

The Messenger

January 2018

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



With the arrival of a new year we instinctively anticipate what the coming year will bring. Some of us might anticipate a major event such as a wedding, graduation, or retirement. If the past year was not so good, we hope things will be better. It might be something like I hope my health will improve, or I will be able to find a steady job. If, on the other hand, the past year was filled with lots of joy and success, the beginning of a new year will find us hoping that this coming year will be pretty much like the last one.

While we might have expectations and plans, the truth is that we actually do not know what the future will bring. The economy has been soaring, but how long will it continue? Will 2018 be a time of a major correction so that the value of all of our mutual funds takes a nose dive? What will happen with North Korea? Will it attack and launch some missiles with nuclear warheads of chemical weapons? Will the threat of terrorism be significantly reduced or will it be even more prevalent? These are some of the possibilities that might occur in the future, which generally are both totally unpredictable, and beyond our control.

Our congregation will be calling a new pastor, and therein lies even more uncertainty. Will the pastor that is called accept the call or decline it? Will we end up having to call several pastors before one finally accepts the call to become pastor here? When the pastor comes, will there be a smooth transition so that things continue to go well and the congregation remains healthy?

We humans generally do not do well in the face of uncertainty. We feel uncomfortable and threatened in situations which are beyond our control, and we become anxious. In our discomfort and anxiety, our faith in Jesus gives us comfort and assurance. Our faith in him means we are his possession. He has assured us that we belong to him and nothing will snatch us out of his hand. While we can't control the future, he can and does. This is the foundation for the unique assurance that we have. Come what may, whether our world would judge it good or bad, God has promised that he will be with us and he will not allow it to separate us from the love we have received in Jesus. The same applies to our congregation. Jesus is the Lord of the Church, including St. Paul. He will be with us as we move forward into an unknown future.

This certainty completely changes how we face the future. Will the coming year bring our own death or the death of a loved one? We don't know, but what we do know is that those who die in Jesus go to dwell with him eternally. There is nothing that could be better for that individual. We also know that Jesus comforts and sustains those who are left behind.

Belonging to Jesus also means that we will have the opportunity to serve him for another year. We will have another year to share our faith in Jesus with those who do not know him. We will have another year to strengthen one another, as we encourage one another to regularly receive the Lord's Supper and to regularly worship and hear God's message of salvation, which builds and sustains faith.

A new year is about to begin. Our faith in Jesus means that we will meet it with confidence, because we belong to him, and he will not allow anything to tear us away.

Pastor George Gude

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

BRETHREN PRAY FOR US

Jan. 7 That the joy of God's Son may live in us throughout the New Year
That Epiphany may draw us to see our Savior in our lives today
For Elders Roger Mouser, Bruce Seehausen, and.
That like the Wise Men we may offer our gifts to Jesus

Jan. 14 For the charitable institutions of our Church and for our support
For those who will retire from public office
For orphans and children of broken homes
For those who die alone and forgotten that they may rejoice in God

Jan.21 That the mission of our Church to make disciples may be our mission
For the officers of our congregation
For an increase in Bible study among us
For our stewardship of money that it reflect accurately God's gifts

Jan. 28 That the members of St. Paul's might have a renewed commitment to serve Christ in our
community and world
For our worship assembly that we may grow spiritually through Word and Sacraments

Letter from President Scharr accompanying the Call Information

18 December 2017

St. Paul Lutheran Church
1327 Vaughn Road
Wood River, IL 62095

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

Greetings in the name of Jesus, the Christ, Our Lord Immanuel!

We are pleased to present a list of names for you to select from to call a new pastor. We are providing a Personal Information Form (PI F) and Self-Examination Tool (SET) for all whom you nominated with these exceptions. Rev. Jeffrey Carlson recently accepted a call and is not available for consideration. We could not find information on Rev. Geoffrey McGuire and Rev. Brett Henricks. We are still hoping to receive the PIF and SET for Rev. Russel Weise. Rev. Curtis Deterding and Rev. David Schultz were listed by their respective District Presidents as unavailable for a call.

In the case of Rev David Schultz, I spoke further with President May of the Indiana District. He said that David is an excellent pastor with no negatives about him He is still within three years of ministry at his current congregation. President May would not release his information to me. In situations like this, you may still call a pastor who is in good standing on the roster as both Rev. Deterding and Schutz are. We are unable to provide you with the PIF and SET for either of these men.

Rev. Herbert C. Mueller, Jr. is the current 1st Vice-President of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. He plans on retiring following his current term of office which expires in 2019. Rev. John Shank and Rev. Kale Hanson are from neighboring congregations. Normally we do not call men from such close proximity as it causes friction with our sister church and may lead to members transferring to follow a pastor. Technically, you may still call these men, but we would strongly advise against it. Rev. Mark Nebel served Concordia, Cottage Hills in the 1990's. If he were called to St. Paul, Wood River, it may hurt Concordia, Cottage Hills. We have included his PIF and SET, but urge caution in calling him

Pastors Stephen Krentz, Timothy Mueller and Bruce Keseman are all from Southern Illinois. Each has provided exemplary service to their current congregations. Each has the requisite experience and pastoral skills for a congregation like St. Paul. You have many excellent men to choose from on this list of candidates. We pray that the Lord will lead you to the man He would have serve you as your next pastor.

