

September, 2025

**MARK: MY WORDS**

 Last month I wrote about the need to contact me before making funeral arrangements. This month I want to address an issue that repeatedly arises that has both pastoral and practical, theological implications.

 Our congregation largely consists of senior members. With that reality comes a large number of health-related concerns. As you notice in the prayers each week, we have a long list of people for whom we intercede, most often because of sickness, disease, recovery from surgery, or rehabilitation from a fall or a medical procedure.

 Because we are a close-knit congregation (and because the “St. Paul grapevine” is faster and better informed than any Google search 😀), word about someone’s fall or surgery or hospitalization spreads quickly. Inevitably, I am approached by concerned friends and parishioners asking how that person is doing.

 Here is where things get tricky. I always ask permission from the person before adding them to the prayer list for worship. Often people agree and are thankful for the intercessions; but many times, they do not want their situation publicized, preferring to keep the details of their condition private. Of course, we respect that desire.

 In addition, even if they give permission to include them in the prayers, they still may want to keep their condition, diagnosis, and prognosis to themselves. Ultimately, what has happened to them is their story to tell, not mine.

 Sometimes, even when I try to explain that to those who have asked, they still attempt to gain more information. They will repeat what they have heard from others to see if I confirm those reports. I then find myself in an uncomfortable position. On the one hand, I understand and appreciate the concern for the one for whom we are praying. On the other hand, I cannot break a promise of confidentiality made to that person.

 This approach also short-circuits a vital part of our common ministry. As you have heard me say (probably *ad nauseum*) over the years, one of the most important ways that we bear the life and love, the kindness and compassion that are marks of the Kingdom is through our care for the sick, the lonely, the grieving, and broken-hearted. That personal interaction embodies the Good News that Jesus lived and proclaimed. If I am put in the middle between those who are sick or hurting and those who are asking about them, that interpersonal aspect is lost. If what has happened to them is *their* story to tell, then it needs to be heard from *them* and not from me. Only then can that empathy, kindness, and compassion be expressed to the one who is suffering in a way that brings comfort and hope.

 In addition, people expect *me* to visit or call and offer ministry to them. That doesn’t mean they don’t appreciate the time we have together. But to hear from a friend or fellow parishioner whom they are not expecting deepens the joy that arises from being the recipients of Jesus’ own presence and care.

 Therefore, from now on, if someone asks me about someone, my response is going to be, “Why don’t you give them a call or stop by for a visit? I am sure they would be thrilled to hear from you.” One of my pastoral responsibilities is to help enable the ministry of fellow-members of the Body of Christ in this place. It is my hope that this direction to the person him/herself will allow that important ministry to take place.

 “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)**“**If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:26) May God grant us the courage, strength, and compassion to “bear one another’s burdens” and so make the love of Christ a tangible gift and blessing to those who suffer.



**NEW PHONE DIRECTORY**

 A useful tool in carrying out that ministry will soon be available. Our last phone directory is now over a year old. That may not seem like much, but over those months we have had people die, move, or change phone numbers. Libby is in the process of preparing a revised version. We are grateful for her work on this important means of inter-congregational communication.

 If you have any changes to your contact information that you have not reported to the office, please do so as soon as possible so that she may include it in the new directory. We will notify the congregation when they are ready to pass out.



**OFFICE CLOSURE**

 The office will be closed on **Monday, September 1,** for Labor Day. It will reopen on Tuesday, September 2, at 9:00 a.m.



**FESTIVAL DAYS OF WORSHIP**

 September brings us three important days of commemoration on the church calendar. Holy Cross Day is on September 14, which is on a Sunday this year. It originated in the fourth century and celebrates the triumph of the cross of Christ.

The Day of St. Matthew is on the 21st, which is on a Sunday. Even though this is the year of the Gospel of St. Luke, it is important to celebrate the feast days of the apostles and the four evangelists, so on that weekend we will honor Matthew’s life and ministry.

 The Day of St. Michael and All Angels is on the 29th; and although we just miss it, we will observe this day on the weekend of the 27th and 28th. Angels are still popular in our culture, and it is always good to be able to hear what the Scriptures say about these heavenly messengers whom God sends us to strengthen us for our Gospel work.



**BIBLE STUDY**

Our Wednesday morning Bible study will resume on September 17 at 9:15 a.m. in the Luther House. We most often look at the texts for the coming week to provide background information that will enrich the hearing and digesting of the Word. No special understanding or expertise in the Scriptures is required. Bring your Bible and join us.

**HOMEWARD BOUND VILLAGES**

 From a conversation with Dave Squires back in 2015 about the homeless people we were serving at our shelter, Leigh Coburn became interested in the need for affordable housing for Michigan City and LaPorte County. Leigh searched online nationwide, and traveled to Texas, Wisconsin, Delaware, and Michigan to learn from others how to address this affordable housing need.  He incorporated the nonprofit 501(c)3 Homeward Bound, Inc., in October, 2016. Together with the help of John VanderWagen from First Methodist Church, they put together a powerful Board of Directors. After nine long years of fundraising, finding suitable property, and getting the necessary zoning, they have finally breaking ground at 516 Karwick Road.

