



St. Paul Lutheran Church
1417 11th Street, P.O. Box 126
Wichita Falls, TX 76307



St. Paul Epistle

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another fulfills the Law." Romans 8:13

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Volume 4

October 2021

Issue 10

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Pastor's Meditation

Dear Friends in Christ,

It has come to my attention lately, as someone has shared with me, "Pastor, you seem to care a lot about the 'trappings' of the church." Or I've heard this one a lot, "That's too Catholic!" Not clear on what this meant at first, I deducted from the rest of our conversation, that it was about the decorum of the worship assembly or certain worship practices. Translation: You care, maybe too much, for the way the sanctuary looks, and less about other things. To which I feel it is my pastoral responsibility to give answer as to why I do care so much.

First of all, we need to remember whose house it is—it is God's house! Jacob (Israel) knew the value of recognizing the presence and location of God the Father. In Genesis chapter 28 verses 16-17, Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it...How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate to heaven." This place that we gather each week is not our house. It does not belong to us. This place that we gather in each week is simply on loan to us. Believe me when I say, God wants us to have it, because this is the place where we meet Him face-to-face, and very intimately I might add, through His Word and Sacraments. So, we must never forget when we walk in here each Sunday that we walk into the throne room of God; at His invitation to join Him, and not us asking Him to join us!

Secondly, I care so much about the look and decorum of the sanctuary because I believe that in the society and world in which we live today, we are in jeopardy of forgetting the very fact that God IS present in His house. What I mean by this is, if we don't care about our church and

(Continued on page 2)

Our Weekly Divine Service Schedule

Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class
- 10:15 a.m. Divine Service
(The Lord's Supper is offered every Sunday at St. Paul)



Pastor's Meditation Cont.,

the way she looks, we might not believe that God is truly present here in Word and Sacrament. Does this make sense? The more intentional we are with the decorations, the Divine Services we offer, the structure of the liturgy, the ceremony, the frequency of the Lord's Supper, the best we have to offer in every way, from the robes we wear, the paraments and banners we provide, the chalice and other vessels for the Lord's Supper, etc., which all give a clear testimony to all who worship here, that we truly believe that the God of heaven and earth is here to meet His people. The more attention we give to the adornment of God's house, the more we believe He is present with us in His holy house. You may be saying, "Well, Pastor, I don't feel that way. I truly believe God is present here with us." That may be true for you, but is it true of your brother or sister sitting next to you? In the cynical and pagan world in which we live today, I'm betting that there are more people today denying that God is truly present where He promises to be than do truly believe, right here even in our own Lutheran Churches today. I say this because I know, too well, that the flesh is weak. Consider this quote about how weak our flesh truly is:

"We do not have the reason or the strength to side with the Word of God when it tells us that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly here, sitting on the altar, brought by the celebrant's hand, and placed and poured on the tongue. The ceremony and the vessels all serve to help out our poor fragile minds here. By them the Church of all generations tells us that we are right to believe against all reason and sense... that God truly is present among us" (Gottesdienst, Vol. 16, no. 3, 2008:3).

I will give you another example. When, and if, you have ever attended an old inner city Lutheran cathedral or even a Roman Catholic cathedral, you will find only the most beautiful adornments in those places. You will also note that when you walk into those sanctuaries, you can't help but feel the presence of God there. When I go into a sanctuary that has the gold trim and the gold communion vessels, the marble altars and pillars, the slate flooring, the statues of Jesus and the holy Apostles, the icons, and other such items, I feel immediately that I should go down to my knees in reverence to Him. I feel "fear" in the reverential form of the word. Which is a good fearing of God. We even confess this in our catechism commandment meanings, "We should, fear and love God so that..."

When we walk into this place do we, too, sense the same sense of awe and power and fear of God's presence, or do we walk into His house just as if we walked into our own home, nonchalantly not noticing a thing at all.

When Michelle takes the time to clean the house all day and I come in from work and say nothing about it, it hurts her feelings, and rightly so. How much more do you think it hurts God's feelings when we come into His house and never once give thought that He is somehow here with us through Word and Sacrament? We communicate this to Him every time we come in and start talking and laughing with others, which is fine and good and encouraged. I also notice that for some there is never a personal prayer offered, or a Psalm read, or a private confession being done prior to the Divine Service. Is this because it is not part of your personal piety, or is it because of a lack of faith in the

Cont., p.12

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter article – October 2021

Why do we give? Is it simply because God commands us to? Or is there more to it? To be sure, the Word and instruction of God in the Bible says we should give, and this is sufficient to encourage us to give (Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:7; Gal. 6:6).

