

AUGUST 2019

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Olean, Indiana

“The Church with the Glad Heart and Hand”

“Faithful to Our Lord through Changing Times” – Our Mission Statement

“Growing in Faith, Sowing the Love of Jesus” – Our Purpose Statement

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Dear Friends,

I am writing this article at the end of a week the nation has spent remembering and celebrating the Apollo 11 mission, during which humans walked on the Moon for the first time. Many gathered in Washington D.C. to view a recording of the launch that was projected onto the Washington Monument. Even the ELCA got into the celebration, sharing stories of Buzz Aldrin receiving Holy Communion on the Moon and the Lutheran (LCA) Chaplain who helped to welcome the three Apollo 11 astronauts home.

What we are not talking about is what has happened to the space program since 1969. We went back to the Moon a few times, but then we stopped. We launched Skylab only to abandon it a few years later. With other nations, we built the International Space Station and keep at least one American astronaut at the station at all times. The federal government got out of space flight altogether. Now a handful of private companies are testing reusable launch vehicles and creating plans to offer commercial flights into space for both people and cargo.

The Church has also gone through a lot of ups and downs over the last 50 years. The 1960's were a time of rapid church planting as congregations took advantage of cultural assumptions of Christianity and high birth rates to welcome many adults, teenagers, and children into worship. In the 1980's, church attendance started turning in a negative direction, but most congregations still showed solid numbers for finances and membership. By the 2000's, a combination of scandals rocking the Church, an explosion of youth sports, and an increasing distrust of institutions of all types started a downward trend across congregational and denominational lines, though some areas of the Bible Belt were exempt until the 2010's. Now, many congregations are struggling to get by, and a growing number are closing their doors.

Many have attempted to answer the questions regarding what we should do now. In my opinion, two of the best answers come from the Rev. Karl Vaters and the Rev. Rachelle Brown. The Rev. Karl Vaters encourages all congregations, especially “small” congregations, to focus on the congregation's mission

Baptismal Birthdays

21 Cooper Mutz
26 Owen Clubb

Senior Birthdays

7 Genevieve DeBurger
7 Eileen Knigga
13 Ron Raper
31 Sharon Spencer

instead of the congregation's numbers. While a focus on mission may not lead to a rapid growth in membership or finances, a focus on mission will keep congregations healthy and faithful to their purpose while also being a blessing to their communities. The Rev. Rachele Brown recently wrote about where the Church finds itself today (<https://wetalkwelisten.wordpress.com/2019/07/24/the-spirit-of-our-questions-oh-and-we-might-be-nicodemus-rev-rachele-brown/>) and concluded with this gem:

“If we are going to be the spiritual people, created by God, seeking to follow the teachings of Jesus then we need to focus on being Christians first. Because when we are Christians living a spiritual life, anything that flows from it, in word, deed, song, prayer, worship, or ritual becomes a light, creating a place for people to gather, ask the hard and confusing questions, receive love, be filled with hope, and experience new life.”

As we continue to face the challenges of a rapidly-changing world and a continued distrust of institutions, I pray that we continue to focus as a community on the congregation's mission in our community and as individuals on being Christians first. As part of that focus, I invite you to extend an invitation to your family members, friends, and neighbors to join us for Sunday morning worship services, this month's church picnic, next month's "God's Work, Our Hands" service project, or any other part of the congregation's mission and work in our community.

We have found that this is a place where we can gather, ask questions, receive love, be filled with hope, and experience new life. There are many who are looking for a place where they are welcomed and where they can have these types of experiences as well. So let's extend the invitation and share the chance for others to gather in God's presence and experience new life! *Pastor Curtis*

SUNDAY SCHOOL SPECIAL OFFERING

The Sunday School Special Offering for the third quarter of 2019 (July thru September) will go to Ronald McDonald House in Cincinnati.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

The floor is finished, and our space is ready for Sunday School kids! Ages 1 through Sixth Grade are welcome to join us in the basement at 9:00 a.m. for Sunday School. The older kids are welcome to be a part of Adult Sunday School. If you would like to become a Sunday School Teacher, please see Pastor Curtis or Teresa.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BLESSING/CHURCH PICNIC RALLY DAY SUNDAY – AUGUST 4

Join us on August 4 for the Back-to-School Blessing/Church Picnic! Kid's Story Bibles will be presented to the preschoolers receiving their first Bibles. Kid's Bibles will be presented to the Kindergartners. These presentations will take place during Worship.

