

Saint Paul Messenger

A Member of the North American Lutheran Church

St Paul Lutheran Church

435 W Fifth St

PO Box 957

Evart, MI 49631

www.stpaul-evart.weebly.com

July 2017

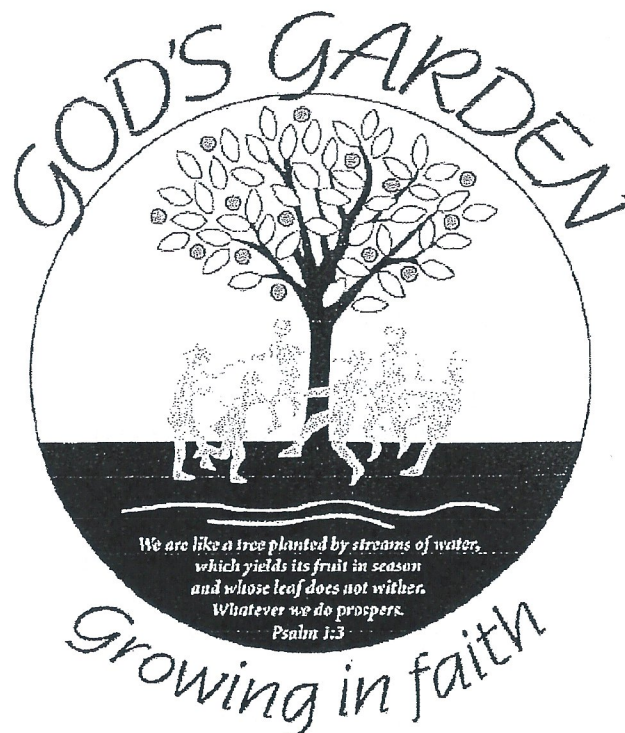
A number of people have gardens that they tend during the warmer months. I think we can learn some lessons from gardening that we can apply to our spiritual life. Gardens will tend to do better if we give them water as needed, if we cultivate the land, and if we add fertilizer from time to time. Our spiritual life will benefit in a similar way if we tend to things like attending worship to hear God's word and receive the sacrament, and also if we cultivate aspects in our own individual Christian life like prayer, reading the Bible, and living as a representative of God's kingdom here on earth.

In a garden, in addition to the positive things that we can do to help its environment, there are also things that we can do to guard against its harm. We can pull weeds that want to compete with our garden plants. We can use insecticide when the bugs want to attack the plants. We can erect fencing or install other means that will tend to deter animals from ravaging our crop. Similarly with our spiritual life we can go on the defensive. We can avoid going places geographically or in our minds where Satan will attack us. We can distance ourselves from conversations or interactions that might lead to trouble.

And for an additional parallel: For our physical wellbeing there are things that we can do to keep our bodies fit and healthy: Good nutrition, physical activity, mental activity, and avoidance of substances which could be

harmful to us. In our life we can also strive to maximize our spiritual fitness. Having the right kinds of thoughts in our minds, reading the right kinds of books, etc. Interacting with other people in a Christian way is also an important ingredient in our spiritual well being. Let us strive to keep ourselves as spiritually healthy as possible, - and let us always keep in mind that God in Christ is the source of all good. We need to keep Him and His redemption at the center of our lives and hearts.

Pastor Turanski



Council Corner



St. Paul Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes June 25, 2017

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

Absent: Steve Mishler, Dave Schlaack, Jim Reider

Guests: Rick Machleit arrived at noon.

Call to order by: President Deb Elliott at 11:45 am in the basement.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Turanski

Congregational Comment: none

Secretary's Report: Don Waker motion to accept May minutes, Peg Walters 2nd, carried.

Treasurer's Report: Motion by Don Waker to accept Treasurer's Report, Jim Whitten 2nd - carried.

Discussion about providing a pie-chart report for income & expenses. Peg will pursue.

May Income: \$3,511.00, Expenses \$4,713.80, Budget \$4,971.00

YTD Income \$22,943.08, YTD Expenses \$18,323.26

5/31/17 Ckg Bal: \$26,339.17 (1 yr. ago \$\$32,228.57)

5/31/17 Spec. Acct Bal. \$7,785.00

Reports

1. Pastor & Elders - Written report on bulletin board. 17 households visited by Pastor for "Little Time of Prayer", NALC Michigan Mission District meeting in Owosso on July 11, Reformation program is planned for July 22, a new

Bible class, possibly beginning in August, is being considered.

2. Worship and Music – Verbal report by Jim Whitten. Terese Whitten has been asked to re-join the committee and has accepted. We are using the liturgy plan from Year A in 2014.
3. Verbal Report by Don Waker & Rick Machleit – New gutter drain is eroding lawn/creating hole. Rick/Dave to investigate and find solution. Flowers in urns are hard to keep watered. Rick suggests planting directly in ground instead. Motion by Don Waker, 2nd by Peg Walters to authorize Rick Machleit to make the changes. Carried. Rick offered a poster for VFW helicopter dedication – will be posted.
4. Community Dinner – Written report on Council Bulletin board. 115 dinners served in May, 29 dinners to go.
5. Call Committee: Verbal report by Deb Elliott. Trying to arrange conference call with Dr. John Fresner. No other update yet.
6. Stewardship – Written report presented to congregation on June 4. Little response from congregation received so far. Will update again with June information.

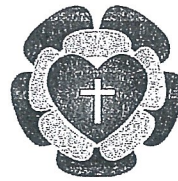
Motion to accept reports by Don Waker, Peg Walters 2nd, carried.