In Christ,

Timothy J. Scharr, President Southern Illinois District - LCMS

Call Status

We have received the information from our call list from the district office. The constitution of the congregation now requires the call committee, which consists of the elders, the chairman and vice chairman of the congregation, the vacancy pastor, and the circuit visitor to review the qualifications of those listed and make a recommendation to the special voters meeting that will be called. There are 29 names on the list, but as the letter from President Scharr indicated, we do not have the information for all of them. However, the call committee will still have 20+ names to consider and evaluate.

The following are the list of names of those pastors on our call list.

The constitution of the congregation requires the call committee to carefully consider all of those nominated. After first identifying those who seem to have the gifts most needed at St. Paul's, the committee will likely interview all of these and then finally recommend a minimum of three, but likely more, to be considered by the voters at a special meeting called for the purpose of extending a call to the new pastor. At that meeting any voting member of the congregation may add to the recommended list any of those names previously nominated to be considered by the voters.

Rev. Roger James
Rev. Kurt Lambart
Rev. Mark Hesse
Rev. Jeffrey Webb
Rev. John H. Diener
Rev. Thomas Christopher
Rev. Kevin Johnson
Rev. Jeffrey Keuning
Rev. Peter J. Weeks
Rev. Russell Weise
Rev. Brett Henricks
Rev. Stephen Krenz
Rev. Bruce Keseman
Rev. Timothy Mueller
Rev. Jeffrey Carlson

Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr.
Rev. Herbert C. Mueller III
Rev. Matthew Wood
Rev. Thomas Wenig
Rev. Curtis Deterding
Rev. Jeffrey Alexander
Rev. Matthew Baye
Rev. Geoffrey Brent McGuire
Rev. Jonathan Christiansen
Rev. William Voelker
Rev. John Schultz
Rev. David Schultz
Rev. Mark Nebel
Rev. Paul Crolius

Older Adult Ministry in 2018

By the time you read this, Christmas will be past and we will be in a new year. However, that doesn't mean that our celebration of our Savior's birthday is over, since we will continue to live in the joy of that event through the period of Epiphany.

Also, when you see this, our Older Adult Ministry planning will have begun as Don Halbe, Mary Heeren, Anita Seehausen, Diana McMahan the newest addition to our planning team, and I will have had our first opportunity to begin discussing what this new ministry might look like here at St. Paul. It will be a chance to begin thinking about what might be of interest to our senior members and how we might offer meaningful ways to enhance the relationship of those who might still have something to offer our congregation and who can benefit from a continued relationship with God's family at St. Paul.

Part of the growth into older adulthood is enhanced by adding resources for our devotional benefit, and to discover that we are still “young enough”. There are many resources to choose from but I will share the following four that you may find meaningful, even if you are still anticipating your age of maturity. Hopefully the expectation bar can be raised for Christians beyond 50, 60, 70, 80, and even 90. God’s most productive days for us could quite possibly still be ahead.

Rich and Charlie Resources – richandcharlie.com

“The focus of this website is to ‘encourage one another through words, reflections, laughter, wondering, wandering, connecting, and lots more’. Rich Bimler and Charlie Mueller, Sr. have spent most of their lives in ministries of encouragement. With this website, they continue to promote, affirm, entice, and celebrate ideas and resources that will benefit you, and those around you.

Senior Planet *Aging with Attitude* – SeniorPlanet.org

SeniorPlanet.org – celebrates aging by sharing information and resources that support aging with attitude, and helps people who were born long before the digital revolution to stay engaged and active by bringing a digital-technology focus to a range of topics.

Next Avenue – www.nextavenue.org

Next Avenue is a website from PBS stations that inspires America’s 50+ generation to live the most meaningful, vibrant life possible. The site features articles, videos and slideshows all designed to help make the most of our life’s second half.

Boomer Café . . . it’s your place – boomercafe.com

Boomer Café is a website that provides a unique place for news and information-sharing among baby boomers with active lifestyles and youthful spirits. Some popular topics for articles submitted include: Active Lifestyle; Boomer Opinion; Health and Fitness; Money and Work; Travel and Leisure; Books; and Retirement.

Give these sites a try and see if you don’t find interesting information and articles relevant to your growing as a senior.

Feel free to share any thoughts, suggestions and questions with me – Bob List, either at church or by email at Robert.List@att.net.

Membership Happenings



Ashley Provaznik, 1 & 140 Purnell St., Carol Stream, IL 60188

Beth Cearley – same address but Lot #72

Lorraine Wieseman, #105 Foxes Grove, 395 E. Edwardsville Rd., Wood River 62095

Matthew Skinner, 600 Park, South Roxana 62087

Ruth Schultz & Marie Schultz, 316 Whispering Oaks, Bethalto 62010; Ruth - 618-978-0369; Marie - 618-975-3568

Baptisms: Jacob & Jared Allen 11/26/17

Adult Baptism: Nicholas Scott Barrett 12/17/17

Affirmation: Chris Bort, Matthew Skinner, and John Sarandis

