

The Epistle of St. Paul



January, 2010

The Core Values of St. Paul Lutheran Church

“We are a family of God that is Christ-centered and Bible-based, focusing on Life-long Learning. We are Family Oriented, Mission-Minded, and Hope Sharing.”

Our sixth core value is Hope-Sharing: “St. Paul members shall respect one another, show a genuine care and compassion for all of our neighbors as we strive to do God’s work, love ourselves, our families, our fellow parishioners, our community and the world; bringing hope to those who do not know Jesus’ forgiveness – a ministry that is joyful with the resulting gift of eternal life.”

There are so many people in this world today who live their lives with false hope. They hope on those things that are temporal – fame, money, employment, etc. With such hope there is only going to be frustration and this hope does not give us what we truly need – redemption, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life.

However, grounded in Christ’s resurrection, with patient expectation, believers hope in the promise of His return in glory. That’s the description of a spiritual hope found in the Lutheran Study Bible.

It is the latter description of hope that we, as members of St. Paul Lutheran Church, want all people to have in their lives. To that extent we will continue to be a congregation that seeks out ways in which we may share that hope in order to encourage one another and to bring more people into God’s family of hope.

In Christ’s Service,

Pastor Mark

New Creations and Christ's Ambassadors

Happy New Year! The ball has fallen in Times Square and we all wait in expectation for what the New Year will bring. Don't you just love the feel of a new year? As December 31st ticks over to January 1st, we have this sense of new beginnings and a fresh start. This sense of a fresh start is what motivates many of us to create those New Year's resolutions as we begin the New Year with excitement and anticipation.

It is this excitement of new things that I want to talk about. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Saint Paul says, ***"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come."*** Talk about new beginnings! Paul tells us here that each and every one of us is a new creation simply because we know Jesus. How amazing is that? In spite of all the sins we have committed, in spite of all those times we have fallen short of what God wants for our lives, he comes to us and forgives us all our sins, making us new creations.

Being new creations is an exciting thing! Just listen to what Paul says about what we get to do as new creations, ***"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us."*** How amazing it is that we are now ambassadors and representatives of the King of Kings! As new creations, we now have the honor and privilege of going out into the world around us and representing the one who humbled himself to the point of death on the cross and who rose again from the dead. Indeed, it is an exciting thing to begin a New Year, and it is even more exciting that we were claimed by Christ through baptism and have now been called to be his ambassadors to the world around us. Together with those things, it is also an exciting time to be an ambassador for Christ here at St. Paul.

In the coming year, we will be doing several different things and sponsoring different events so we can reach out and represent Christ in our community and in the world around us. But this work cannot be done only by a few people. We need more ambassadors who are willing to step up, get involved and share their ideas on how we can best represent our Savior to those around us. I want to encourage each one of you to come and be a part of our Evangelism team here at St. Paul. Join us on the second Monday of this month as we gather together to discuss ways we can represent our Lord and what he has done for us.

My friends in Christ, the New Year brings with it a wide array of opportunities for us. Here at St. Paul, we have been given a great opportunity to share the Gospel with those around us. As a new creation and as an ambassador for Christ, join in on the action and help us take the Good News of Jesus to our community in 2010!

In Christ,

Pastor James



Grace Notes...

As I write this today, we are still in the hubbub of preparing for all the Advent, Sunday and Christmas worship services still to happen in December, as well as family gatherings in our homes. It's a furiously busy time but as much as I love to decorate my home, plan and shop for just the right gifts for my family, try to squeeze in some candy making and cookie baking, my greatest joy of the season remains always the preparation and observance of these special worship services.

My heart and soul are overwhelmed with the realization of the birth of our Savior. How grateful I am that we live in a country where our Christian celebrations are unfettered by government; that we have such a beautiful building in which to gather; and, most of all, that through the Word and song, we have this opportunity to share with our Christian family and others this great message of salvation. It is my prayer that you will be filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit as we celebrate this glorious season.

