



Good News

Connecting People to Jesus

Please pray:

- for those in our congregation and in our community who are grieving the loss of a loved one.
- that church members would eagerly volunteer their time and talents to support the congregation's educational programs, such as vacation Bible school, Sunday school, and groups for young families.
- for our church that God will send the pastor we need, when we need him.

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Good News

May 2018

From the Council *by Chris Mowers*

It was almost ten years ago that St. Paul Lutheran Church in Hamburg, MI made its last Divine Call in a long series of Divine Calls that sought to bring a faithful man of the Gospel to serve as her pastor. Now, as she seeks to begin this process again, I feel the uncertainty in the air. These are indeed uncertain times for us, but I want to write to you today to tell you that we are equipped for the road ahead and that our God will take care of us. I hope this message will bring you peace as you ponder our future.

Before we consider the road further, we should pray. There is no need to fear for the future; our God will provide for us. We should ask him to do so. Pray that the Lord will grant us a pastor who is faithful to the Word. Pray also that in the interim time we will be sustained by faithful pastors. Pray for our congregation, that we may continue to reflect the nature of the Body of Christ, that we stand proclaiming the mercy of God, the forgiveness of sins by Word and Sacraments in the name of Christ, and that we continue to strive to connect people to Jesus. Finally, pray for all of us who carry the burden of administration and decision making at St. Paul, that

we may serve the church with wisdom, prudence, and joy.

I want you to know what is coming, so that you may be prepared. Regarding the vacancy, we will have a meeting of the voters on May 20 after the 11 am service. The purpose of this meeting is to make decisions regarding the nature of the pastoral support we require during our vacancy. The church council will have a recommendation to make, and the voters will get to make the ultimate decision. Regarding the call process itself, I will briefly summarize here the remarks I made on April 8. The council is charged with forming a small call committee representing a cross-section of the congregation. This committee will be chaired by Stan Bucrek. During this time, we will conduct a needs assessment to be sure we are clear on those needs before we call a new pastor. A nominations list will be compiled based on recommendations from the voters as well as a list from the Michigan District office. These candidates will be vetted by the call committee, and preliminary recommendations will be made. These recommendations will be presented to an assembly of the voters, where votes will take place until by process of elimination one candidate receives a 2/3



Saint Paul
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Connecting People to Jesus

majority. That candidate will receive a call from our congregation.

I cannot emphasize enough how important the voters of the congregation are in this process. Please participate in the process as much as you are able. It is the voters as a whole who will call our next pastor.

You can expect updates throughout this process in the newsletter, e-News, Facebook group, bulletin, and Sunday morning announcements.

I'd like to leave you with a plea for good order in our congregation. God blesses us with a congregation that is healthy and thriving in many ways. The times ahead may try this. Vacancies are tough times no matter what. Let's keep this in mind, and deal with one another with patience for the sake of our Lord. All Christian relationships run through Jesus, and when we look at one another, it is Jesus that we see. May God not let us forget this, and so when we have conflict or contention with one another, let us go together to the altar of God with joy, for he grants his forgiveness to every one of us, and he grants

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MEMBERS OF THE BODY *by Tim Hurst*

It is not a real secret, but a puzzle without an answer. Every church has a membership list whose numbers exceed the people in the pews on Sunday. Sometimes the discrepancy is by a factor of two or three, nominal members versus those who participate in Sunday worship. Where did the missing people go? More importantly, why did people who once declared allegiance to Jesus Christ and His church disappear from the body of active Christians? There are no satisfactory explanations. The numbers seem to say that many people have turned their backs on the church and moved away from their link to forgiveness and salvation.

“...the Christian church is a place of refuge, ...”

Once again, the Bible gives us an answer. Three of the Gospels recount the parable of the seeds (Matthew 13:3-8 Mark 4:3-8 and Luke 8:5-8). As the Christian message is spread, the farmer sows his seed, but only some of it produces a crop. Sometimes there is an evil message that destroys belief. Sometimes persecution or life's troubles inhibit growth. Sometimes it is the "worries of life or the deceitfulness of wealth" that choke the life out of it. But Jesus taught that seed that is nurtured in good soil produces a bountiful harvest.