Old Business:

Martin Luther Workshop by Institute of Lutheran Theology – Sign up list posted.

We will begin to publicize and promote this July 22 event. Jim Whitten is organizing. Woman's group asked to provide luncheon.

Council Corner cont.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

New Business:

Women of NALC requesting disaster relief supplies for their national warehouse. Deb E. will forward to our Women's group.

Correspondence:

Thank You letters from Life Resources of N. Michigan and Evert Fire Dept. for our donation.

Solicitation letters from Salvation Army & Lutheran CORE were referred to Benevolence Committee.

Suggestion Box:

No suggestions

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

Next scheduled meeting: July 16.

Submitted by

Jim Whitten, Secretary

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 Thesis 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, Evert, Michigan
- \$10/person which includes the workshop, Morning Coffee/Doughnuts and Lunch Youth Groups, Church Councils, and Call Committees Encouraged



Confessional LAITY
and CLERGY standing "steadfast"
together for over five centuries!

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.

Hallmarks of Lutheran Identity pt.5

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 fourth in a series based on a book by Alvin Schmidt.

Word and Sacraments – Three Means of Grace

The expression "Word and Sacrament" is not really heard in non-Lutheran circles. Likewise, the phrase "Means of Grace" is not a common term in non-Lutheran circles. Lutheran pastors are known to use these phrases and they may even sound like a Lutheran cliché, but the truth is they are packed with theological significance.

There are several meanings for the Lutheran usage of the word "Word". One meaning being God's *Word* - the Bible, - read or heard by an individual and used by the Holy Spirit to create a saving faith in a person. As it is said in Romans 10:17: "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." This is one passage used as the basis for Luther's explanation of the third article of the Apostle's Creed. "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." These words in the Small Catechism, underscore the Lutheran belief that it is only through God's Word that a person, by God's grace, comes to believe in Jesus Christ. Thus in Lutheran theology, the Word, whether read or heard, is a Means of Grace. Lutherans reject the

belief that someone can become a Christian apart from the Word of God.

Lutherans also teach that God creates faith in infants (and adults) in the rite of Baptism. "It is not the water indeed that does this, but the Word of God, which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts this Word of God in the water.... With the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit." *Small Catechism, Baptism, Third Part.*

Another sense of meaning for "Word" says that it is only through the Word that Christians are kept and sustained in their faith. That is why Christians must not neglect the Word of God. God's Word is to be read, heard regularly preached, and studied with fellow Christians.

Lutheran pastors use "the Word" in a broad sense referring to both Law and Gospel but, most often it is used in a narrow sense meaning the Gospel which promises God's forgiveness, eternal life, and salvation in Jesus Christ. It is the Gospel that motivates Christians to do the right thing for the right reason.

In the New Testament Jesus is referred to as "the Word". We see this in the Gospel of John which states "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

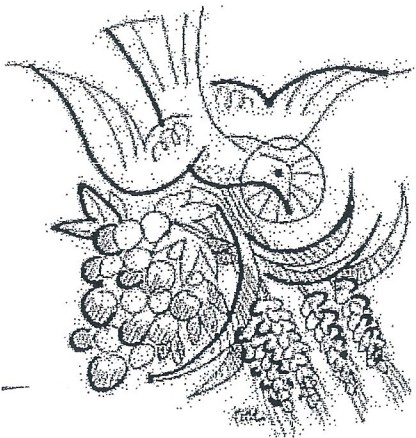
Lutherans hold to only two sacraments, seeing a sacrament as "God's visible Word" and a Means of Grace that conveys the forgiveness of sins to penitent sinners. The two are Baptism, where visible water is connected to the Word of God and in the Lord's Supper where visible elements of bread and wine are connected with God's Word. Moreover, these are the only rites instituted by Christ Himself.

Although Baptism is an initiation rite by which individuals enter the Christian Church it is also a Means of Grace through which the Holy Spirit, with water connected to the Word, creates faith.

As a Means of Grace, Baptism serves as an instrument of God's forgiveness. This forgiveness of sins is not a one-time thing but a divine promise which God offers daily (in fact, many times a day) to the repentant Christian.

In the Lord's Supper Christ's body and blood are supernaturally, truly present, through, with, and in the visible elements of bread and wine as a Means of Grace. God conveys the forgiveness of sins to repentant Christians as they partake this Holy Meal. This meal also strengthens the participant's faith, for receiving the assurance that your sins are forgiven strengthens the Christian's faith.

The Lutheran concept of Word and Sacrament underscores how God's grace is given to all His children who believe in the atoning merits of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is important to remember that Word and Sacrament are the means through which God creates and sustains us in the true faith as members of His kingdom. And that is why Word and Sacrament are hallmarks of the Lutheran identity.



Keep them in your prayers:

Linda Ahlgren, Carol Anderson, Henry Parker Cravens, Lettie Fox, Bob Green, Carol Kenny, David & Pastor Kelly, John Kelly, Bill Lehman, Michelle McCoy, Agnes Maittand, Harold & Ruth Mowat, Jason Proefrock, Jimmie Reider, Carol & Ralph Roberts, Gerald Shilling, Kristie Stratton, Lyle Swanson, Diane Terlasky, Fern Thorburn, Ron Walters, Larry Whitten, and the leadership and congregation at St. Paul.



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"Wireless communication is nothing new.
I've been praying for 75 years!"

New name and new address

Congratulations to:

Jim & Karren (McCallum) Flanders

360 7 Mile Rd.

Sears, MI 49679