

August, 2021

**MARK: MY WORDS**

 The pattern continues. For the past two months in these pages, in sermons, and in conversations both at Church Council and individually, I have been raising the question: where do we go from here? Now that some sense of “normalcy” has been re-established as far as gathering for worship, the resumption of the meeting of some groups in the congregation and the desire to expand that in the fall, and a greater feeling of comfort and security in being together, what will our ministry be in the months to come?

 Over the past several weeks, three possible options have presented themselves to us. Two of them originate from the ELCA/Indiana-Kentucky Synod and one from our past efforts at such strategic planning. From the ELCA come the programs entitled, “Connect Transformational Ministry” and “Beginning Anew.”

 Both are specifically geared toward helping congregations re-think and discern their common mission and ministry in light of our experience with COVID-19 and the way it re-shaped our worship and community lives. Both involve establishing a small leadership team (usually 4-7 or so) along with the pastor who have the support of the congregation in embarking on the program. They then engage in a one- to two-year program of instruction, discussion, and coaching from a qualified leader of the program.

 Once goals have been identified, they are presented to the congregation for consideration and adoption. Usually there is some ongoing help from the leadership of the program to help the congregation implement their objectives. There is some cost to the programs, but it is fairly minimal compared to hiring a consultant or company who specializes in such programs.

 The other option that was suggested at our June Council meeting was to revisit the strategic planning program we developed some years ago and see if there is anything that could be re-worked or adapted to our current situation. The advantage of that approach is that much of the groundwork has already been done and, in some cases, perhaps only some tweaking would be necessary.

 A fourth option would be some combination of the two possibilities. Perhaps a look at our previous plan would yield some consensus on what we would like to pursue and then utilizing one of the other programs would help sharpen that work.

 In the end *something* needs to be done. We cannot simply strive only to exist and keep the doors open and the lights on. As devastating as the pandemic was on us and for us, it has also presented a powerful opportunity to open ourselves to the Spirit’s urging and direction in new and creative ways. I hope and pray that we will respond to that guidance.

 As the Council discusses possible next steps, we will keep you informed, not as spectators but partners with us in this Life-giving and Life-bringing work to which God is calling us.



**RECEPTION FOR DALE ZYLSTRA**

As we have been publicizing, we will hold two receptions to celebrate Pastor Zylstra’s ordination. They will be held on Saturday, August 7, and Sunday, August 8, following each worship service. These receptions will be held in the St. Paul Room, featuring some wonderful refreshments and good fellowship.

 At the Saturday reception, we will offer cake bites, fresh fruit, coffee, and water. On Sunday, the menu will consist of breakfast casseroles, bagels and cream cheese, fresh fruit, coffee, and water. Dale will participate in both worship services, and there will be ample time to greet him and pass on congratulations and blessings upon his ministry.

 We need a count for each reception by **August 1,** so if you have not yet indicated whether you are coming and plan on doing so, please either fill out a form at worship or call the church office as soon as possible. We look forward to what promises to be a fun, joyous weekend with Dale and Lori.



**A PERSONAL NOTE**

In my home and nursing home visits, many of you have kindly asked about my health and the condition of A-Fib with my heart with which I have been dealing for the past nine months or so. I am deeply thankful to be able to report that, due to the excellent care that I have been receiving from my cardiologist and assistants and the medications I am taking, I remain in normal sinus rhythm. My blood pressure and heartrate are where they want them to be, and, aside from some fatigue associated with one of the medications, there have been no other side effects.

In the past two months or so I have been experiencing some dizziness/vertigo when I sit or lie down. This can be due to some of the medication that I am taking and fortunately it does not last more than a few seconds. I continue to see and work with the cardiologist and his staff to monitor my condition and to do all that we can to prevent going back into A-Fib.

Thank you for your concern and prayers. I will continue to keep the Council and congregation updated if there are any changes in my treatment or status.

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**SCHOOL NEWS**

 The School Board has been meeting more than usual this summer due to the departure of several staff members and the need to interview candidates for their teaching positions. We are happy to report that we have been able to fill three positions with some excellent qualifications.

 There has been and will be some switching around of duties and responsibilities to utilize some of the skills the new teachers bring, which is always exciting. They bring good experience and a fresh perspective which will benefit our students and their families.

 As of now, we have 47 registered for the fall; but it is always slow until the end of July and the few weeks in August before school begins on August 18. Our expectation is that we will again have between 100 and 110 students, which will be a good number for us. Because of the funds we receive from the state for the Choice Scholarship Program, that level of enrollment will keep the school comfortably in the black with our salaries and operating expenses.

 We are not sure of how many COVID restrictions of the past two years will be necessary this year. At the July School Board meeting, it was decided that we would continue to require the students to mask since most of them will not have been vaccinated; and we will try to maintain good social distance throughout the building and day. As plans for the year become firmer, we will keep you updated on our progress and prognosis for the new year.