Then there comes January and a new year awaits us. Special music for the month will include:

January 10: The Chancel choir anthem for the day will be "In Christ Alone." With lyrics by Englishman Stuart Townend and music by Irish composer Keith Getty this is one of the most inspiring hymns of the new millennium. It explores the character of Jesus Christ, and what his life, death and resurrection mean to individual believers. Arranger Larry Shackley sensitively underscores the many moods of the text, bringing out the beauty of the folk-like melody.

January 17: The *Alleluia Ringers* will be reviving one of their favorites from the past, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho" arranged by Martha Lynn Thompson. This energetic rendition combines the use of mallets along with brilliant ringing of the handbells. This is one that is sure to put a smile on your face and a lilt in your heart!

January 24: The Chancel Choir will revisit one of their favorites from this past fall, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee." Jack Schrader is well known for his dynamic "blues-gospel" choral setting and this blockbuster, classic arrangement is no exception. Filled with energy, his expressive setting creates an enjoyable atmosphere that all will enjoy. The orchestration by Don Hart on CD adds to the beauty of this anthem.

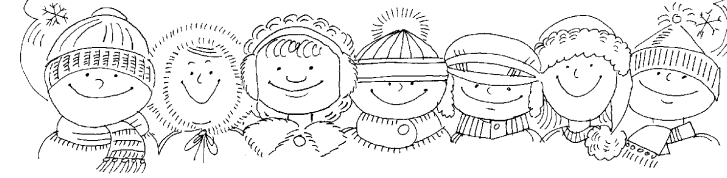
A very heart-felt **THANK YOU!** to all who made 2009 such a great year at St. Paul. The dedication, talent and faith of the choir and handbell ringers are such a blessing to me....and all who worship here.

And **THANK YOU** to all in the congregation for your support and allowing me to do what I love most...praising our Lord through music.

May your New Year be rich with blessings!

Soli Deo Gloria!
Ruth Bruha

JANUARY PRESCHOOL NEWS



January is a time of new beginnings. We begin the New Year – 2010, we begin the registration process for next school year, and we begin the countdown for Jesus' next birthday.

This month in preschool we will hear about the news of Jesus' birth travelling throughout the world. That wonderful message is still being delivered! We will also spend lots of time talking about snow and cold. We will celebrate our "Winter Wonderland" and "Penguins" during our thematic units. We will continue our studies on the alphabet, numbers, time-telling, and phonetic sounds. We will make plenty of time for music, crafts and play!

Registration begins January 11th for church members and established families of our preschool. Please call the preschool before then to arrange to receive an enrollment packet or to observe our environment. Last year the classes filled within a few days.

Please make the most of 2010. Enjoy your family and friends – young and old!

Mrs. Susan J. Smith
Director/Teacher
St. Paul Lutheran Preschool

LWML

Greetings ... The start of a New Year and the hope of the St. Paul Lutheran LWML is that we will continue doing the Lord's work both in action and in our prayers.

Our special mission for January is Lutherans for Life. In our world today, life is taken for granted and is not seen as a very precious gift from God. Lutherans for Life witnesses to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God.

Mission work is needed more today both here and in foreign countries. Our mites are so important as they continue to do the work of the Lord by helping fund many various mission projects.

All ladies of St. Paul are always welcome to join us. Please plan to join us at our next meeting which is scheduled for January 12 at 7:00 pm. Our hostesses for the evening are Linn Hayden, Jan Volf, Sherri Silvey, and Kay Mueller.

A very blessed New Year to all!

Your sisters in Christ,
Jane Thompson, LWML President
Betty McConnell, LWML Vice President
Carol Wenndt, LWML Secretary
Kathy Witt, LWML Treasurer

*"...serve the Lord
with gladness,
glorify His name."*

January

LWML MISSION PROJECT

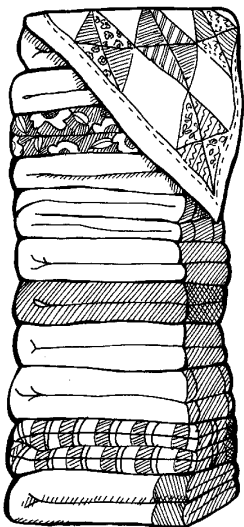
“Every life is the handiwork of God.”