In Revelation 2 and 3, John writes to seven churches, praising them and admonishing them for behavior that advances or retards the growth of faith in the hearts of men. He speaks of hard work, false teaching, need to repent, persecution, individual immorality, overcoming poverty, and succumbing to apathy, all characteristics of churches that minister to the

souls of the members. His charge to the churches is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago.

So there is a dual responsibility. The member is charged to serve a church which will help him to grow in faith, increase his understanding, forgive his trespasses, and support him in adversity. The church must faithfully transmit the Gospel message without worldly adulteration, provide the opportunity for growth in understanding and faith, provide guidance, and sometimes, exert gentle discipline to amend unchristian conduct and offer forgiveness for human frailty. All of us are merely aspiring Christians; the job is never finished. As we master each aspect of discipleship, we see further vistas to be explored. To maintain Christian joy, we must press on toward perfection of our union with Christ, knowing that this side of heaven we will never be perfect, but working, praying, and hoping for that ideal.

In human society, the church provides for, at least, three basic needs of its members. First, it is a social place, a place for families to congregate. In the time of the pioneers, it was often the only social organization available to everyone, spawning schools and local community enterprises. As time passed, other organizations seeking to fill this need (unions, PTA, sports leagues, the local pub) found that if roots in the church are not deep, it is easy to shift allegiance, time, and effort to other organizations, especially if they make fewer demands.



Second, membership in a church sets us apart, drapes a cloak of respectability on our life, gives us status. There was a time when church membership was essential to anyone who aspired to a high position in the secular world. Now, lack of religious belief is not a handicap and may enhance our relative position in some cultures. The reversal is not complete; Christians are not being actively persecuted in our country - yet.

Third, and most important, the Christian church is a place of refuge, where followers of Christ can congregate. Members who join for social or status reasons, if the church engages them properly, can transition into fervent and loyal disciples. The church is a place to bring up children, to strengthen faith with reason, a place of comfort in adversity, a place to commune with other believers. We confess our shortcomings, forgive one another, sing with joy, weep with compassion, work to lift our fallen brother. When the superfluous elements are swept away, this is the core of our faith and our view of life.

Speaking statistically, the membership in churches is falling, particularly in some of the "mainline" denominations. We certainly are losing some of the purely "social" members. It is

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Librarian Reviews *by Jean Schneider*

The Last Gentle

by Gary Bybee

In this incredible story of love and courage, the world is being destroyed by evil of the lowest kind. Follow the heroes as they attempt to save the lost before Satan devours them.

The Final Witness

by Gary Bybee

The *Final Witness* is the terrifying conclusion to *The Last Gentle Trilogy*. Guided by their young leader, Elisha Kaufman, and his faithful companion Jasmine Hamar, a trail of people, miles long, exit Jerusalem as they run into an incredibly cold desert. Soon God's wrath will

pour out on the already terminally ill world. Even now, meteorites are falling to the earth as fiery hail. The world is suffering from a nuclear winter, darkness is everywhere, but during the night a strange luminescent sky hauntingly lights the way. However, that will not last. Stars begin to shift in the heavens, drawing the sun nearer to earth, scorching the planet. What the cold did not kill, the heat will. One world power, one new god, much of the world's population dead or on the run, and the rest thrown into concentration camps, yet, as two witnesses appear from Heaven and call down the

wrath of the Almighty God, things can only get worse.

Isaiah 9:10 Judgment DVD

In the book of Isaiah, an obscure passage describes the demise of ancient Israel. Does it eerily echo the decline of the United States? Revealing astonishing parallels between the fall of ancient Israel and current events, Rabbi Jonathan Cahn's riveting presentation unravels the mystery behind Isaiah 9:10 and shows that similar harbingers of judgment are manifesting themselves in contemporary America. Approx. 120 minutes.



Members of the Body *continued*

easy to get together with people in other venues. Given the purposeful campaign to denounce Christians as "bigots" or "outdated," wearing a badge of Christ may subtract from our status in the secular world. But strangely, these developments have concentrated and intensified the beliefs of the "remnant." Some recent research findings support this belief.