But there's more to it than just obligation. We're not just trying to fulfill a work of the law. We are bearing fruits of the Spirit given to us by our Father in heaven through His Son our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, we're not just doing what our Father said, we're also doing what He did.

Children emulate their parents. When they grow up, they often carry many of the same mannerisms and characteristics as their parents. But there is more to it than that. Children copy their parents even on a more mundane level. They watch how their parents cross their legs, how they fold their hands, how they stand and sit and walk, and how they do and say most everything. Then children try to copy it.

This can be quite humorous when caught in the act. They do this even when parents don't want them to. Everyone has been in the uncomfortable – and embarrassing situation – where a child does or says something one of their parents have done or said that is less than polite. Sitcoms thrive on these. It only works because of the truth that children emulate their parents, and they do it because they want to be like them.

We are the children of God – by grace through faith. In Holy Baptism, God the Father declares of us what He declared of Jesus at His Baptism in the Jordan, "You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God the Father claims us as His own. He takes away all our sins. In exchange, He gives us His righteousness, His purity, His holiness, and His Spirit – by which we cry out, "Abba, Father."

We are born again – born from above, born of water and the Spirit – to a new life in Christ as His children. We are sons of God in Christ through Baptism. Since we are sons, we are heirs who share in the glory of the Son of God. The inheritance is ours because of the Father's grace, mercy, and generosity in sending His Son in time to save us for all eternity.

This is why we give generously of our income to the work of the church. We want to be like our heavenly Father. We want to emulate His generosity by being generous ourselves. We give to the work of the church because we have witnessed the generous giving of our Father in heaven.

More than that, we are recipients of it. It is because we have received our Father's gifts that we desire to give ourselves. His gifts are not just spiritual. They are temporal and earthly as well. As *Luther's Small Catechism* teaches in the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer:

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread? Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

In other words, He gives us everything that we need for the care of both body and soul. His generosity knows no bounds.

Therefore, we sit down at the beginning of the year, the beginning of the month, or the beginning of the week and set aside a generous portion of God's daily bread for His work in the church. This is not done because He has commanded us so to do but rather because we, as His children by grace, want to emulate His generosity in our own lives. He is our Father; we are His children. And children want to be like their parents.

Thank You



FIRST RESPONDERS!

Dear friends at St. Paul!

We are planning to have our 2nd Annual First Responders Appreciation Luncheon on Saturday, October 16, 2021. The lunch service will run from 11AM-1PM.

Our First Responder Luncheon in 2020 was a success! Our First Responders continue to be on the front-line protecting our community and meeting our needs. We want to say thank you to them for their service.

Like last year, we plan to serve Pulled Pork Sandwiches, chips, a sweet treat, and bottled water in a drive-through fashion in our church parking lot. We have requested a Thrivent card to help defray the costs and ordered T-shirts that we will be wearing as we serve.

At this time we are looking for volunteers who would be willing to help with the luncheon. We have requested a Thrivent card to help defray the costs and ordered T-shirts that we will be wearing as we serve.

If you are willing to help out, please return this form or simply call the church office 940-322-6112. We need all the help we can get. Thank you in advance and if you have any thoughts or suggestions that can make this an even better event, please don't hesitate to share those.

___ I would like to volunteer for this event (Name) _____

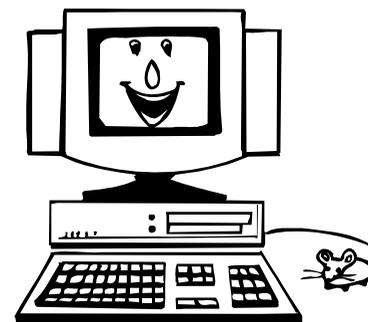
___ I cannot volunteer, but would like to support in this way _____

FUN AND GAMES

Our next fun and games date will be **Sunday, October 3th at 4:00 PM.** Come out and join us for dominoes and cards. Bring your favorite snack to share and bring a friend along with you! See y'all there!