We will have a Back-to-school blessing for all the students, teachers, bus drivers, school staff, etc. as they return to school. Bring your backpacks, school bag, etc. as we ask God to bless our school year.

Please plan to stay after Worship for the Church Picnic. Sunday School will provide some fried chicken, hot dogs, table service and drinks. Please bring a covered dish or two to pitch-in.

There will be Bingo with Shirley in the educational building following the meal. AND, there will be water slide fun outside.

Please invite your friends and neighbors to Worship and to share some after Worship fellowship. This event is open to the public!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JULY 7-11, 2019

We had a ball at VBS learning “Who is My Neighbor”!

- Thank you to Mackenzie for leading music, and putting together our closing program.
- Thank you to Pastor Curtis for leading Story Time, helping with the power point, and pitching in wherever needed.
- Thank you to Stephanie and Gracey for leading Crafts.
- Thank you to Gary for leading Games.
- Thank you to Linda C. and Vicki, for keeping the kitchen going and the snacks flowing.
- Thank you to Mary McCarty for teaching the Preschoolers, and to all the preschool assistants, Abby McCarty, Mary Ann Geisler, Connie, Libby, Liz, Alicia, Amy Hobbs, Christy and Dawn..
- Thank you to Amy Hoskins, Ellie, Ruth Tebbing, Carrie Tebbing and Rylie for leading the Crews.
- Thank you to Jenny, Ashley Hunger, Amy Hoskins and everyone else who took pictures and worked on the slide show. (Note: the slide show will be shown on 8/4 due to technical difficulties.)
- Thank you to Victoria, Alayna and Ashley Hunger for working registration.
- Thank you to Pastor, Mackenzie, Karen and Gracey for participating in the skits.
- Thank you to Martha Jean for being offering coordinator. We brought in \$112.00 for ELCA World Hunger!
- Thank you to David, Lamont, Danny, Bob, Gary, John, Tom and everyone else who assisted in the setting up and removal of the stage.
- Thank you to Dawn, Holly, Ashley Hunger, Libby and Vicki for donated snacks for the week.
- Thank you to Ashley Landwehr for filing in everywhere we needed her this week.
- Thank you to Joan, Mary Ann Westmeier, Eric, Dedra and Belinda for coming and pitching in to help wherever needed.
- Thank you to the ELCA for the great VBS materials.
- Thank you to VBS past for the leftover craft items, and to everyone who has donated craft items, toys used in the preschool room, and money to fund VBS.
- I apologize if I missed anyone. I totaled up 42 names. As you can see, it takes lots of people working together to make VBS happen.
- The Prayer Web will be up through 8/4. The Bible Verses of the kids have been added to it, as well as some pictures of the VBS kids.
- So last, but certainly not least, thank you to God for assembling this wonderful group of people who work so well together, and these amazing kids who attended VBS. To God be all the glory. - *Teresa*

“BACK DOOR FRIENDS OF FAITH”

Donations for “Back Door Friends of Faith” for August will be Paper Items and School supplies. Items needed: Toilet Tissue, Paper Towels (really need), Paper Tissue (Kleenex, Puffs, etc.) and Trash Bags. The date for collection will be **Sunday, August 11**. Again, THANKS for your support of this special ministry sponsored by Tyson United Methodist Church. A big Thank You to all who donated items in July. This continues to be a great need. Items for September will be Cleaning Supplies. *Ruth Green*

School Supplies needed for the elementary school: Backpacks, 3 Pocket folders, Watercolor markers, Pencils, Pens, Rulers, Regular ruled notebooks, Dry erase markers, Glue, Glue sticks, and Highlighters.

Lois Vogel will take monetary donations if you can't shop, she will purchase them for you. Thanks you.

Lois is now our representative for “Back Door Friends of Faith”

2019 FLOWER CHART

If you, or a group, would like to provide flowers in the Sanctuary for Worship Service, please sign you, or the group, up on the flower chart located in the educational building. If a Sunday remains unclaimed, someone will take care of that Sunday. Questions? See The Flower Chart Ladies – Becky Turner, Ashley Hunger, or Teresa Lawrence.