The LWML mission project for January will be Lutherans For Life. LFL would like to expand “Teaching for Life”, the day school curriculum, to include curriculums for Sunday School, VBS, Confirmation, youth, and adults. They are developing these curriculums using Lutherans For Life nine concepts. At present they are working on the VBS and Sunday School development. We have some samples of the curriculum for day schools on the table in the Narthex. Take a moment and look them over. There are also some interesting handouts there for you.

We are asking you to adopt a baby bottle again for the month of January, this time for Lutherans For Life and their “Teaching for Life” project. Fill the bottles with coins, bills or checks. Sign out the baby bottle and bring it back full! Make sure you cross off your name when you bring the bottle back. You can continue to do this for the entire month of January. Please help Lutherans For Life to expand their curriculum.

If you have any questions, please contact Norma Zubradt at 964-4369.

Thank you all for your generous help and all your prayers for this project.



Ladies of St. Paul!!

We welcome the ladies of St. Paul to join us as we resume Quilt and Blanket Making on Jan. 23rd. We had taken a break in Nov. and Dec. due to the 4th Saturday falling so close to the holidays. We do thank the Lord as we have been able to deliver six blankets to Hope Ministries and five blankets to Youth Emergency Services in Des Moines, and have a good start on several quilts. Thanks to all the ladies who have helped work on these blankets and quilts. We hope that all of you will continue to join us along with anyone else who might enjoy a Saturday morning of fellowship while making blankets and quilts. Remember no experience is needed. We are in need of more fleece material for blankets. If anyone has any extra they do not need, you can just leave it in the kitchen, or better yet, bring it with you as you join us on the 23rd.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

“Matthew 5:16 says that we should give evidence of our heavenly citizenship by being good citizens on earth. This vocation as citizens of both the secular kingdom and God’s kingdom of His children, gives us the responsibility to speak and act as a moral compass for society. This means that we are often called to engage the ‘public square’ with our message of Christ’s mercy for all. We are called to use God’s Word to make a difference in the world. We do this through prayer; letters, e-mails, and phone calls to elected civil servants; and discussions with family & friends.” (Linda Bartlett)

As Senior Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, I want to encourage all of our members to get involved as Linda suggests. During this month in which we emphasize the sanctity of human life, I urge you to visit www.lcms.org. In the This We Believe series you will find our Christian responses to such items as stem cell research, abortion, artificial insemination, birth control, cloning, cohabitation, euthanasia, organ donation, and other life issues.

Linda goes on with this request: “Please pray that the hearts and minds of many be changed by Truth. Pray that God’s creation and redemption of all human life be honored. Pray for courage to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves (Proverbs 24:11). Pray for Godly wisdom ... in Jesus’ name.”

(Just a note: Because of our six week series regarding our Core Values, we will be celebrating Life Sunday on February 21st.)

CORE VALUES SERMON SERIES

Beginning the weekend of January 9/10 we will be introducing and focusing on our congregation’s Core Values. For six weeks the messages and music of the services will stress one of our six core values – Christ-Centered, Bible-Based, Life-Long Learning, Family Oriented, Mission-Minded, Hope-Sharing.

In addition, large banners are being made for each of the core values and they will be hung – one each week – on the side walls of the sanctuary. These are permanent banners that will most certainly help to beautify our worship center and also be a constant reminder to all of us of our priorities as a family of Christ.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN STAFF SETS GOALS FOR 2010

Each of the five members of our staff was asked to present ministry goals for 2010. The following is a summary of those goals:

- **Establish a new hand chime choir made up of children of all ages**
- **Have our *Journey* service outside during the summer months**
- **Have four major outreach activities in 2010**
- **Develop regular small group Bible Studies**
- **Become more proficient with the technology available**
- **Recruit more volunteers to assist with mailings, etc.**
- **Increase participation and average attendance in Sunday School by 8%**
- **Host three education events**
- **Welcome visitors and new members into Education and Youth programs**
- **Make personal contact with inactive youth**
- **Begin Parish Nurse Ministry**
- **Investigate possibility of Stephen Ministry**
- **Work with Lutheran Family Services on satellite site**

With these goals and other opportunities we seek to expand all areas of ministry in order that we may reach more people with the love of Christ.

