

The Messenger

February 2018

St. Paul Lutheran Church and Preschool
1327 Vaughn Road, Wood River, IL 62095
Dr. George J. Gude, Vacancy Pastor

Pastor's Page

On February 14 we once again begin the season of Lent, that forty day period during which we reflect and prepare to celebrate the completion of God's plan of salvation. Those little words "once again", remind us that this is not our first-ever observance of Lent. We know the process. There is Palm Sunday, Ash Wednesday, the mid-week Lenten worship, which culminates in Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter.

The danger is that because of our familiarity it is easy to miss the profoundly incomprehensible character of the Lenten message. In part, Lent is about telling the story of God's plan of salvation. Jesus, the lamb of God sacrificed himself on the cross in payment for the sins of all humankind. Exactly how that worked we have no idea. But that's what God was doing, and we focus on that, retelling the story again and again.

But more importantly, Lent gives us the ultimate revelation of the nature of God, which can only be known through God's revelation of himself to us. That ultimate revelation of God's nature is that he loved sinners so much he was willing to become man for the purpose of himself becoming the substitute for sinners.

And we wonder why would God love sinners. God created man to be the high point of his creation and to have a special relationship with him. But man chose to rebel, and thus came under God's judgment and condemnation. Fallen man wants nothing to do with God's ways. Worse, fallen man wants to do everything the opposite of what God wants, and has made himself despicable to God. When we look for the reason that God would love sinners like us, the short answer is that there is no conceivable reason that we can imagine. Yet, the message that the Scriptures proclaim loud and clear, and again and again, is that God does precisely that.

Lent then becomes an opportunity to meditate on this incomprehensible love God has for us sinners, and to repent and constantly turn to Jesus for the forgiveness we so desperately need. In keeping our focus on Jesus, the lamb of God who has taken away the sin of the world – our sin, our faith will grow, and we are equipped to remain steadfast in our faith throughout our lives.

Wednesday, February 14th at 7pm

Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes
(No meal served before this service)



*Remember man
that you are
dust and into
dust you shall
return.*



Wednesday Evening Lenten Worship

This year during our Wednesday evening Lenten worship, our theme will be the message of Paul contained in six of his Epistles. The message will be presented in form of a dialog between some of the individuals mentioned in each of the letters. The liturgy each week will be similar to what we have done in the past. The Lenten meals and hymn sing will begin on February 21.

On February 14, Ash Wednesday, the focus will be Paul's letter to the church in Rome, and the message will be presented by Priscilla, Rufus, and Linus.

On February 21 the focus will be Paul's letters to the church in Corinth, and the message will be presented by Stephanus, Titus, and Crispus.

On February 28, the focus will be Paul's letter to the church in Thesalonica, and the message will be presented by Julia and Jason.

On March 7, the focus will be Paul's letter to the church in Philippi, and the message will be presented by Lydia and Lucius.

On March 14, the focus will be Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus, and the message will be presented by Anaeus and Tyrannus.

On March 21, the focus will be Paul's letter to Philemon, and the message will be presented by Apphia, Philemon, and Onesimus.



Wednesdays of Lent: February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21

Soup & Sandwiches

This is served at 5:30 by the Youth!

Hymn sing from 6:45 to 7:00pm in Church

Join us each week at 7:00pm for Lenten Meditation. These services are being planned with children in mind and will be only 45 minutes. We hope this will assist your family in worship.

Please Join Us Every Wednesday!

(Confirmation classes will be held on Mondays at 7p)

The following are prayer suggestions to assist you in your personal prayer and devotional life.

BRETHREN PRAY FOR US

Feb 4 That we may receive the blessing of God in our witness to Him

For our Board of Elders and Board of Properties.

For our worship assembly that we may grow spiritually through Word and Sacraments

Feb 11 For the Bible and that all may faithfully use this Means of Grace

For our Board of Stewardship.

That Lent will be a time to be drawn closer to our Lord

Feb.18 That our righteousness may show Jesus Christ to the world
For our PreSchool as a means of sharing the Caring Christ
For our teachers - Tammy Plummer, and Peggy Searles who faithfully tell the children about Jesus.

Feb 25 That we may receive the blessing of God in our witness to Him
For all volunteer workers at church
For our Lutheran High School, and the blessings of Lutheran Education
For our Donald Trump and Mike Pence, the cabinet and all federal officials



Membership Changes

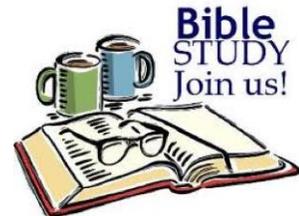
Matt Horton, 310 E. Lake Drive, Edwardsville 62025 618-514-1498

Jerry Bort, 401 S. Moreland Rd., Apt. 113, Bethalto 62010
618-792-0197

Baptism: Brynlee Marie Herzberg, daughter of Kelsie Gauen & Bradley Herzberg 11/23/17

