Baker



### **Daylight Savings Time**

Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday night, March 10<sup>th</sup>.



### **Ed Choice Scholarships**

The Educational Choice Scholarship

window is now open. If you know of anyone interested in Christian education for their children, please share our school information with them! We are asking for all our scholarship renewal application to be in by Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, so that we have time to complete all of the online work to submit these to the Ed Choice Office. The state deadline for new applications is April 30<sup>th</sup>. We do not have knowledge of another window opening up in summer so everyone should get their applications in early!

### **DC Trip**

The trip plans are on schedule for April 3<sup>rd</sup>-April 7<sup>th</sup>. Students sold coupon books to help with the expenses. Now they are selling candy bars. Thank you to everyone who has purchased candy bars. There will be 10 students and 3 adults (including Mr. Galecki) going on the trip. We look forward to having the students visiting many historical sites then coming back and sharing with their classmates the information that they learned.

### **Skating Party**

There will be a skating party on Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-9:30 PM at United Skates of America on Refugee Rd. Admission is \$5.00 and skate rental (if needed) is \$3.50. The admission charge will be

given 100% back to the school. The profits from this will help to fund the DC Trip in April. Everyone is invited to come out and support this project!



- Mar 2 Teacher Professional Day  
No School
- Mar 9 Skating Party at United Skates of America 5:00-9:30 PM
- Mar 14 Pi Day Celebration
- Mar 16 Jump Rope Contest 12:30 PM
- Mar 16 End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter
- Mar 22-23 Parent-Teacher Conferences  
Dismiss at 2 PM Thursday  
No School of Friday
- Mar 26-Apr 27 ELA Ohio Testing
- Mar 30 Good Friday-D dismiss at 2:00 PM
- Apr 1 Easter Sunday
- Apr 2-6 Easter Break
- Apr 3-7 DC Trip
- Apr 9 School resumes after break
- Apr 13 Teacher Professional Day –  
No School

## **ORGANIZATIONS**



The Altar Guild will have its next meeting on Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM is the date for our annual

“Spring cleaning” in church. If you are interested in the work of this group, consider coming to the meeting or talking to one of the members about how we serve. We are always happy to have new members.

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers in honor of a special occasion or in memory of a loved one, sign up on the calendar posted on the entryway bulletin board. The cost is \$25.00 for the Altar vases and \$15.00 for special flowers after the altar vases are taken.

**Easter Lilies:** Sign-up sheets will be posted on the bulletin boards for people to



sponsor Easter Lilies to beautify our sanctuary on Resurrection morning. You can sign up for a plant or for lilies to be placed on the rustic cross outside in memory of loved ones or in thankfulness for blessings, etc. The plants will cost \$12 and you can designate an amount for the lilies on the rustic cross.

The Altar Committee for March is Dawn Howell, Pam Bivens and Mercedes Wiley.

*(Pat Ratz, president)*



**Evening Women's Guild Meeting**  
**On Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**

Evening Women's Guild

The ladies of the congregation are in the process of planning for the May 2018 Mother/Daughter banquet. Our theme is: Growing in Christian Love. Any ideas for entertainment or decorations that you have can be shared with Suzanne Geiger. We extend a warm invitation to all women of the congregation to join us on Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. The March meeting host will be determined in the weeks ahead. Watch your bulletin for more details. Those attending can bring their Bibles for the Bible study portion of the evening and then plan to stay after the meeting for food and fellowship.

*(Suzanne Geiger, president)*

**LWMS Rally at Peace of Our Savior in New Carlisle on Saturday, April 14**

Next month, the ladies of our congregation are invited to the spring rally of the Heartland Circuit of LWMS. Our guest presenter is Pastor Robert Krueger, Chairman of the Michigan District Mission Board. The event runs from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. A free breakfast and lunch are included for those attending. All are invited. A carpool will be leaving from church at 7:30 A.M. and returning by 5:00 PM. Questions? Contact Melinda Sims at 614-991-5697.

