

August, 2022

**MARK: MY WORDS**

Another year has passed. It has been my practice before writing my materials for the upcoming edition of the newsletter to look at what the news for that month in the previous year held. When I looked at the August edition from last year, the main article dealt with the question “What do we do now?”

 We had begun to worship in person again, and some of the normal activities were resuming. Coming out of the quarantining and isolation forced upon us by the pandemic, I wanted to turn the Council’s and congregation’s attention forward. The issue of “what’s next for us?” was one that the synod was urging upon congregations and that we had been pondering as well.

 In that column, I laid out three options for us to discern to what ministry God was calling us now that we are no longer supporting the soup kitchen or the men and women’s shelters. Two of the possible programs to help in that process were from the synod’s resources and one possibility was to re-visit our strategic plan from eight years ago and see if we could build on what we established then.

 Another year has passed. And nothing has been done. The Council heard and read about the synod’s programs, and we said we would look more carefully at the former strategic plan but that is as far as we got. There has been no interest or impetus to move forward in any direction.

 There are a number of reasons for that inertia. In the last several months in particular, we have been preoccupied with issues relating to the school and its future. That continues to be a source of concern and uncertainty as we prepare to begin another school year.

 While the term “burnout” has become over-used and sometimes inaccurately utilized, I think that is a factor with which we are dealing. The same small group of volunteers does virtually everything in all areas of our congregational life. In some cases, those persons have been carrying the burden and responsibility for various ministries for many years. They are tired and sometimes find it increasingly physically difficult to continue, but there is no one to take their places.

 Let’s face it: we are an old congregation. We have very few members who are under the age of 65. We have no Sunday School program, no youth group, no children’s choir, no activities or programs for families. As members grow older and deal with increasing health issues, the pool of potential helpers grows smaller.

 I have always tried to make my newsletter contributions uplifting, informative, and encouraging. But I confess, sisters and brothers, that I am discouraged and disheartened. I feel stuck in this malaise in which we find ourselves, and I don’t know how to move us out of it. That probably is due mostly to my own failures and short-comings of leadership, but at least some of the problem is due to a lack of interest or will on the part of the congregation to do anything other than show up for worship each weekend.

 I do not mean this to sound harsh or judgmental. I mean it only as a portrayal of our situation as it appears to me. I wish I had some answers, but I do not. I will continue to challenge the Church Council and leaders of the congregation to consider one of the synodical programs or to tackle again our previous strategic plan. Truthfully, my fear is that, even if we engage in such work, it will end up looking and sounding good on paper but fail to be implemented in practice.

 Our only hope is that in this long season of Pentecost we hear again and again of God’s Spirit pushing and driving reluctant messengers into new and often surprising areas of mission and ministry. I shall hope and pray that the Spirit is not yet done with us.

 Come, Holy Spirit!

**SCHOOL UPDATE**

At the July meeting of the School Board, a number of concerns that have arisen in the last year about the school’s viability and future were discussed. At the May congregational meeting, at which the school’s budget was presented, we were informed that we needed a minimum of 85 students to cover expenses for the year.

 Specific figures about enrollment are not available right now because many parents have not yet thought about formally committing their children for the fall. As of the end of July, we have 81 students enrolled. We have seven new kindergarteners, which is encouraging.

 We have hired (yet another) new janitor. She has good experience doing cleaning at the Light House Mall, so we are hoping she will last longer and do a better job than the last several people in that position. This week we were able to hire a middle school science and math teacher, Mr. Robert Tebout, completing our faculty for the coming year.

 Because we will not have sufficient funds to make payroll and expenses before we receive our first voucher check from the state in October, we will be taking out our line of credit with Horizon Bank for $125,000 as we have done in the past. When the check from the state arrives, we will immediately pay the line of credit back to the bank.

 At the congregational meeting, one of the questions that arose surrounding our discussion about whether the school would remain open was what we would do with the building if the school was closed. At that point, the Council could not give a good answer because we did not know if the congregation would approve the proposed school budget and keep the school open in the fall. We could not discuss an offer with any other schools or businesses that might be interested in the building and then call off the discussion because it was decided to keep the school open.