Transfer Out: Bob, Catharine, & James (B) Perkins to Zion Lutheran, St. Charles, MO

Lenten Bible Breakfast: Join our local Lutheran Churches on Wednesday mornings during Lent for breakfast and devotions at the **Eagle's Nest Restaurant in Bethalto at 9am.** The devotional studies will focus on "*The Salutory Gift*". Bible Study Leaders: February 14 - Rev. Willard Meyer - *Life-Giving Fruit*; February 21 - Rev. George Gude - *Bread from Heaven*; February 28 - Rev. Mark Hofferber - *Healing Medicine*; March 7 - Rev. Kale Hanson - *Blest Communion*; March 14 - Rev. Dale Skeesick - *Rest for the Weary*; March 21 - Seminarian Tim Roggow - *Nuptial Feast* Plan now to join your friends from Concordia, Cottage Hills; St. Peter, Prairietown; St. Paul, Wood River. Hope to see you there! **(Wednesday morning devotions will be held on Thursday mornings at 8a during the Lenten season – beginning with Ash Wednesday, February 14th thru Wednesday, March 21st)**



The Ladies Aid will meet after Wednesday Devotions on February 7th.
Reminder: Ladies Aid members are to bring a donations of any house cleaning product for our basket project for our Silent Auction at our Chili CookOff on Saturday, March 17th

Call Status

The call committee, which consists of the elders, the chairman and vice chairman of the congregation, the circuit visitor, and the vacancy pastor have carefully reviewed the names of all the pastors who were on our call list. These came both from the members of the congregation and from the district president.

On the basis of this review, seven of the pastors were identified as men who seemed to be excellent candidates to become the next pastor at St. Paul, and an interview schedule was set up. By the time the newsletter is published, most of these will have been interviewed, and the interviews will be completed on February 6.

After that the call committee will prepare a report for the congregation which will provide information on those candidates. This report will assist the voters at the special call meeting. At that meeting the voters can also ask that the name of any pastor from the original list be added to the names of pastors being considered at that meeting.

Chili Cook-off & Dessert Bake-off Saturday, March 17



HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

- ✓ Sign-up to bring chili and/or dessert
- ✓ Donate a Silent or Oral Auction item or Group Gift Basket.
(Items can be dropped off at church anytime)
- ✓ Buy Early Bird tickets to avoid the line
 - \$20 = 40 tickets pre-sale or 35 at the door
 - \$10 = 18 tickets pre-sale or 15 at the door
 - \$5 = 8 tickets pre-sale or 6 at the door
- ✓ Plan to attend for an evening of fun & fellowship

EVENING'S SCHEDULE

- 4:30 pm - Doors open, chili & desserts delivered
 - 5:00 pm - Opening prayer, sampling begins
 - 6:00 pm - Voting ends. Preschool BMX Bike winner announced.
Golden Ladle, Golden Spatula awarded.
 - 6:30 pm - Heads Or Tails, Silent Auction ends
 - 7:00 pm - Oral Auction
- Accepting Cash, check or plastic

Questions? Contact Bob & Myra Farrell at 618-971-6644 or myfarrell@ymail.com

February Older Adult Ministry

By Bob List

Last month's newsletter article mentioned the first meeting of our planning team, and I am very happy to be working with Don Halbe, Mary Heren, Dina McMahan and Anita Seehausen. We did meet after Christmas and are planning to meet again on February 21, before the Lenten supper. One of the items of business will be to discuss the results of the survey distributed late last year. I won't go into detail here, but there were 17 surveys returned out of 245 sent to members age 55 and older. Although more returns would have been desirable, we will consider what can be used for applying to our future ministry.

I read a recent article in a Missouri District newsletter that refers to starting a program for young people that could easily be applied to our effort for older adults. One of the points of the article is encouragement not to start a "program" but to think of it as a "ministry". An internet search shows the difference: programs are a planned series of future events, whereas ministry places the focus on planning activities through which Christians can express or spread their faith. If we as the Church endeavor to have as our goal anything but sharing our faith and the love of Christ in and through our activities, we are losing sight of what we are truly about. Once we have this as our focus, hopefully it will be easier to determine why we are endeavoring to do this and what our desired outcome will be so we can determine whether or not it is accomplishing what we want.

So, we will try to look at our own survey results, refer to some of the resources available, and look for ideas that may lead us to what it is that our older adult population might need or desire. If anyone has any thoughts or ideas on this broad subject, especially if you didn't get a chance to turn in the survey, please feel free to let any of us know. Also, if you would still like to become part of our planning group, we would love to welcome you.

Of course, we can never forget that all of this must be approached with much prayerful consideration and with an eye toward how it fits into the overall mission and ministry of the congregation. Please pray for this ministry and the team members who will be looking for the Lord's guidance and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And always feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions that may help make this ministry relevant for those members we wish to serve.

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