The 2019 flower chart is available on the bulletin board in the Education Room. Need August flowers!

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to:

* Sean and Brittany Guenther on the birth of their son, Owen Paul, born Saturday, June 22, wt. 9lb.2.6oz and 20 in. long.

* Joe and Laura Rusconi on the birth of their son, Elisha “Eli” James, born Saturday, June 22, wt. 7lb 12.2oz. and 21 in. long.

* Ron and Michele Hunger on the birth of a grandson, Levi Gerald Workman, son of Matthew and Amber Workman, born June 27, 2019.

* Curtis and Rachel Althoff on the birth of their daughter, Amelia Jane, born July 1, 2019, wt. 7lb. 9oz. and 20 1/2 in. long.

PICNIC IN THE PARK

I would like to thank the following ladies who helped prepare and serve meals at Pangburn Park the week of July 15-19 - Peggy Mix, Vicki Diem, Karen Huntington, Christy Swango, Holly Harley, and Ruth Tebbing. Pastor Curtis for helping with the children and Linda Rump for making delicious cookies. It was a very hot week but a fun week. We served 43 meals. *Linda Cutter*

ALTAR GUILD VOLUNTEERS

Need altar guild volunteers for Sundays this coming year especially **August and November!** There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Education Building, or call the office 812-667-6989, Monday through Thursday during the hours of 9 to 12. The office is closed on Fridays.

THANK YOU

Thanks to Teresa Lawrence for all of her hard work in preparing and leading VBS this year!! A good job well done.

Thank you to Ruth Green for gathering the items and taking them to Versailles to “Back Door Friends of Faith”. Lois Vogel is taking over Ruth Green’s volunteer role delivering donations to “Back Door Friends of Faith”

A Big Thank you to Larry and Esther Hunger for spraying both parking lots for weeds and other things that they are always doing around the church.

Dear Caring Friend: I am so grateful for what you did in July 2003. That is when you first gave a gift to Food for The Poor and helped someone in tremendous need. Through sharing your blessings, you eased suffering and restored hope. Thanks to your support and the support of other donors like you, the world is a better place. You are the reason why we can help so many destitute children and families. May God bless you and your loved ones. A servant of the poor, *Rolin*

PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE MILITARY

Luke Smith: 8166 Madrone Court, Indianapolis, IN. 46236. He is undergoing his cancer treatments in Indy. - *Birthday January 20 (He has retired from the service.)*

Jacob Menchhofer and his wife, Erin, daughters Ella, Ava, and Willow: 40 Red Feather Trails, Wakefield, RI 02879-2044 *Jacob's Birthday: January 24, Erin's Birthday: August 7, Ella's & Ava's birthday, March 18, 2016, Willow's birthday February 9, 2019.*

Col. Whit Wright and family: 1 Couchman Street, Fort Bragg, N.C. 28307

Adam Thieman, son of Randy and Rhonda Thieman, in Alaska.

James Bardine, brother of Mandy Black, at Robins AFB, GA

Tristan Ralston, grandson of Pat Ralston, in Okinawa, Japan.

Mike Harris, in N.C.

David Black (Pastor's brother) now back in the states.

SMORGASBORD

St. John's Lutheran, Napoleon, smorgasbord will be held on August 1, serving from 4:30 to 7:00 P.M. Carry-outs available. Any questions call 812-852-4416.

GERMAN FESTIVAL

St. John, Bellair, annual German festival will be Sunday, August 18. German menu, Eureka Bank, Cincinnati Enzian Dancers (German Dancers), Games for all ages, Bouncy house, Strudel Stroll, and Basket Raffle. For more information see flyer on the bulletin board in the Education Building.



The Women of the ELCA I-K 2019 Biennial will be held September 13 & 14 at the Holiday Inn Airport in Indianapolis. Theme: "Come to the Well. Leave It All Behind." Registration deadline is August 17th. For more information see the second bulletin board in Education Building. Registration forms are available in the church office.

The Mary Circle of the WELCA will meet on Tuesday, August 6 at 6:30 P.M. All ladies of the church are invited to attend.

