

From the Pastor's Desk

When we gather for Holy Communion we gather as a community of faith to share Jesus' body and blood in remembrance of him. This is a gift from God for all who believe. Our homebound members are not able to join us on Sundays for this gift. I regularly take communion to our homebound but I have been thinking about how we could share community with them on a more frequent basis. The Holy Spirit is at work here at St. Paul! Three people approached me about taking communion to our homebound. I asked another person to join them and now we have two teams of two eager to serve. God is good and God provides! I have trained these folks (some already had previous experience). The first Sunday of the month we will send communion kits with each team as part of worship. They will contact our homebound for a convenient time to visit and share communion with them. I will continue to visit our homebound, but now they will have visitors more often and will be connected to our community of believers in a new way. If you would like to be added to this list please call the church office or me at (608)397-1975. Together we can share the gospel and the gift of Holy Communion to more people!

Grace and peace,

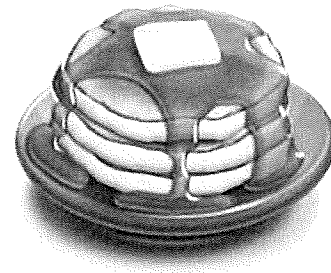
Pastor Bonnie

Church Council

Julie Lusk, Council President
Jim Weston, President Elect
Cathy Stuewer, Council Secretary
Diane Merkau, Treasurer
Sue Atfield, Financial Secretary
Paige Koglin, Asst. Financial Secretary
Don Strauss, Financial Representative
Laurie Morris, Evangelism Rep
Amy Lutz, Parish Education Rep & Chair
Chris Matts, Properties Rep & Chair
Kay Schnur, Stewardship Rep
Cindy Duncan & Amy Fabick, Worship Reps
Alex Stuewer, Youth Representative
Rich Cochrill, Youth Team Chair

Come and Join the Senior High Youth as they host Palm Sunday Breakfast!

On Sunday, March 25 the senior high youth will be hosting a pancake and sausage breakfast between services from 9:00-10:15. The cost of the meal is a donation to help youth and adults who are attending the National Youth Gathering this summer in Houston, Texas. Thank you to all of the members of St. Paul for all that you do to support our vibrant youth ministry!



A Note from the Treasurer

Bills and payroll are scheduled to be paid March 1st, March 15th and March 29th. Please submit paperwork at least one day prior to these dates in order for checks to be issued.

1) Kroger Community Rewards

Program. St. Paul will receive rewards from your purchases at Kroger. To use the rewards program you can register online at krogercommunityrewards.com. All **current participants** in the Kroger Community Rewards Program do not need to re-enroll this year in order to earn funds for St. Paul. The rewards program runs from May 2017 to May 2018. Our NPO number is 90228. **Registration is online only.** Last quarter St. Paul earned \$110.71 in rewards.

2) Newsletter: The newsletter deadline for the April Ray is Sunday, March 18, 2018. Articles may be submitted via e-mail (stpaulww@comcast.net), on a disk (IBM Format) or in writing.

4) Please make sure that if you need to borrow something from the church that you check the book and make sure no one else has reserved that item. If it is available, it needs to be signed out with the church office. I will leave the rental book on top of the filing cabinet in the church office so people know where it is.

WHEN DROPPING ITEMS OFF IN THE CHURCH OFFICE: PLEASE leave a note indicating for whom the items are intended. Thank you!

*Church Secretary Hours:
Monday – Friday 9am to 1 pm*



Diane,
Church
Secretary

Wednesdays during Lent-

5:30- Bells

6:00 – Potluck Soup Supper

7:00 – Worship with Holden Evening Prayer

7:45 – Choir

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS February 12, 2018

Each month a council member opens our meeting with a Bible verse reading or a short devotional reading. Diane Merkau provided the reading for this month.

We continue to pray for the Evangelism Team and Laurie Morris asked us to focus on Psalm 105:1 "Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name; make known among the nations what He has done." We invite the entire congregation to join us in this.

Our keyboard system is not working properly and we are currently using Schubert Chorus' keyboard. We are waiting to hear what the cost to repair our keyboard system will be.

Our youth continue their fundraising efforts and planning for the National Youth Gathering in Houston this summer. They raised \$500 on the spaghetti dinner. The Youth Ministry Team will be planning a Summer of Service challenge, an intergenerational opportunity for adults and youth of all ages to participate in this summer. More information will be provided to the congregation on this project in the coming months.

Our congregation should be proud of the efforts put forth and our response to the Synod's Rise Up Campaign. We have more than doubled our \$9,500 goal and would like to once again thank Margaret Hanselman for leading this campaign.

Bids from three cleaning companies were reviewed and a decision was made to use Clean Cut Maintenance.

The council's Star Word for 2018 is Languages.

Our next meeting is March 12, 2018 at 6:45 p.m.

Thank you 

To all of our St. Paul family I extend a big thank you for all your cards, hugs and comforting words extended to me on the passing of my brother, Bruce.

Thank you, thank you for caring.

Love Donna & Jim

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

Thrivent Financial members have until **March 31, 2018** to direct any remaining **2017 Choice Dollars**. After that date, the 2017 Choice Dollars will expire. You can make your designation by calling 800-847-4836 and asking for fraternal or Choice Dollars, then talking to a pleasant person OR by going online to thrivent.com. You may have more Choice Dollars available, even if you already designated Choice Dollars last year. Please call Don Strauss at 810-434-2380 if you have any questions or need assistance.



Joy Jars Workshop Friday, March 23 6-8 pm

WELCA is sponsoring a Make and Take workshop. All are welcome: men, women and children. Snacks will be provided.