This is Homeward Bound’s local effort to help low-income individuals and families for whom housing costs often consume a disproportionate share of their monthly budget.  These neighbors often face the impossible choices of pay rent or utilities or purchase groceries or get necessary healthcare.  About 25% of LaPorte County households earn more than the federal poverty level but less than the basic cost of living for the county.  Addressing this urgent need for housing helps build healthier, more resilient communities.

          The Karwick Village project will provide affordable homes, foster a cooperative supportive community that helps reduce the negative effects of isolation, and promote health and resilience.  The homes will be available to those whose income is between 30-50% of the area median income ($17,000-$33,000, depending on household size).  The Board of Directors of Homeward Bound, Inc., which is guiding this project, has recently formed a working group to develop policies and guidelines for resident selection.

          This is an expensive endeavor. For these homes to be affordable, the project needs to be debt free.  If you would like to help make this project a success, donations of money, materials, and/or labor will move this project from dream to reality for our neighbors in need.  Monetary donations can be made online at [www.HomewardBoundVillages.org](http://www.HomewardBoundVillages.org) or mailed to Homeward Bound at P. O. Box 9214, Michigan City, IN  46361-9214.  Any donations of materials or labor that will reduce building costs would include kitchen cabinets, flooring, trin, paint, locksets, landscaping, metal roofing, electrical materials, plumbing fixtures, ceiling fans, lighting fixtures, and countertops.

          For more information or to sign up for Homeward Bound’s newsletter, check out the above website, homewardboundvillages on Facebook or Instagram, email info@homewardboundvillages.org, or call 219-250-4513.

 



**INSTALLATION OF MUSICIANS**

 September is traditionally the time when we thank and recognize our many gifted musicians and formally install them for their ministry in the coming year. On September 14, on which, as we mentioned above, we will observe the festival of Holy Cross Day, we will again commission them for their Spirit-led leadership of our worship and praise.



**MONTHLY MISSION: ZERO PROSTATE CANCER**

September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. Prostate cancer will affect about one in seven men in their lifetime, and about 35,000 men will die from prostate cancer this year. Fortunately, if detected early, prostate cancer can be successfully treated; and new treatments are becoming available to extend the lives of men with advanced disease. ZERO is the largest prostate cancer support, education, and advocacy organization in the United States.  It offers free support and education services to prostate cancer patients, and advocates for research funding and improved prostate cancer treatment.

Council member Jim Schraidt is a 15-year prostate cancer survivor and a member of the Board of Directors of ZERO. He leads a monthly ZERO-sponsored support group that meets in Chicago with simultaneous virtual access. Jim is happy to answer questions about prostate cancer and ZERO, and more information can be found at [https://zerocancer.org](https://zerocancer.org/).

Checks can be written to St. Paul and can be marked for ZERO and placed in the offering plate. The noisy coin offering will also support the mission of the month.



**Happy belated birthday** to David Jocely (August 27) and Sandra Galinowski (August 31). We apologize for missing your birthday last month.

 **September Birthdays August Anniversaries**

 1 Benjamin Crozier 4 Michael & Becky Greenlaw

 2 Judy Litchford 6 Paul & Lora Brooks

 5 Sarah Payne 14 Allen & Kimberly Sydow

 7 Verne Lee 15 Al & Sue Green

 8 Joan Seifert Richard & Pamela Henderson

 9 Mary Knaup19 Donald & Elizabeth Thompson

 10 Nan Larson

 11 Trish Sprague

 13Kalen Sprague

 14 Robert Pheanis

 15 Richard Collins

 James Krueger

 16 Clay Payne

 17 Hannah Tannehill

 19 Kay Peglow

 20 Daniel Ottersen

 Laurie O’Hara

 21 Ronwynn Jones

 22 Helen Wiese

 Sue Pfeiffer

 23 Martin Tannehill

 26 Frederick Weiss

 27 Katherine Crozier

 28 Donna Knoll



**AUGUST COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS**

The Church Council will meet on August 28. Copies of the minutes will be available in the narthex after they are approved .



**Long-Term Prayer List**

Barry Anderson John Bennitt Laura Dovey

Mike Galinowski Jess Kalvaitis Christine Kiser

Larry Litchford Bethany Manning Debbie Martin

Shirley McCarty Sarah McNabb Jan Paholski

Bob Phaenis Grace Romine Martha Schroeder

Jeanie Boatman Shepple Joyce Stark Kathy Stein

Mark Tannehill Kevin Thiede Kathy Thielman

David Weiss Brian Wiseman



 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 Staff**

 Pastor Rev. Mark Reshan

 Secretary Libby Pollock

 Accompanists Jary Tannehill, Mark Tannehill, Jacob Tannehill

 Custodian Mark Kloess

Thank$ for $haring

This month, are going to Holly’s on Tuesday, September 9.  Here are two coupons—one for you and one for a friend.