Check out our website!
www.stpaulwftx.org





All Circuit Reformation Celebration and German Food Festival

Sunday, October 31, 2021
 St. Paul Lutheran Fellowship Hall
 Service at 4 pm, dinner to follow

Come join us as we celebrate Reformation!
 More information will be announced in the bulletin.

Thank You

We wish to thank those who served last month:

- Organist:** Darla English, Leo Tulagan
- Elders:** Kenneth Schkade, William Parker, Kevin Copeland
- Sound man/PowerPoint:** Eugene Kruger
- Altar Guild:** Judy Hancock, Delores Palmatary (setup) Judy Hancock, Delores Palmatary (take-down)
 (And all members!)
- Greeters:** Ruth Rathgeber, Hank & Judy Hancock, and all greeters
- Ushers:** Randal Schoppa, Eugene Kruger, ...and all who volunteer on Sundays
- All Church Council members**
- All Board and Committee members**
- Parish Worker:** Lisa Schur
- Treasurer:** Nina Keethler
- Church Sexton:** Randall Schoppa

The current needs for Faith Mission:

- Winter gloves
- Winter Hats
- Men's & Women's underwear
 (men's boxer briefs)
- Paper towels.



If your child needs a ride to Catechism instruction, we will be happy to provide that service to you. Please contact the church office and let us know. William Parker, Janice Wiechman and/or myself will be picking the kids up and taking them home, if needed. Thank you!

The *St. Paul Epistle* is published monthly by:
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 www.stpaulwftx.org † Email: stpaulwf@att.net

The Rev. Rick Cody..... Pastor
 Cell Phone: 832-745-3314 †
 Email: revcody11@gmail.com

Darla English, Leo Tuladan.....Organist

Lisa Schur Parish Office Worker

presence of God? I'll let you ponder on that for a while.

Finally, I care so deeply about God's house, because I care so much about you—His precious children. God has given me the responsibility to shepherd you, love you, admonish you, marry you, bury you, baptize you, feed you the Supper of Christ, and one most important aspect of the pastoral ministry—to teach you! Through a constant movement toward a higher decorum in worship I hope that I am teaching you the most important thing I can—that this IS God's house and that He IS truly present here to serve you His gifts. This is the mystery that has been entrusted to me to teach to you. God doesn't need our worship and praise and service. But we do need His service, His presence, and His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. Whatever praise we give to God, whatever honor is due His name, is our response to God's service to us. So, as we have opportunity to increase the worshipfulness of our sanctuary, let us offer the best that we possibly can, because we know that the more attention we give to God's house, the clearer the message we communicate to ourselves and to others that our God dwells here among us!

Think of it this way, when we come into God's house, we are joining a world outside of ourselves by receiving gifts from heaven in the flesh of Jesus Christ and submitting ourselves to the great mystery that heaven comes to earth through this bodily presence of our Savior. We sometimes think of heaven abstractly, as somewhere "up there," but heaven is where Jesus is. Because Jesus is present among us in the gifts of Word and Sacrament, then heaven itself is present among us. When we walk into church, we walk into the world of angels and archangels and all the company of heaven. Again, when you come into this place, does the church's decorum through touch, look, feel, smell, and taste, communicate to all who worship here our knowledge that this truly is God's house?

Dear friends in Christ, as long as I'm your pastor, I'm going to do everything I can to help you understand and appreciate this view of God's house. If I have to apologize for this, then so be it. But I promise you, I will never be accused of not loving the house of God and teaching you about His Divine presence in this place! The Lord be with us and bless us as we are about His loving work! I would like to close with the first verse of a hymn I wrote several years back called, "This Is None Other Than God's House:"

"This is none other than God's house, to come with family child and spouse, to hear the word of God come near, whom all in Christian faith hold dear."

In Christ's love, +
Pastor Cody
Psalm 84:10

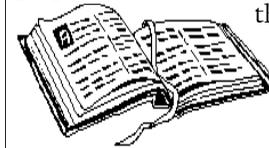
If you or someone you know needs a ride to Divine Service or any other church activity, please call the church office at (940) 322-6112 and we will see what we can do to arrange



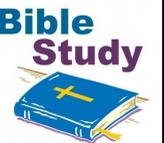
Religious Education



The Adult Bible Class meets every Sunday morning before Divine Service. Our goal is to have 40 people in Adult Bible Study. We want to come together and study God's Word, and reap the benefits that God promises to those who remain in His Word (John 8:31-32). We continue to study 100 Bible Stories. I think that you will find this class interesting and thought-provoking. Please plan on joining us each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.