**2017 Door Offering Projects**

A portion of the door offerings collected twice a year at St. Paul's will fund one home mission choice and one world mission choice which is voted on by LWMS member churches. Final results are always revealed at the annual convention. On Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, St. Paul's will collect the next

door offering. Those with mite boxes can bring them to Joyce Larger.

**Silent Auction Donations Needed for the LWMS Fall Rally**

The Heartland Circuit of LWMS is asking each church to send one small basket and one large basket donation to the LWMS fall rally. St. Paul's small basket theme is Road Trip. Donate maps, snacks, car air fresheners, small tissues, window & car interior cleaners. The large basket theme is Gifts of Love. Donate gift bags, bows, gift tags, curling ribbon, decorative boxes and other gift wrapping supplies. Boxes will be available in the church narthex for donations until Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. The funds collected from the silent auction baskets go towards the convention stipend fund.

**School Supplies Needed for Home Mission Church**

Those attending this year's spring LWMS rally are encouraged to bring along with them school supplies for the elementary school children of Palabra de Vida Lutheran School in Detroit, Michigan. Donations will be divided up at the rally and distributed at the school this coming fall. A box will be available for those who wish to donate items at St. Paul's. Here is the list of needed items:

- Spiral notebooks (2 or 3, wide rule)
- Elmer's glue
- Scissors 5" rounded
- Crayons (24 pack)
- Colored pencils (8 pack)
- Folders (2 or 3)
- Pens (small pack)
- Pencils (small pack)
- Clorox disinfecting wipes
- Highlighters (small pack)
- Paper (8.5x11, wide rule)
- Backpacks

**Young at Heart**



We will meet at 10:00 am on Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup> in the church office meeting room. We will continue our study and discussion of **Predestination**. Please join us. Call Joyce Larger at 614-314-7571, with questions.

*(Joyce Larger, coordinator)*



The teens continue their Bible study on the nine fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23). All teens beginning in 9<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome. We meet each Sunday at

9:15 am in the auditorium.

The Valentine’s Dinner raised \$822 for the 2018 WELS International Youth Rally. Special thanks to the Larger family, teen and adult volunteers, attendees and/or donors, St. Paul’s, and most importantly God for making this fundraiser a success.

On Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> is the annual snow tubing trip to Mad River Mountain with dinner at Der Dutchman. Tickets for snow tubing will be about \$20. Please bring enough money to cover the cost of snow tubing and dinner. Family, friends and the entire church body are welcome. We will meet at St. Paul’s at 1:00 pm and carpool to the resort, to the restaurant, and back. The next day, March 4<sup>th</sup>, is the Youth Group gathering immediately after the late service in the auditorium. Teens in grades 7-12 are welcome for food, devotion, and games.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vicar Spaude & Pastor Sims



## New WELS catechism and personal Bible study

2018/02/20/in Together

You may not be aware that our synod, as a part of our celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, has recently produced a revision of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism. The revision is not a revision of the chief parts of the catechism or Luther’s familiar answers to the question, “What does this mean?” What have been revised are the detailed questions and answers that expand on what Luther wrote.

Luther often encouraged faithful Christians to study and review the catechism as a part of their daily devotional lives. With that in mind, the newly

revised WELS catechism is formatted in such a way to encourage our members to use the catechism on a daily basis, long after they have been confirmed. As in the previous version of the catechism, Scripture passages are included to provide the clear biblical basis for the doctrines we believe, and a continuing review of those teachings is always helpful in strengthening faith and increasing our knowledge of what the Bible teaches.

But in addition to those passages, the new catechism has been designed to flow for a more natural read. Each section begins with an introduction and transitional thoughts and concludes with a “Connections” section that provides application and could also serve as the basis for personal or family devotions. The new catechism provides additional guidance through Bible history narratives. It also features illustrations, thought questions, and applications of biblical truths in a way that makes it a practical and easy-to-use tool for continuing study of God’s Word.

The catechism is not just for kids. Consider getting a copy for your own devotional use. Copies are available for purchase from Northwestern Publishing House at [nph.net/catechism](http://nph.net/catechism).

Serving in Christ,  
President Mark Schroeder