 To be better prepared for such discussions in the future, should it become financially unviable to keep it open, a “Property Evaluation Team” has been formed to investigate what would need to be done to get the building ready for rent/lease/sale. The group members are Janet Bakken; Bob Kiser; Donna Knoll; Judy Hunt; Larry Litchford; and Wayne Dolson.

 Their first topic has been to explore if it is possible to separate the heating/AC systems of the church and school buildings that currently are connected and what the cost would be for such work. They will make a report on their findings and what other issues they will address at the November congregational meeting.



**TIME AWAY**

 As mentioned in the July newsletter, I will be away for about ten days around the week of August 21-28. Sunday the 21st begins a five-day freshman orientation for my son Dan at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. We will be moving him into his dorm and then attend a two-day parent orientation for first-year students.

 My son Jacob will be returning to campus at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute on August 26, a week after completing his five-week Math-Physics course for freshman orientation before classes begin that following week. There is a parent orientation on the 26th and 27th that we will be attending as well. I am working on finding supply pastors for those two weekends.



Often when I visit those who are homebound or in assisted living/nursing home facilities, members will ask me to bring their offering back to church. In the past, I have agreed; but I find myself increasingly uncomfortable with that task. Sometimes I do not return to church to put it in the safe until the next day; and until then, I am worried that somehow I will misplace or lose the envelope.

 From now on, I will ask that either the contribution be dropped off at the church office or put into an envelope and mailed to the church. Thank you for your understanding.

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Blessings to you all, and I hope you are enjoying the warm weather this July.  The church has generously given the school charge of overseeing the parking lot along with grilled hot dogs/popcorn sales for the boat races.   We will be there on Friday, August 5, from 2:00 p.m. - TBA and Saturday, August 6, from 9:00 a.m. - evening TBA.   We are looking for volunteers to help take shifts, especially on Saturday.  If anybody is able to spend some time with us taking money for the parking lot or food sales, we would greatly appreciate it.

Other school news:

* A Janitor was hired at the school, starting July 21.  Ms. Tara Soto-Garcia has been a janitor at the Lighthouse Mall for some time and is looking for indoor work.  We found her through our Office Coordinator, Lisa Heddens.
* The first day of school is August 17th.
* We will be having a Port-a-Pit fundraiser on Saturday, September 17, in the Franklin Street Al's parking lot.   Tickets will be available, hopefully, at the beginning of August.  We will be having a Butter Braid fundraiser October 10 – 24.  The pastries will be delivered before Thanksgiving.  Both Port-a-Pit tickets and Butter Braid orders will be made available to interested parishioners.

Blessings!

Tracey McCay

Principal

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**RALLY DAY POTLUCK**

A pot luck celebration is planned to celebrate Rally Day on September 10, 2022.  The potluck will be held after the 4:00 p.m. service on Saturday evening.  We hope you will mark this important date on your calendar and bring your favorite dish to share.  Meat will be provided by the Church Council.  More details will follow.



St Paul Lutheran Church has always been a supporter of the less fortunate in our community. We hosted the men’s and women’s shelters for many years. The shelters are now in their own building, but Interfaith PADS operates by donations and a few grants. United Healthcare of LaPorte has given PADS a matching dollar-for-dollar grant. matching donations up to $25,000.  This means for every dollar we donate, PADS gets another dollar from United Healthcare. PLEASE , let’s show our continued support by making a donation to PADS. The mailing address is:

 Interfaith Pads

 P. O. Box 38

Michigan City, IN 46361

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**ARCHIVE ROOM NEWS**

The Archive Room has been cleaned, sorted, and somewhat changed around. Come and visit! Please sign the Guest Book on the table so we know how many folks have visited. Feel free to bring a friend or two.

The Archive Room is located under the entrance stairs, and the door is always unlocked. (Since the church is generally locked, you may want to come and visit the Archive Room and sit awhile before church service. Before, after, or during committee meetings should work as well.) A table, chairs, pencils, and paper have been added to the room for your comfort, so you can come, sit down, and browse through all the items. Take your time!