Because of the continued interest in the **Adult Catechism Classes**, Pastor Cody is teaching **Continuous Adult Catechism Instruction** to study together what it is that Lutherans believe, teach, and confess. This class meets weekly on Monday nights at 5:00 pm. Those wanting to become members of St. Paul can join the class at any time, and once through the series of lessons, they can be confirmed into communicant membership of the church. If you are interested in taking this class, please come out and join us! We continue our study of the Book of Genesis! We meet at 6 pm following Adult Catechism. Come join us..... You'll love it!



Sunday school for all ages starts at 9:00AM each Sunday morning. The Scriptures are clear, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and **when he is old, he will not depart from it.**" (Prov. 22:6). Bring the kids out and stay for Adult Bible study yourselves and teach them the proper habit to be in as the spiritual leaders of your homes! See y'all there!

Middle School Youth Catechism Class

We have young people that will be gathering together each week to demonstrate to their parents, and their Lord, the importance of this journey in their faith walk. Catechesis is the teaching of our Lord that is drawn from the Holy Scriptures, confessed in the Small Catechism, and expressed in Divine Service. Please pray for them as they study the Word of God and complete this important stage in their lives. The class is open to any and all from the 5th grade through the 8th grade. We meet on Wednesday evenings at 5:00 p.m.

January 16, 2021 All Board and Committee Planning Meeting Takeaways & Goals

Increase Bible Study and Worship Attendance

- A. Multi-generational Study...Bible Knowledge 101– **Began February 28, 2021**
- B. Weekly Divine Services with the Lord's Supper– **Ongoing**
- C. Advent & Lent noon & 7pm services– **Completed Lent**
- D. Possible Seder Supper—**Did not schedule**
- E. Continued 7pm & 11pm Christmas Eve Candlemas services

Continue/Increase our Social Ministry Outreach/Presence in and to the community

- A. Faith Mission– **Ongoing—tentatively scheduled to serve a meal on Aug. 14**
- B. Rathgeber House– **Ongoing**
- C. Interfaith Ministries– **Ongoing**
- D. Give it Away– **Funds started**
- E. Courtyard Gardens–**Ongoing-delivered 48 Easter Goodie Bags & 40 t-shirts**
- F. First Responders– **Scheduled for Oct. 16, 2021**
- G. City Lights Parade

Resume Fellowship Opportunities

- A. Valentine Gala– **Cancelled due to weather, held Italian Bistro Gala 3/6/2021**
- B. Church Camp Out
- C. Confirmation Questioning invitation for entire congregation & reception/dinner- **3/26/2021**
- D. Vacation Bible School- **Completed 6/18– 19 participants & 6/19 - 23 participants**
- E. North Campus worship/sing along
- F. Church meals and special occasion meals
- G. Card showers for all occasions and special birthdays and anniversaries (8/9 Hank Hancock is turning 80, 8/9- Ruth Rathgeber is turning 80.)
- H. Easter Egg Hunt– **3/27/2021**

Trustee/Maintenance/Building improvements

- A. Elevator improvements and repairs– **Ongoing**
- B. Windows replaced in the education wing and music room of the church– **currently at 36k**
- C. Floor at Church Camp (cracking and buckling)
Maintenance things that just come up

Improved Communication to all members

- A. Following constitution for certain meetings, i.e. council meetings, voters' meetings, etc.
- B. Spread sheets showing who has what forms of communications (Cell phone, landline, email etc. noting what preferred form of communication for members)
- C. Phone calls, emails, newsletters, minor prophet
- D. Attempt, if possible, to give at least a 2 week notice on any given changes

***Red indicates the current status of listed project

God's People at Work during October

Elders

William Parker
Kenneth Schkade
Kevin Copeland

Ushers

Randal Schoppa
Eugene Krueger
Hank Hancock

Sexton

Randal Schoppa

Altar Duty

Set Up: Judy Hancock,
Delores Palmatary
Take Down: Judy Hancock,
Delores Palmatary

Greeters

Oct. 3– Delores Palmatary, Ruth Rathgeber
Oct. 10– Pam Marten, Nancy Martinez
Oct. 17– Hank & Judy Hancock
Oct. 24– Kevin Copeland, Ruth Rathgeber
Oct. 31– Del Tech, Penny Becker