Devotions will be given by Martha Jean and the Bible Study will be led by Kaye. Hostess for the evening is Vicki Diem.

Visiting Committee for August is Barba Eades and Eileen LaGreca

7TH ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

SEPTEMBER 14, 2019

Olean's Seventh Annual Rummage Sale will be held on September 14, 2019. Please continue gathering your gently used clothing, toys, books and household items. We need donations, donations, donations! Please remember that we cannot accept electronic items or exercise equipment. These items do not sell. You may begin bringing your items to the Church on Sunday, September 8, and place them in the educational building. Please do not place items in the Church garage or basement early without asking. No items will be accepted after Thursday. If you need assistance in bringing your items to the Church, please contact Teresa, Linda C., or Mary.

The Rummage Sale Team has decided to make some changes this year to the process. Because the main goal is to raise money for "GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS." projects and needs of the community, there will be no early shopping this year by anyone or for any project. Everyone can shop beginning at

9:00 a.m. on Saturday. Items that remain and can be used at the Church will be gathered after the Saturday shopping has ended. The congregation can shop for a free will offering following Worship Service on Sunday. After this, items that remain and can be used by local organizations, will be gathered. What remains will be bagged and boxed for delivery to the Mountain Mission Ministries. No items that have not been available for sale at the Rummage Sale should be brought to the Church for delivery to the Mountain Mission.

The generosity of our rural Church with the glad heart and hand continues. God has blessed us immensely, and we are humbled to be able to share that blessing with our community. We are growing in faith, sowing the love of Jesus. This project is a part of **“GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.”**

Come work with us beginning Sunday, September 8 through September 15. Please mark your calendar, and be a part of this Ministry. *Questions? See Mary, Linda C., Vicki or Teresa.*

CHURCH COUNCIL

JUNE 16, 2019

St. Paul Church Council met at 8:00 a.m. on June 16, 2019, in the educational unit. Present were David Lawrence, Bob Hunger, Joan Rohrig, Pastor Black, Linda Cutter, and Peggy Mix. The meeting was opened by Pastor Curtis offering a prayer.

The secretary’s report needed to correct the spelling of the seminarian who will lead services on June 30th. After that change, the report was approved as presented.

The financial secretary’s report was shared by Joan. The balance in the checking account still looks healthy. The report was approved as presented.

Pastor highlighted several parts of his report. VBS will correspond with ELCA world hunger’s week of July 7-11. The following week will be the week of helping with lunch at Pangburn Park.

Today is the last Sunday we will use the “Now the Feast and Celebration” liturgy. Next week we will return to Setting 2 in the green hymnal.

Old Business

Ellen has checked with Pastor about what will need to be finished when she leaves early today.

The downstairs flooring will be finished Monday and Tuesday of this week. With all the recent rain, if it is dry today, it will probably stay dry. If something needs to be replaced, it probably can be without much extra expense. David and Bob checked, and the whole basement was dry.

The clean-up list was discussed. Dylan Chandler offers some landscaping duties with his mowing. He may be asked to work on the landscaping at the parsonage if no one else offers to do it.

WELCA will be consulted about how much of the dusting and other chores they do.

Linda stated that the educational unit’s floor is due for a treatment to keep it shining.

The Luther League has agreed to replace the window in the garage.

Once the camera is run through the drainage pipes, some reseeding may need to be done.

Pastor said that the middle rack on the south side of the sign is loose and allows letters to slip. It needs to be riveted back in place.

The shelter house needs some work.

Bob will change the lights. A walk-around will be done before completing the list.

New Business

For the first time in several years, two young people want to attend church camp at Lutheran Hills this summer. In the past, the congregation has paid half the expenses of those who attend. Money has been designated for this. Pastor will get the paperwork completed with the right numbers so that this expense is covered.

The next quarterly meeting will be next month. Council will meet on July 21st, and the Quarterly Meeting will be held on July 28th. David will let Martha Jean know today so that the dates are published in the newsletter.

For the next meeting, council members should have read Chapters 4 and 5 in *Canoeing the Mountains*. The meeting ended by praying the Lord’s Prayer. Respectfully submitted, *Peggy Mix, Secretary*