



Saint Paul Messenger

A Member of the North American Lutheran Church

May 2017

St Paul Lutheran Church
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The Word of the Lord says in Exodus 20:24, "In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you." These indeed are beautiful words from sacred scripture that can speak to our hearts. In connection to the above passage, sit back for a few minutes, clear your mind, think back to your early days, and remember.

Can you remember some of your first thoughts about God as a child? Think back and take the time to remember the first spiritual stirrings in your life. Where were you when you first became aware that God was a part of your life? What was the earliest glimmer of faith that you had? Try to remember as much as you can about the formative days when you first came to believe in God. Were there any spiritual questions that you had as a child? Were there people that you could talk to about religion, or were you pretty much on your own to figure things out? Were there people or things that helped you along the way?

Actually there may be many points to look back to in your life. How has God guided you and blessed you along the way? How many sacred moments can you count in your life?

These are things that we certainly want to remember. How the hand of God has touched us along the way is one of the most precious things to have in our thoughts and memories.

Pastor Turanski

 Lord
I pray
to be Led to
and by you

The President's Pen



To: St. Paul Members and Friends,

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! The Lord is Risen indeed,
alleluia!

Our Lenten journey is over and we have just celebrated the resurrection of our Lord, what a time to rejoice and be glad! During our journey we met in fellowship for a light supper followed by a brief service reminding us of Christ's journey into darkness. Then we journeyed through Holy Week together. I did not attend all the services, but as I look at the schedule I see what a busy time it was. What a blessing that our small but dedicated congregation is able to experience the fullness of all these events together in worship. At St. Paul especially during Lent and Holy Week we have received many blessings, starting with Pastor Turanski who is willing to lead all these services for us and Lynette, who gives up her time with him for us. We are blessed with people willing to organize and provide the light meal we shared. We are blessed to have people looking after all the changes that had to be made to the altar and its accessories. We are blessed to have people willing to be lay readers, provide special music, make the service music files, work the sound booth and provide bulletins for all the services. The list could go on and on but the point is that God has truly blessed us at St. Paul.

He has also put some challenges in front of us that I am sure we can get through with His help. So as we move from this Easter season let's remember our blessings. Jesus promised to send a helper and comforter and we will hear about that on Pentecost. Let's pray that with His help we will find His will for the days ahead at St. Paul.

Thank you to Terese for her help with the compilation of thoughts from the Lenten journey.

Please take note that our Stewardship Committee is actively engaged in meeting every two weeks to strive

to find ways for better communication and ways to help our church. If you have ideas or suggestions that you feel would be helpful, please submit them in the suggestion box or give them to me.

Deb

Council Corner



St. Paul Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2017

Present: Deb Elliott, Jim Whitten, Don Waker,
Pastor Turanski, Peg Booher

Absent: Jim Reider, Steve Mishler, Peg Walters,
Dave Schlaack

Guests: none

Call to order by: President Deb Elliott at 11:25 am
in the basement.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Turanski

Congregational Comment: none

Secretary's Report: Don Waker motion to accept
March minutes, Jim Whitten 2nd, carried.

Treasurer's Report: Motion by Don Waker to
appoint Peg Booher as a voting member of
Council, 2nd by Jim Whitten - carried.

Mar. Income: \$4786.00, Expenses
\$3921.83, Budget \$4,971
YTD Income \$12,504.07 YTD Expenses
\$9669.62

3/31/17 Ckg Bal: \$24,553.80 (1 yr. ago
\$32,352.95),
3/31/17 Spec. Acct Bal. \$7,601.49 (1 yr.
ago \$7,612.30)

Council Corner cont.



Reports

1. Pastor & Elders –Lenten Midweek services are completed. Holy Week of 4/9/17. Pastor visited 2 households for a little time of prayer. Moving on to others if they desire it. Plan to complete all by fall. Carol Roberts is playing piano before Sunday church. Don Waker planning on a solo for Good Friday. Written report on bulletin board.
2. Worship and Music – Plans for Holy Week and Easter are complete. We will be returning to the blue book liturgy after Easter. Written report on bulletin board.
3. Property: No report. Peg Booher advised that we will need Eave contractor to fill out a W-9.
4. Community Dinner – Report of March dinner provided. 72 dinners served, 18 Take Outs. Expenses \$536.23. Donations: \$386.30. Balance on Hand: \$2,956.45 (includes \$1,354 St. Paul seed money.)
5. Call Committee: No Report.

Don Waker made a motion to accept Reports, Jim Whitten seconded, carried.

Old Business:

No old business

New Business:

Stewardship Committee Development -
Written report from Jim Whitten. See

bulletin board. The committee now includes Don Waker. Jim Whitten, Dave Schlaack, Vera Bailey and Deb Elliott. Plans include a presentation to the congregation regarding our budget and how well we are meeting it. Also, how to increase attendance, membership and giving to meet our budget.

Martin Luther Workshop by Institute of Lutheran Theology. St. Thomas Lutheran in Trufant agreed to join us for this event on July 22 at St. Paul. We will provide coffee, donuts and lunch as part of the program. We will charge admission of \$10. ILT needs \$400 to cover their expenses. Motion by Don Waker, 2nd by Jim Whitten to host this event. Motion carried.

Sears Church of God Ladies Brunch – Deb Elliott will post information for those wanting to attend.