Please continue to keep the Board, the administration, and students in your prayers as we prepare for what we hope will be a fruitful year of learning and growing together.

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The **Taste of Michigan City** is coming on Friday, August 6, from 4-9 p.m. and on Saturday, August 7, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Also, the Boat Parade preceding the boat races will be Saturday, August 7. St. Paul Lutheran Church will offer parking in our parking lot at $5/car on both days. We will also be selling popcorn, cans of pop and bottled water, hot dogs, and walking tacos on both days. This event will not only help us raise funds for the church, but it will also let our neighbors see that we are active and serving our community. **Many volunteers are needed as parking lot attendants and food vendors.** If you can help, please reach out to Barb Fulkerson at 219-210-0034 or Karen Fleming at 219-363-8579. Reminder: the drawing for our Meijer and Amazon gift card raffle will be held Saturday at 8 p.m.



 **August Birthdays**

 1 Susan Dolson 28 Reese Robbins

 2 Terri Bartels 29 Charles Thomas II

 4 James Galinowski 30 Mike Maesch

 Hannah Payne Martha Setser

 Sandra Robbins Lauren Slisher

 5 William Schafer 31 Sandra Galinowski

 Richard Thielman

 6 Mike Bockover

 Robert Ziesmer

 8 Thomas Ottersen **August Anniversaries**

 Jason Schacht 3 John & Amy VanGemeren

 Lynn Wilson 5 Virgil & Patricia Miller

 9 Carol Hanft 21 Troy & Hillary Frever

 Brooklyn Howard

 10 Stacey Richardson

 11 Karen Peters

 Deborah Reagor

 James Waltz

 12 Anna Kreighbaum

 14 James Tomsheck

 15 Diane Dirks

 Diane Egilske

 Frankie Thomas III

 Carol Weiss

 Venia Wendt

 16 James Pryzbylinski

 Reilly Wilson

 18 Richie Newenhouse

 19 Shirley McCarty

 20 George Ottersen

 Nancy Squires

 21 Barbara Djuvik

 22 Betty Yourist

 23 Robin Cross

 27 Ayden Dettman

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**IN LOVING MEMORY OF CLINT POWELL AND CONNIE HOLLIS**

**Capital Improvement Fund** by Maxine Powell

**IN MEMORY OF MY MY COUSIN, MARLENE LISAK**

**General Fund** by Pam & Bill Hackett

**IN MEMORY OF MY DAD, JIM STEINBORN, ON FATHER’S DAY**

**General Fund** by Kerry Steinborn



Thank you to all who participated in our Blood Drive on July 27. We were able to collect 21 units of blood. Our Red Cross workers told us that each unit collected saves **three** lives! That means 63 people will be helped by your donations.



**Do You Shop on Amazon?**

**St. Paul Lutheran Church is on Amazon Smile.** 0.5% of all eligible purchases will be returned to St. Paul. Help us spread the word! Link your Amazon account through the following link—https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1239301. When prompted, sign into your account to make sure you are choosing St. Paul for Amazon Smile. There’s no extra charge to your purchases.



**PRAYER CHAIN**

 The members of the Prayer Chain at St. Paul have made a commitment to pray for any and all who request their prayers. Let us pray for you! To activate the Prayer Chain, contact one of the members on the list below and tell her of your need. You may give as much informtion as you wish. Your request will be kept in strict confidence.

 Prayer request forms are also available in the pew racks during worship. These forms include prayer categories such as Healing, Comfort, Guidance, etc. Simply fill out the form (please include the date of your request) and place it in the offering plate or hand it to a deacon. The form will be forwarded to a Prayer Chain member. When using the e-mail addresses, please note “Prayer Chain Request” on the subject line. If the subject line is not filled in, the e-mail will not be opened

 **Vivian Zellers** 872-8780 vteach2006@sbcglobal.net

 **Carrie Ziesmer** 872-6541 carrie124@comcast.net



**Long-Term Prayer List**

Robert Atwood Sherry Brotsky Laura Eilers-Straight

Jim Gleason Andy Hipskind Terry Hygema

Jess Kalvaitis Ryan Krueger Tom & Larry Leuth

Duane Ormsby Jean Thomas Linda Utley

Chris Weninger

**OFFICE HOURS**

 Monday 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.

 Tuesday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

 Wednesday 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.

 Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon

 Friday 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon

**St. Paul Lutheran Church & School Staff**

 Pastor Mark Reshan

 Organist John Remmel

 Accompanists Jary Tannehill, Mark Tannehill, Jacob Tannehill

 Choir Director Lori Zylstra

 Office Secretary Libby Pollock

 Custodian Mark Kloess

 School Principal Christy Smith

 School Office Secretary Tracey McCay

Thank$ for $haring

The Holly’s Give-Back in July raised $158. Thank you for participating in this event.

This month,we will see you at Galveston! Remember to cut out this coupon, because it is required for the Give-Back bucks.