PARENTS OF 2010 CONFIRMANDS

All parents of our 2010 Confirmands are invited to attend a very important meeting on Thursday, January 7th at 6:30 p.m. Some of the items to be discussed include: Confirmation banners, schedule for Statements of Faith, Confirmation Service and banquet. Please mark your calendars for this informative meeting.



HOMEBUILDERS

Are you looking for a way to make new friends and grow closer to your spouse and children? Do you want to strengthen your marriage and family in a fun and friendly small group?

Our mission is to help strengthen marriages and grow as parents in a supportive environment. Together we will discover timeless principles from God's word that you can apply to your role as a parent or spouse.

Homebuilders small group meets the third Sunday of each month from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the church. Child care is available and drinks and snacks are provided. This year our topic of study is "Helping Your Children Know God". Join us January 17th for our study in this series titled "Learning about God through the Bible"

Contact Aaron and Erin Hoelscher: erinhoelscher@yahoo.com 965-5391 or Brian and Carmen Herbel 964-3586 for more information.

PLAY GROUP

Parents of Newborns to Preschoolers

Please join us in the Family Life Center at 9:00 am on the 2nd Monday of each month for fun and fellowship. Coffee and light snacks will be provided. This group is open to anyone in the area, so tell a friend!

Our next play date is Monday, January 11.

Hope to see you there!!!

YALF

(Young Adult Lutheran Fellowship)

YALF is a Bible study group for 20 and 30 year olds. We usually meet the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm. **We will be meeting at the Café Diem located at 2005 S. Ankeny Blvd. (across from DMACC).** Pastor Fernandez will be leading a Bible study on the book of Isaiah.

Please join us for a fun evening of fellowship and the Word.

FAITH WALK 'N WEIGH

Fore! Yes, Faith Walk 'n Weigh is off to Arizona to go golfing with the St. Paul Snowbirds. **We will be walking 1,438 miles to Surprise, Arizona.** We need walkers to help get us there before they come back to Iowa! Come join us Sunday evenings for our informational meeting and to walk. Come to walk only on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the week or you can walk anytime the church is open. For more information, please email Joy at joylivingston@worldnet.att.net or call her at 515-971-1323. Watch the weekly bulletin for more updates.

January 03: Starting 2010 – Full steam ahead!

January 10: FWW Holiday Party

January 17: Exercise to a DVD

January 24: Importance of drinking water

January 31: Winter Munchies



SCRAPBOOKING/CARDMAKING/CRAFT CLUB

3RD FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH

6:00 – 11:00 PM

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Come join us for an evening of fun catching up on your scrapbooking, cardmaking or your favorite craft project. Everyone brings their own supplies to work on. We meet every third Friday of the month from 6:00 pm until 11:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your friends along for the fun and fellowship!

If you are interested in joining this fun group or have any questions, please contact Dianne Buls, 965-5301, or Doreen Buls, 965-9860.

Family Bunco Night

**Sunday, January 31, 7:00pm
In the church Fellowship Hall**

Join your church family for a free night of fun in the Fellowship Hall. Bunco is a great game for all ages. Those who have been to our Bunco nights before can tell you what a fun time we have. Refreshments will be served, and there will be prizes too! As always, guests are welcome.



Winter Jam 2010

Christian Music's Largest Annual Tour

January 24, 2010, 6:00pm

**Veterans Memorial Auditorium,
833 5th Ave, Des Moines IA**

Cost: \$10 at the door - No Advance Ticket

Doors open at 5:00pm
Pre-Show approx. 5:20pm
Lights Down approx. 5:55pm
Show Ends approx. 10:20pm

LINE UP: Third Day, Newsboys, NewSong, Tenth Avenue North, Fireflight, Sidewalk Prophets, Robert Pierre, Revive & Guest Speaker Tony Nolan

Go to jamtour.com or call 515-564-8000 for more information.