NALC Convocation. Motion by Jim Whitten, 2nd by Don Waker to offer no reimbursement for travel/hotel for a convocation representative this summer. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

Letter from Terese Whitten read explaining the prayer time being held for Pastor in his office before Sunday services.

Several solicitation letters were referred to Benevolence Committee.

Suggestion Box: No suggestions this month.

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 12:30 pm

Next scheduled meeting: May 21, 2017.

Submitted by

Jim Whitten, Secretary

Hallmarks of Lutheran Identity pt.3

As we look forward to the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of his 95 Theses, it is perhaps helpful to remind ourselves of the beliefs that make Lutherans different from other Christians. The following is the second in a series based on a book by Alvin Schmidt.

Sola fide – (By Faith Alone)

“ For it is by grace that you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

Paul told the Christians in Ephesus, Rome and Galatia the same thing. As Christians you have been saved through faith in Jesus Christ, not by any human efforts or good works. Luther based his teaching of faith alone on these words of St. Paul. They mean that man (and woman) are justified before God through faith alone in Jesus Christ. there is no other way to justification. This biblical doctrine is a major hallmark of the Lutheran identity.

The word faith is used a lot in conversation about religion, yet it is rarely defined. Thus faith is generally understood as a subjective experience – something that is independent of historical faith or evidence.

Interestingly, when Paul used the Greek word that is translated “faith” he was giving it a new meaning. A theological meaning for the word was not known to the Greeks or Romans. Dieter Luhrmann, a history scholar shows that faith is a peculiarly Christian concept. While other religious traditions have aspects of what has been called “faith,” “none has the specific quality of intellectual assent that distinguishes faith from fidelity.”

In fact the Greeks had a negative view of the word, seeing it as the state of mind of an uneducated person who believed in hearsay without reason for their belief.

Paul argued that the faith Christians had did have evidence behind it. The first Christians were eyewitnesses of Christ's work on earth. The validity of their faith rested on the historical fact of Christ's bodily resurrection. It was not that their faith made this true, they had seen it and knew it to be true.

The Lutheran Reformers said that faith consists of historical knowledge and a persons assent, along with trust regarding God's redemptive acts in Jesus Christ. The augsburg Confession states that a Christian's faith consists of believing “the history, but also the effect of history. In other words, it believes this article: the forgiveness of sins. We have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins, through Christ.” (XX23)

In the biblical context, faith is accepting the effects or benefits of Christ's bodily resurrection, not whether He rose from the dead on Easter. Merely knowing and accepting the historical fact of the resurrection, however, is not enough for saving faith. Only when a man relies upon this in that he trustingly takes this event as the ground on which he stands does he receive saving faith. Salvation is only received in the act of trust. Christian faith is thus grounded not in blind faith but in fact.

It is important for Lutherans to remember that we are saved by grace through faith alone. This means that our good works do not help us acquire salvation but are the fruits of our faith.

As we cling to this faith by God's grace, remember that it is a unique Christian doctrine and another noteworthy hallmark of the Lutheran identity.





MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

St. Paul will be hosting an event this summer to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's work to reform the church.

On October 31st 1517 a small-town monk nailed 95 Theses to the church door in Wittenberg Germany. This was not an unusual act as the church was the meetinghouse for the community and when there was a topic for discussion one simply put up notice on the church door. Martin Luther, the seemingly insignificant monk, had unintentionally put into motion the Protestant Reformation. This reform movement would return the focus of Christian theology to pointing to Christ alone for salvation. And in the process change the world forever.

Our fellowship hall will be the site for a seminar called, "The Life and Theology of Martin Luther" put on by the Institute of Lutheran Theology.

- Saturday, July 22 at 9 AM - 4 PM
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, Evart, Michigan
- \$10/person which includes the workshop, Morning Coffee/Doughnuts and Lunch
Youth Groups, Church Councils, and Call Committees Encouraged

St. Thomas Lutheran of Trufant, MI has already indicated that 10-15 of their members will join us at this workshop. But it is open to everyone. We will be promoting this event to churches all over central Michigan. It is a remarkable opportunity for us to reach out to a wide community and within our own congregation to build closer bonds with each other in our Christian walk together. Look for more information to come.

Life Resources of Northern Michigan announces their Annual

Walk 4 Life

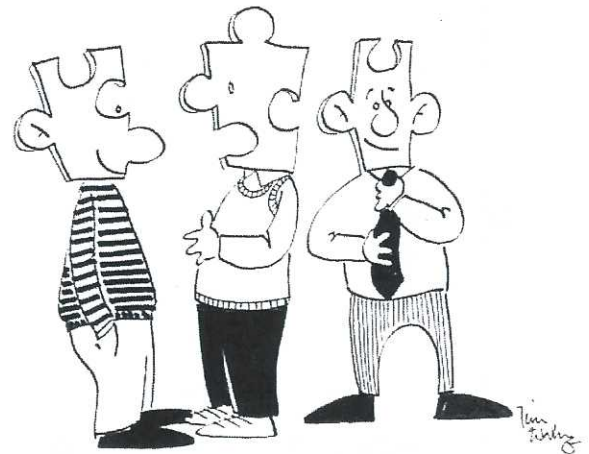


Saturday June 3rd at the
Rotary Performing Arts Pavillion
Cadillac

or

Saturday June 10th at
14321 Northland Dr, Big Rapids
Registration begins at 8:30 am
Walk begins at 9 am

*See the bulletin board for additional
details*



"I LOVE THIS CHURCH... I REALLY FEEL LIKE I FIT IN HERE!"