Many heartening statistics have come from Baylor University, Harvard, Indiana University, and studies by the Pew research organization. In 1989, only 39% of church members held to strong beliefs and religious practices. Today that percentage is 47%. Many of the people who

left mainline denominations have resurfaced in more evangelical churches. There has been significant growth in non-denominational churches. People are voting with their feet. Church membership and attendance is declining in Europe and East Asia but is blooming in Africa and South America. The percentage of church-attending Americans relative to overall population is four times greater than in the year 1776. One in three Americans prays multiple times per day. America is exceptional.

Today, we can choose from a wide range of churches, with divergent creeds and styles of worship. We seek a church

where we can feel comfortable in our beliefs, but also a church that will challenge us to grow in understanding and faith. Do I trust Jesus as the cornerstone of my faith? Is the Bible the reference source for my belief? In my thoughts and my deeds, am I a sinner who requires the grace and forgiveness of Christ? As I recite the prayers and creeds that I have been taught and sing the hymns with the people near me, do I feel the presence of a power out of this world calling me to salvation? Then I am in a church, and I belong here, and here I must stay until the Lord calls me home.

LWML Mustard Seed Devotions

I am Jesus' Little Lamb

In the Word

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. [Isaiah 40:11](#)

Of the Word

I am Jesus' little lamb, Ever glad at heart I am; For my Shepherd gently guides me, Knows my need and well provides me, Loves me ev'ry day the same, Even calls me by my name.

No matter our age, the opening words to this child-like hymn, based loosely on the words of [Psalm 23](#), remind us that Jesus called Himself the

good shepherd ([John 10:11a](#)).

Our Shepherd assures us we belong to Him and He "Even calls me by my name." He provides for His sheep and gives us the greatest gift of all, His life, so that we may be forgiven. He then rose again, so that we, His little lambs, will have eternal life with Him in heaven.

Because we are joyful to have a Good Shepherd, we sing along with the hymn writer: "Who so happy as I am, Even now the Shepherd's lamb? And when my short life is ended, By His angel host attended, He shall fold me to His breast, There within His arms to rest."

Walking with my Lord

Shepherd of all Your little

lambs, hold me and mine close to Your heart. Protect us and gently guide us to Your pleasant pastures. In Your watchful name I pray. Amen.

Mustard Seed: [Joyful, Joyful](#). Rev. Larry and Shari Miller, authors. 8/31. Hymn Text: LSB 740. ©2011 Lutheran Women's Missionary League, 3558 S Jefferson Ave, St. Louis, MO 63118. www.lwml.org

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Mustard Seed Daily Devotions

May 2018 LWR Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund \$80K

For as long as the LWML has existed, Lutheran women have been making quilts to send to those in need. Some have been works of art and some more serviceable, but all are made with love. These same women have been putting together kits of health items or school supplies, baby needs or even just fabric. And since 1945 Lutheran World Relief (LWR) has been supplying these quilts and kits to those who need them most. Getting these items to the farthest reaches of the world can be complex and challenging. Great care must be taken to

ensure the program runs efficiently and that these materials reach these vulnerable people in remote areas. LWR has established a network of transportation, warehousing and distribution, enabling the recipients to live better lives and to know the love of Jesus. LWR ships between 12 and 13 million dollars worth of quilts, blankets, baby care kits, personal care kits, school and fabric kits, and soap to 20 countries on average each year. Each year it costs approximately \$1.5 million to run this program. The Quilt & Shipping

Fund raises about \$675,000 each year but this is not enough. A LWML grant of \$80,000 will help sustain the fund and support these costs. Many of our women who make these quilts have no idea how treasured they are by those who receive them. They are cherished as a personal gift of love by the hands that made it and by God who brought it to them.

In fiscal year 2015, LWR sent 332,592 quilts along with 375,500 kits to countries from

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In the Garden *by Barb Nettleton*

As this article is written, thoughts of gardening bury themselves in snowflakes that continue to accumulate as April dates march across the calendar. But spring will arrive (it does every year!) and once again the St. Paul garden will need the many hands of volunteers to produce this year's

harvest. Gardeners meet every Tuesday morning at 9:00 in the fellowship hall beginning in May, weather permitting. Other than gardening gloves, all tools and equipment are provided. This is an excellent way for families to donate some time in service to the community and St. Paul whether you are an experi-

enced gardener or a novice.