Readers

Oct. 3– Ken Schkade
Oct. 10– Kevin Copeland
Oct. 17– Eugene Krueger
Oct. 24– Kenneth Theimer
Oct. 31– Russell Heineken

Days to Celebrate in October

Birthdays

4th Kenneth Martinez
 5th Eugene Kruger
 6th Kathy Schkade
 9th Tina Anderson, Randy Rangel
 13th Lynn Sharp
 17th Jordyn Bernhardt
 18th Eric Myers
 19th Chad Buckmaster

24th Kyle Townes
 29th Leanne Roten



Wedding Anniversaries

14th Jason & Pam Bernhardt
 16th Eric & Jessica Myers
 18th David & Joy Schneider
 28th Martin & Angela Gonzales



Please Pray

Please continue to pray on a daily basis for:

- ✦ Pastor & Michelle Cody
- ✦ Darla English, Leo Tulagan
- ✦ Lisa Schur, Parish Office Worker
- ✦ The leadership of our church, all boards and committee members.
- ✦ The mission of Paul Lutheran Church.
- ✦ All those sick or suffering in our church family.
- ✦ Church unity.
- ✦ Our nation and governmental leaders.
- ✦ All military personnel..

Prayers of God's People

FOR - THOSE WITH CANCER:

Jeanette Evans, Janie Khlum, Dennis Keethler, Lee Shores, Kay Castleberry, Chad Brown, Staci Myles, Sally Handrick, Patty Hernandez, Mike Groover, James Sheppard, Cash Cochran, and Kent Streit.



PHYSICAL AND OTHER CONCERNS:

Betty Corder, Brantley French, Duncan Hibbard, Ronnie Newman, Kellen Osborne, David Baker, Virginia Martinez, Dean Miller, Jesse Flick, Katey Lewis, Pastor Thomas Handrick, Jordan & Dustin Randall, and Ben English.

HOMEBOUND/SHUT-IN MEMBERS: Dorothy Kutzler (Royal Estates), Virginia Hendricks (Rolling Meadows), Lois Kramer (Rolling Meadows), and Jesse Flick.

ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL: Whitney Colligan (Air Force), Eli Buckmaster (Marine Corps), Brian Clayton (Army), Kate Ridinger Dozier (Navy), Jaydon Martinez (Navy), Trent Meisel (USAF), Zachary Wied (National Guard),



Save the Date: Saturday November 6

Red River Zone Fall Rally, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Wichita Falls

Registration beginning at 9:00 AM

Come and join us for a morning of fellowship with other ladies of the LWML

Please RSVP with a head count from each location attending so we will be well prepared for breakfast and lunch

Contact information: Cyndy Reneau

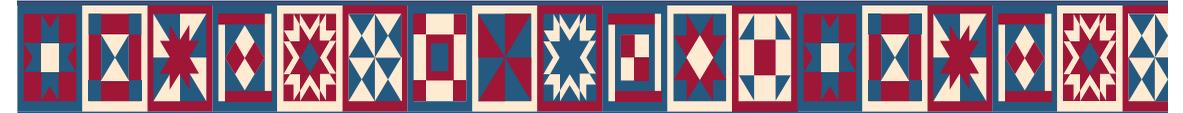
Cell: 832-465-4452

Email: cyndyreneau@gmail.com

The LWML Ladies Group will meet on **Thursday, October 19,** at 1:00 pm. All ladies interested are very welcome to join us! We have a devotion and discuss our current project for the Texas District LWML.



Our **Women's Bible Study** meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month at 9:30AM. They invite all women interested to come for some thought-provoking Bible study and great fellowship!



NEWS FROM THE LWML/TABITHA JOY

It is that time of year again! Tabitha Joy/LWML is collecting items to assemble Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. The following items are needed for these kits. They are being collected in the fellowship hall. All items need to be brought to church by **October 31**.

- 1-light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping
- sturdy comb, remove packaging
- metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging +

Guidelines to remember when purchasing items:

- Be sure to shop for light- or medium-weight towels, which are easier for Kit recipients to hand wash and air dry, take up less storage space and are considerably less expensive than the fluffier towels we may prefer to use.
- Bath towels vary in size. The 52" X 27" size listed in the guidelines is the maximum size. 20" x 40" is a good guideline for a minimum size. • Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.

Ask any of our LWML members if you need assistance in what to purchase. Thank you