Previous work done by past Archive Committee members has been respected, and many "new" items have been added. There are updated displays in the Archive Room itself, and many boxes of books have been organized for display in the basement as well. Many artifacts never seen before are now out for your enjoyment. Although not "out," feel free to look through all the drawers labeled in green. There are photos in drawers and in a box on a table, identified by year. On a small table are many photos still looking for your help in identifying.  Did you know a picture of St. Paul was found that predates the one from 1881? It is framed and on display.

 There is now a section of German and English children's books, choral books, and many bulletins that have been bound. Some of the most fragile items are 146 years old!

In next month's newsletter, look for interesting tidbits about St. Paul Church and School.

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**IN MEMORY OF ROGER MILZAREK**

**Altar Guild** from Maxine Powell

**General Fund** from Steve & Tracy Kring

**IN MEMORY OF CLINT POWELL, CONNIE HOLLIS, AND KATHRYN MURRAY on their birthdays**

**Capital Improvement Fund** from Maxine Powell

**IN MEMORY OF JIM STEINBORN**

**General Fund** from Kerry Steinborn

**IN MEMORY OF ALLEN KRING**

**General Fund** from Al & Sue Green

**IN HONOR OF DAVID & NANCY SQUIRES’ 40th Wedding Anniversary**

**General Fund** from Steven & Joan Galinowski



**A PRAYER AT THE BEGINNING OF A SCHOOL YEAR**

God of all wisdom, we praise you for wisely gifting us with sons and daughters. Give to each one a clear sense of your love, that they may feel your presence supporting them throughout this school year. Guide their choices, direct their quest for knowledge, bless their relationships, and use their successes and failures as opportunities to grow in understanding of who you would have them be. Continue, we pray, to shape them as branches of the one true vine, that they may ever walk in the way of Christ, grow strong in your Spirit’s love for all people, and know the complete joy of life in you. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

Prayer by Linda Witte Henke,”From the Vine,” in *Marking Time: Christian Rituals for All our Days* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2001), page 63.



 **August Birthdays**

 1 Susan Dolson 21 Barbara Djuvik

 2 Terri Bartels 22 Betty Yourist

 4 James Galinowski 23 Robert Cross

 Hannah Payne Brenda Biggs

 Sandra Robbins 27 Aydan Dettman

 5 William Schafer 28 Reese Robbins

 Richard Thielman 30 Mike Maesch

 6 Mike Bockover Martha Setser

 Robert Ziesmer Lauren Slisher

 8 Thomas Ottersen 31 Sandra Galinowski

 Jason Schacht

 Lyn Wilson

 9 Carol Hanft **August Anniversaries**

 Brooklyn Howard

 10 Stacey Richardson 3 John & Amy VanGemeren

 11 Karen Peters 5 Virgil & Patricial Miller

 Deborah Reagor 21 Troy & Hillary Frever

 James Waltz

 12 Anna Kreighbaum

 14 James Tomsheck

 15 Diane Dirks

 Diane Egilske

 Frankie Thomas III

 Carol Weiss

 Venia Wendt

 16 Jaime Pryzbylinski

 Reilly Wilso

 18 Richie Newenhouse

 19 Shirley McCarty

 20 George Ottersen

 Nancy Squires



**Long-Term Prayer List**

Robert Atwood Audrey Beyer Irene Bohnstadt

Donna Bostater Sherry Brotsky Laura Dovey

Laura Eilers-Straight Marta Furness Diane Gielow

Jim Gleason Ed Gustum Dolores Hackett

Heidi Happel Terry Hygema Jess Kalvaitis

Christine Kiser Ryan Krueger Tom & Larry Leuth

Pastor Al Lorentzen Bethany Manning Christian Martinez

Laura Moore Shane Nevels Duane Ormsby

George Ottersen Jan Paholski Kay Peglow

Cameron Rackard Wally & Betty Ratliff Annette Scroggin

Knox Shepherd Ryan Sirk Erik Tannehill

Jary Tannehill Kathy Thielman Jean Thomas

Lee Timm Venia Wendt



 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 Tracey McCay

 School Office Coordinator Lisa Heddens

 School Custodian



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