Youth News & Events

Cleaning the Bucs Stadium

For our next National Gathering fundraiser, we will be cleaning the Buccaneer Arena on Friday evening, January 1 and again on Thursday evening, January 14. We will meet there at the hockey arena (7201 Hickman Rd. in Urbandale) at 9:00pm. Enter through the main doors on the southwest corner of the building and let them know you are there to clean the stadium. The more help we have, the faster and easier it will be to clean the stadium. It's a messy job, so you'll want to wear grubby clothes. This will be a great way to bring in funds for the Gathering from outside the church. You can even make a night of it by buying tickets for the game before our fundraiser.

Let's Meet!

On Thursday, January 7, at 6:30pm we had a confirmation meeting scheduled for the Parents of seventh graders. Due to the winter storm, this confirmation meeting will be moved to a later date.

On Sunday, January 10, at 6:30pm, we will have a meeting for all youth attending the **National LCMS Youth Gathering** and their parents. At this meeting, we will make decisions about transportation to the Gathering, decide on a mission project to support as we tithe the funds we raise, and continue planning for our upcoming activities.

This month, **Junior Youth Group** will be on January 6 and January 20. Adults who would like to volunteer to serve a meal or help for the evening are encouraged to sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway between the Narthex and Fellowship Hall.

Lutheran Youth Fellowship for senior youth will meet on January 13 and 27. Be sure and come, we have exciting activities planned for you.

Junior Youth Retreat at Camp Okoboji

Our Annual Junior Youth Retreat at Camp Okoboji is scheduled for January 22-24, 2010. This exciting retreat will include games in our cabin and the activities center, devotions, sledding or bowling, a church service, great fellowship, and a lot more. Youth will meet at St. Paul at 5:00pm on Friday and return around 3:00pm on Sunday. The cost is \$40 per youth, but financial assistance is available if needed. We anticipate having a large group, so **we'll also need several adults to join us**. To participate, please sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway between the sanctuary and fellowship hall as soon as you can. Your health forms and \$40 can be turned in any time before we leave. Watch your mail for more information. This is one of the most memorable activities for many of our youth. We hope you can be part of it!

Youth News & Events

Omelet Breakfast

Back by popular demand, we're having an Omelet Breakfast on Sunday, January 17, between services starting at 9:15. We will meet on Saturday evening, January 16, at 6:30pm for setup and preparation. This is a fun way for the congregation to support our annual Junior Youth Retreat at Camp Okobojo and our National LCMS Youth Gathering.

Super Bowl Subs

We will begin Super Bowl Sub sales on January 17 and continue taking orders on January 24 & 31. Youth are needed to run the table by taking orders. On Saturday, February 6, at 10:00 am, all youth will get together at St. Paul to assemble the Super Bowl Subs. After our worship services on February 6 & 7, we will help those who submitted orders to pick up their subs. Super Bowl Subs have always been a great way to help us with our Camp Okobojo Jr. Youth Retreat, National LCMS Youth Gathering, and the mission projects we support.

Lock-in at America's Incredible Pizza Company!

That's right, we're having a lock-in for everyone in grades 6-12 at America's Incredible Pizza Company in Urbandale on February 19-20 (please note this change in date), 11:00pm to 6:00am. Cost is \$25 per person. The cost will include the buffet, a ten dollar game card, two of their most fun attractions, and more. This lock-in will be with other Lutheran youth from the area, including those from Beautiful Savior in Polk City, Living Faith in Clive, Trinity in Des Moines, and others. Friends are welcome. To get an accurate count of everyone planning to attend, please sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway between the Fellowship Hall and Narthex. For this event to be possible, we need at least one adult committed to joining us for every eight youth who attend. This will be an amazingly fun event, so we hope you can be there!

The Board of Youth

Last November, Duane Medick was elected as our Chairman of the Board of Youth for another two years. We thank him for his years of service and his commitment to continue to serve in this way. As we begin a new year, we welcome parents and other interested adults to be part of the Youth Board. We would love for you to share your ideas and help in the planning process as we seek to provide opportunities for youth to get involved here at St. Paul. Talk to Duane Medick if you are interested.