If you have questions, please contact Barb Nettleton at 810 355 4350 or maxbarb@chartermi.net.

With warmer temperatures and sunshine, God's goodness will soon be growing in our garden.



Funeral Luncheon Ministry

Your help is needed

As a church family, we seek to comfort the bereaved by offering funeral luncheons. St. Paul Lutheran provides the main course, i.e., meat, beverages and all paper products. Donations are welcomed but not required to cover the cost of the meat and paper products.

We have a small group of members who take turns preparing other dishes (salads, vegetables, casseroles, and desserts), setting up, serving the meal, and cleaning up. Because this group is so small, the same members are sometimes called every time there is a funeral luncheon. With additional members on the list, we

will rotate volunteers serving and providing for these luncheons.

We will welcome anyone interested in serving on this group. This is a wonderful service provided for those experiencing the loss of a loved one. Please sign up or call the office if you are interested in being included on this list.

May 2018 LWR Quilt and Kit ... *Continued*

Angola to Yemen; from Burkina Faso to Ukraine and from Ghana to Thailand. The Quilt & Kit ministry is LWR oldest ministry serving as an expression of Christ's love in the

world but it also promotes global education in the US about the need for humanitarian assistance and the opportunity for ministry at the same time. We pray that through

this grant for supplying funds for shipping that the quilts made with great care and love will be an expression of the compassion and the love of Jesus.

From the Council *continued*

us the ability to forgive one another in His name, even though we lack the strength to do so on our own.

May God continue to bless his people in Hamburg, Michigan and to make them a blessing to others.

Youth News

by Mike Hausch

Confirmation

Youth Confirmation will be on Sunday, May 6 at the 11:00 am Divine Service. Seven young people will confirm their faith in God their Father, Jesus their

Savior and the Holy Spirit who convinces and comforts. The young people to confirm their faith are Noah Ankenbrand, Ashton Foley, Gwen

Mastenbrook, Jamie Meadows, Amelia Robinson, Daniel Stack and Ethan Zagotta. Lift up these students and their commitment in your prayers.

LAC (7th and 8th graders) and High School Youth



The Activity for May will be a combined event.

Students who are part of Living Active Christians and those in High School are invited to some fun games of Laser Tag on Sunday, May 20. We will meet after church, have lunch

together and then off to Zap Zone! The cost is \$15 and covers the cost of 2 games of Laser Tag and food for lunch. Get your name on the sign-up sheet or in an email to Mike no later than May 18.

Vacation Bible School

Save the date: July 23-27 is VBS!

At Splash Canyon VBS, your children learn God keeps His promises on life's wild ride! They'll look into the Bible, God's Holy Word, and explore five Bible accounts where our faithful God keeps His promises to be with us and gives us life and hope through Jesus, our Savior.

Registration is now open for children 3 years old - 8th grade! Register at stpaulham-burg.com/vbs.

If you can help full or part time,

we have many ways to be involved to suit your schedule and interests.

Contact Ashleigh Mowers (amowers@icloud.com) for more info.



May 2018

St. Paul Special Events

Daily Readings

| | | |
|------|---------------|---|
| 5/3 | 9:00am | Hymn Selection |
| 5/5 | 5:30pm | Evening of Honor |
| 5/6 | 11:00am | Choir Sings |
| | 11:00am | Confirmation Sunday |
| 5/10 | 6:00pm | Ascension Day Barbeque (no Bucrek Bible study) |
| | 7:00pm | Ascension Day Festival Divine Service |
| 5/15 | 1:00pm | Blood Drive |
| | 7:00pm | Church Council |
| 5/20 | 8:30, 11:00a, | Choir |
| | 12:15pm | Voters Meeting |
| | 12:00pm | LAC and HS Laser Tag |

