



THE PROCLAIMER

January 2022

The mission of St. Paul Lutheran Church is to hear, share, and proclaim the Word of God.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

***“Beloved, ... forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 3: 13-14 (NRSV)***

Dear Friends in Christ,

As of 12 midnight, January 1, 2022, the year 2021 is behind us. A new year has just begun. It lies behind.

*In St. Paul's words above, from his **Letter to the Philippians**, Paul wrote that he made it a practice to forget “what lies behind” and that he strained “forward to what lies ahead” in order to continue on in God's plans for his life and ministry. At the point that he wrote these words, he was most likely in prison in Rome. Paul did not write or reflect upon how he might have changed his situation. Nor did he express bitterness or despair. Rather, Paul looked forward to whatever God might yet have in store.*

Is Paul suggesting that we forget everything about our past? Surely not. Our God-given gift of memory is a great blessing. We need to cherish good memories. We need to remember facts we have learned in order to continue functioning in our daily activities and jobs. At times we even need some recollection of difficult memories so we do not repeat mistakes of the past. We cannot forget everything that has ever happened to us. Even those folks who lose memory functions often retain many past memories.

No, Paul is not saying that we should let go of all our memories. What Paul IS saying is that we should not let what lies in the past keep us from missing out on the present and from having courage to move forward into the future, God's future. Paul knew that whether life or death lay ahead for him, he could have complete hope and trust in God's plans because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection!

In this month of January 2022, we will (as we do each year), review the work and mission of our congregation in year 2021. We will meet together on the last Sunday of this month to present reports and to pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and vision as we project plans for this year and on into the future.

In this first month of the year, we will also be preparing to celebrate the first part of the 150th year anniversary of our St. Paul congregation, which is to be celebrated on Sunday, February 13. With thanksgiving to God, we will remember the stalwart faith of those original 13 pioneer members who met on February 15 of the year 1872 to organize this congregation. Our hearts will overflow with gratitude for all the leaders and members who brought great growth to this body of Christ over the past century and a half. We will converse with each other about our more recent memories and of how our Lord has brought us to this new time in God's history. We will celebrate a special service of worship with Bishop Sue Briner of our Southwestern Texas Synod preaching. A panoramic photo will be taken of everyone, plus we will celebrate a special meal together.

A small, lovely woodcut model of our church building is now available for purchase (\$20 each). This woodcut highlights the newly renovated stained-glass windows to the glory of God and will help defray extra costs for the anniversary celebrations.

The second part of our congregation's 150th anniversary celebration will be a community celebration on Saturday, August 20, at the Community Building at Fort Mason Park. Musical entertainment, a fish fry, memorabilia, and much fun will fill the day. (Watch for more details.)

*As our congregation is named after St. Paul of Tarsus, God's called missionary to the Gentile world, I plan to present a series of videos soon which will focus on who Paul really was, where he came from, and all the places God sent him. It will be announced in the Thursday emails when this series will begin. All adult and older youth members will be invited to join the Owls Class for these videos. (Currently the Owls Class meets in the conference room of the office house, but the class location may change if class numbers grow during this series.) In Paul's words, let's “**press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus!**”*

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Fred Krebs

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 30, 2022. Details regarding the covered dish luncheon will be announced at a later date.

Among the business items we will deal with at the Annual Meeting are the following:

- Approval of the 2022 Ministry Plan
- Election of individuals to serve on the Church Council from the following nominees: Mark Lehmborg, Bob Vacek, & Jenna Jacoby
- Election of the Synod Assembly delegates and the Nominating Committee for 2022

Outgoing council members are Lynn Reichenau, Paulette Keller, & Merlina Gamel.

ST. PAUL CELEBRATES JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Mary Schmidt
- 2 Avery Brooks
- 4 Lynn Reichenau
- 5 Jenna Evans
Rex Smith
- 6 Caycen Potter
Everly Rabon
- 7 Joan Lindley
- 9 Casey Callahan
Gene Zesch
Kassi Reichenau
- 11 Amy Brooks
- 12 Sherry Schmidt
- 18 Steve Schmidt
- 20 Jodie Evans
- 22 Allyson Yonker
- 23 Colinn Evans
- 25 KC Mun
- 29 Jimroy Atchison
- 31 Sherie Clarkson

If your birthday or a family member's birthday is not listed or is listed incorrectly, please let Deb Probst know @ 325-597-2832 or dcprobst@hotmail.com. Thank you for helping us with this project.

"COME LORD JESUS!"

As I sit in the darkness of Tuesday morning, December 14th, I am hearing the pain of God's people, listening to the early morning news of the tornado victims of the last few days and my heart is filled with two emotions: the wonder of God's love and how He comes to us this time of year, filling us with the sense of His abiding Presence and the hurting and longings of His people. We have received SO MANY BLESSINGS and yet we yearn for more. I want to do what I listened Sunday to Kathy Krebs read out of an amazing devotion book used many years ago by the Meyer family: learn from how God uses the simple things. Reflect with me on a few of those:

1. The Wisdom of the Past: On Sunday, December 12th, we had the blessing of learning from 18 members of St. Paul who have been here the longest. Each of them told us to stay near to our Lord Jesus. In the words of "Away in a Manger", Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay, close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven to live with You there. Do we recognize the power and beauty of these lines? Our 3 Confirmands, Kolton Wenzel, Jaxon Reichenau, and Elliott Brast placed these words before us: His Presence is the GIFT. Let's receive this wisdom with joyful and grateful hearts and live each day in His Presence! Thank you, Lord, for the wisdom of the past. Fill our hearts and lives with your truth in this Holy Season.
2. The Opportunity of THIS DAY: There are so many things I could say about this: But I want to use the words of Harvey Zesch. As Bert and I visited with him beside his pick-up, he shared memories of growing up in the faith that were humorous, heart-warming, and truly beautiful! On November 15, as many of the 18 Senior members as could, gathered in our Fellowship Hall for a time of fellowship and sharing their wisdom. As I was walking Harvey to his pick-up, he handed me a true treasure to be shared with you. It was his Sunday School pin with 11 bars for attendance. It is still beautiful and such a blessing to him. He wanted me to share it with the youth of St. Paul. His message is: what you do now and each year of your life is to be faithful in learning and growing in Christ the Lord. I pray we fill the many seats in our lovely sanctuary with faithful followers of the baby born at Bethlehem.
3. Hope for the Future: What a year of blessing lies before us! We approach the 150th Anniversary of St. Paul Lutheran Church. On Sunday, we listened to the voices of children singing the favorite hymns of Christmas and we heard Eli read the Isaiah 9:6 Prophecy and the Christmas Gospel. What a joy to hear the story written from the memories of faithful Senior members "Remembering Christmas" told with such passion

and expression by Cy, Rylan, Elizabeth, Noah, and John Preston. And then we witnessed the dramatic entrance of the Sunday School children to form a nativity scene at our altar, followed by the Luminary on a crisp December evening, bringing to life through music and drama the story that warms our hearts and gives us hope each and every Christmas.

- In closing, my Christmas wish and prayer for each of us is to learn from the past, make the most of the present, and find joy in the hope that is our future. Hebrews 13:8 says “Jesus Christ-Yesterday, Today and Forever.” May the Christmas Gospel come alive in your hearts and home this year and in all of those that follow. The Christmas season is a wonderful time when family and friends gather, share gifts of love, and open their hearts to one another. More than anything else, it should be full of sweet fellowship with our Savior and Lord.

“Come Lord Jesus!” In His love, Ann Mahnken

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

- Approved the Report of the Nominating Committee. Nominees for 2022 Council are Mark Lehmborg, Bob Vacek, & Jenna Jacoby.
- Chel Terrell approved to serve on Audit Committee.
- Date for Annual Congregational Meeting set for Sunday, January 30.
- Council approved the 2022 Ministry Plan of \$253,693.
- Annual Reports are due in the Church Office by January 6, 2022. This includes all committees and organizations of St. Paul Lutheran.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR NOVEMBER

Congregational Giving: \$22,045.34
Expenditures: \$19,820.75

2022: YOUR YEAR FOR GENEROSITY

“You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity!” -2 Corinthians 9:11

As you make resolutions and set goals for the New Year, be sure to include this one: “I will be more generous in 2022.” It will bless you – and your community and neighbor!

The Bible makes clear that generosity leads to a more abundant life. Generous people experience one of those paradoxes of the Kingdom of God, where the last are first, the greatest is servant to all, and whoever loses her life for Christ will gain it. The paradox? Generous people get back far more they give.

First, a clarification: The paradox is NOT a financial strategy to maximize return on investment. That would be missing the point. Besides, there are more important things to give than money, such as time, service, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, love, and

joy. And what we get back may not be quantifiable. How do you measure wellbeing and happiness? Generosity’s real “payback” is what and who we become when we cultivate a habit of giving. Giving transforms us into generous-hearted people, and generous-hearted people tend to experience a real abundance of joy, peace, love, and security.

The old saying is most certainly true: The open palm holds more than the closed fist.

For 2022, set a goal to be more generous. Start by increasing your charitable giving above last year’s offering, but also aim to give away your time, to serve your neighbor, to be lavish in compassion, extravagant in love.

Pray that God will guide you and help you experience the paradox: Givers get back more than they give away.

--Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2022, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com.

STEWARDSHIP DIRECTORY FOR JANUARY

Lay Reader: Julie Gillespie

Communion Assistants: Del Roy Reichenau & Gene Geistweidt

Council Rep. on Duty: LeEster Burch

Bell Ringers: Mark Lehmborg and Mike Goff

Speaker System: Bob Vacek and Mark Lehmborg

Ushers: Matt Schmidt, Hunter Geistweidt, Jerry Bearden, and Harold Albers

Property Person on Duty: Matt Schmidt

Acolytes:

(1/2) Hudson Terrell

(1/9)

(1/16) Hannah & Elizabeth McFarland

(1/23) Noah Sparks

(1/30) Camille Schmidt

Altar Guild:

Flower Chairman: Nancy Brown

Parament Chairman: Debbie Nebgen

Communion Chairman: Sherry Schmidt

Women’s Bible Study:

Morning Bible Study (First Wed. of Month at 10AM)

Bible Study Leader: LeEster Burch

Hostess: Helen Habecker,

carpool from church at 9:45AM

Evening Bible Study (third Tues. of the month)

Fellowship Hall at 5 PM

Memorials: Church Office 347-5582

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Rev. Fred Krebs

Pastor

Mrs. Heather McFarland Church Administrator

Mrs. Ann Mahnken

Youth Director

Church Office Hours:

Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

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