We also welcome donations of pint-sized jars and embellishments. We will be decorating jars to celebrate joyful moments in our lives.

Please bring your joy jar to help us celebrate Erntedankfest in October. All proceeds will help fund WELCA inreach and outreach programs.

MEN'S MINISTRY

Summer of Service

*Everything men do in church is men's ministry-
-EVERYTHING!*

Did you know?

Over the past few months God has provided opportunities for the men of St. Paul to grow spiritually and in fellowship with other men of God.

In January, the Imlay City Reformed Church provided a breakfast for surrounding community men. We had the chance to, once again, hear Tom Harmon speak about "the one thing unchanging".

In February, Countryside Church in Sandusky hosted the annual **Get In The Game** Men's Ministry Conference with keynote speaker, Chris Swainson, undersheriff of Genesee County, Mike Williams, a Christian comedian, and many breakout session speakers had spirit filled messages for those attending.

Right here at St. Paul a new Men's Ministry Study has started, Genesis of Manhood, which provides a look at God's plan for authoritative manhood rather than what our culture defines as manhood. This study is the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Did you know?

Through various grants – Thrivent and Mt. Zion included – many materials have been purchased for St. Paul's Men's Ministry and are located in our church library. There are materials grandfathers or dads could use with sons from small to teen years. Some of the materials deal with faith and the issues men of faith might face. Some relate to husband-wife relationships.

God has been busy providing many different opportunities for men's spiritual growth here at St. Paul.

I Timothy 1:17

With all of the snow, it may be difficult to start thinking about summer. The youth ministry team is developing something new for this summer that you will be hearing about over the next several months. Summer of Service will be an opportunity for intergenerational service for adults and youth of all ages instead of a traditional Vacation Bible School. Summer of Service is a challenge to the entire congregation in which families or small teams will get together and serve/volunteer a minimum of once a month during June, July and August. Families and teams will be encouraged to consider volunteering somewhere that they have not served in the past. An extensive list of ideas, names and contact information of possible summer service opportunities (agencies, opportunities at church, and individuals in need of assistance) will be provided. The anticipated result of the Summer of Service is to help members of the congregation answer a call to serve their neighbors in our community. We also seek to develop and deepen intergenerational Christian relationships. At the end of the summer we will provide an opportunity to celebrate and review all of the different ways that families and teams served. As we begin participating in the Rise Up campaign with the Southeast Michigan Synod, this will also help the people of St. Paul begin to explore the specific needs in our local community through listening while serving. Look for more details to come.



The Anniversary Committee wishes to thank Chairwoman Mary Smith for her inspired leadership during the celebration of St. Paul's 100th anniversary in 2017. Mary's tireless efforts, her creativity, her patience and sensitivity helped make the celebration the success it became. We could not have done it without her. So we offer our humble thanks for all her good work and a job well done.

Jim Ketchum
Member on behalf of the St. Paul Lutheran Church
100th Anniversary Committee

The Splash Kids at the fall of Jericho

SPLASH!

The Bible is full of events that include water and so our youngest group of believers is called Splash.

Currently we are discovering how God empowered some of the great Biblical characters and how God will also empower us to shine His light on those around us.

We have observed Pharoah's stubborn "No" and yet God, through Moses led Israel out of bondage. We followed Moses to the swirling Red Sea and walked across on a dry path. We tasted manna (minature Goldfish) that fell from above, learning to trust God to supply our daily needs.

We've followed Joshua into the Promised Land and, with our kazoos blaring, knocked down the walls of Jericho.

If you see us out in the narthex, church, or halls, curiously searching for answers, join our parade and discover what God is all about. Just be warned, it often involves water!

Thank you Anniversary Committee for the beautiful card, bookmark and gift card. It was my pleasure to serve on the committee with all of you.
Mary Smith



**Confirmation Bake Sale –
March 4 after both services**

Support our Confirmation students going to camp this summer!



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE- MARCH 28- APRIL 1

Wednesday: Bells @ 6:00, Choir @ 7:00
NO supper or Worship

Maundy Thursday Worship @ 7:00pm

Good Friday Worship @ 7:00pm

Easter Sunday Worship @ 8 & 10:30am

**Natural
Church
Development** **NCD**

Survey Results

Two years ago 30 members of our congregation took the Natural Church Development Survey. We discovered through the results that our lowest scores were in "Passionate Spirituality" and "Holistic Small Groups". We spent the next year and a half working to build small groups and a deeper sense of passionate spirituality through the *Unbinding Your Heart* book and small groups. Prayer was the focus of Lent last year. More small groups have developed within the congregation. In December 30 people were asked to repeat the survey to see how our scores might have changed. We are so pleased to discover our results far exceeded our expectations. Even the Natural Church Development organizer was very impressed! Our score for "Passionate Spirituality" went from a 31 to 60! Our average of all the characteristics in 2015 was 46 and in January it was 72! This is incredible progress. The Holy Spirit is at work here at St. Paul. Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey. As we move forward as the people of God, we can't wait to see what will happen next!

Natural Church Development Team



AREA CHURCHES

Connect, Serve, Collaborate in the name of Christ

*Blue Water Area
Churches*

2018 Lenten Lunch Series

Bringing Hope

12:00 noon ~ 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 1

Rev. Don Doerzbacher, Our Savior Lutheran

Thursday, March 8

Father Sal Palazzolo, Holy Trinity Parish

Thursday, March 15

Rev. LuAnn Rourke, 1st United Methodist

Thursday, March 22

Ven. Linda Crane, Grace Episcopal

*All presentations in the
series will be at*

*St. John's United Church of
Christ*

710 Pine Street, Port Huron

*A free-will offering will be taken each week toward a
"Gift Ark" through Heifer International*