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 5/1 | Leviticus 23:1-22 | Luke 12:13-34 | |
| 5/2 | Leviticus 23:23-44 | Luke 12:35-53 | |
| 5/3 | Leviticus 24:1-23, | Leviticus 25:1-55 | Luke 12:54-13:17 |
| 5/4 | Leviticus 26:1-20 | Luke 13:18-35 | |
| 5/5 | Leviticus 26:21-33 | Numbers 1:1-2:34, | Luke 14:1-24 |
| 5/6 | Numbers 3:1-16, 39-48, | Numbers 4:1-8:4 | Luke 14:25-15:10 |
| 5/7 | Numbers 8:5-26 | Luke 15:1-32 | |
| 5/8 | Numbers 9:1-23 | Luke 16:1-18 | |
| 5/9 | Numbers 10:11-36 | Luke 16:19-31 | |
| 5/10 | Numbers 11:1-23, 31-35 | Luke 17:1-19 | |
| 5/11 | Numbers 11:24-29, 12:1-16 | Luke 17:20-37 | |
| 5/12 | Numbers 13:1-3, 17-33 | Luke 18:1-17 | |
| 5/13 | Numbers 14:1-25 | Luke 18:18-34 | |
| 5/14 | Numbers 14:26-35 | Numbers 15:1-41 | Luke 18:35-19:10 |
| 5/15 | Numbers 16:1-22 | Luke 19:11-2 | |
| 5/16 | Numbers 16:23-40 | Luke 18:-19:22 | Luke 22:47-71 |
| 5/17 | Number 16:41-17 | Numbers 20:1-18 | Luke 20:1-18 |
| 5/18 | Song 1:1-27 | John 5:1-18 | |
| 5/19 | Song 2:8-3:11 | John 5:19-29 | |
| 5/20 | Song 4:1-5:1 | John 5:30-47 | |
| 5/21 | Song 5:5-6:3 | John 6:1-21 | |
| 5/22 | Song 6:4-7:5 | John 6:22-40 | |
| 5/23 | Song 7:6-8:14 | John 6:41-59 | |
| 5/24 | Ecclesiastes 1:1-18 | John 6:60-71 | |
| 5/25 | Ecclesiastes 2:1-26 | John 7:1-13 | |
| 5/26 | Ecclesiastes 3:1-22 | John 7:14-31 | |
| 5/27 | Ecclesiastes 4:1-16 | John 7:32-53 | |
| 5/28 | Ecclesiastes 5:1-20 | John 8:1-20 | |
| 5/29 | Ecclesiastes 6:1-7:10 | John 8:21-38 | |
| 5/30 | Ecclesiastes 7:11-29 | John 8:39-59 | |
| 5/31 | Ecclesiastes 8:1-17 | John 9:1-23 | |

Weekly Schedule

Sunday

- 7:30am Fresh Brew Bible Study
- 8:30am Divine Service
- 9:45am Education Hour
- 11:00am Divine Service & Kids' Connection
- 5:00pm Tough Issues
- 6:30pm Confirmation Class

Monday

- 9:00am Quilters
- 11:00am Women's Bible Study

Tuesday

- 9:00am Old Timers
- 1:30pm Knitting Group
- 7:00pm Boy Scouts

Thursday

- 6:30pm Bucrek Life Group

Saturday

- 8:30am Men's Bible Study
- 9:00am Altar Preparation
- 10:30am AA/Alanon
- 11:00am Knitting (downstairs)





St. Paul Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 490
Hamburg, MI 48139
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Worship Times

Sunday

8:30 am Traditional Divine Service

9:45 am Christian Education Hour for all ages

10:45 am Fellowship Time

11:00 am Blended Divine Service

11:00 am Kids Connection for preschool-2nd grade after the Children's Message

Monday (During the Summer)

7:00 pm Traditional Divine Service

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Ascension Day Barbecue and Worship

Want some great food?

Want to give thanks to Jesus for His position speaking to our Heavenly Father on your behalf?

Join your church family May 10 for barbecued chicken, German potato salad, coleslaw, beverages, and an ice cream sundae for dessert.

A free will donation for the meal will benefit our community gardens. The meal will be served at 6:00 pm with worship at 7:00 pm.

